

## **AMBIENT ADVERTISING**

An investigation into the effect that the Visual Impact, Environmental Impact and Pedestrian Interpretation has on creating the Ambient Advertising message.

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## **Declaration**

## Summary

In my thesis I will be discussing how messages are conveyed through ambient advertising. Ambient advertising is a form of advertising that appears in public places. It does not have the same spatial boundaries as conventional outdoor advertising for example; billboard. It can appear as a person/s, object or spectacle. Its messages are often hidden and can rely on the intellectual perception of the observer for interpretation. In this thesis I have formulated three parameters in order to deconstruct my analysis. The three parameters I am using are; **Visual Impact, Environmental Impact and Pedestrian Interpretation**. I will go into greater detail explaining these parameters in my hypothesis.

Ambient advertising strategies aim to highlight the unusual in the usual, the unexpected in the expected. Strategies through which pedestrians encounter enigmatic installations of various kinds within the public spaces of towns and cities. It could be described as the 'Brand' displaying its advertising message in three-dimensional form. Using material strategies to engender curiosity, wit and likeability to engage the pedestrian, it is a non-traditional method of creating an advertising campaign. Ambient advertising is designed to disrupt, intrigue, entertain and be memorable. It exists outside the normal rules of engagement of traditional advertising for example; digital, television, radio and press. All of these advertising strategies struggle to find a voice amongst the thousands of brand messages that fight for the attention of consumers everyday.

In my thesis I discuss the theories of semiotics as developed by Ferdinand de Saussure(1916), Roland Barthes (1964), Michael O'Toole (2011), Laura Oswald (2012). I am also using semiotics as a tool to interpret and decode the visual

language of the ambient advertisement. By including the theories of social theorists Erik Du Plessis (2008) and Robert Cialdini (2007) I will be able to discuss how people react and behave in social situations when viewing an ambient advertisement. The metaphors that are created in the mind of the pedestrian when viewing an ambient advertisement are integral to the interpretation of the 'message' and therefore I have included the theories of metaphor and interaction theory of Charles Forceville (1996), Gunther Kress (1996), Theo van Leeuwen (1996), George Lakoff (1980) and Max Black (1972). Advertising is constructed to attract attention and be persuasive, I have included the theories of persuasion(advertising) by Judith Williamson (1978), Katherine Told Frith (1997), Guy Cook (1994) and Paul Messaris (1997) and Zaltman & Zaltman (2008) to decode and interpret the relevance of cognition and metaphor in the interpretation of signs of visual communication. In order to discuss the theories of environment and the anthropological aspect of space, in each of the case studies, I have included the theories of Marc Augé (1995) and Michel de Certeau (1984).

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## **Preface**

I started my research into ambient advertising to discover what factors are needed to create an effective ambient advertising campaign. Visual communication and in particular ambient advertising has always been a passion of mine. I graduated from the Faculty of Art and Design, (UWIC) with a Diploma in Visual Communication in 1981, where I was taught how to use typography, colour, shape, form and texture to convey a specific visual communication message. We were taught techniques of using visual imagery to convey a persuasive message, whether the brief was for a glossy magazine or poster advertisement. Before graduation I turned my attention to three-dimensional visual communication and created an installation of visual communication as part of the Cardiff Public Art Strategy, for the City of Llandaff. This still remains in situ today.

Once I began working in the design and advertising industry putting the skills I had learned into practical use by designing advertisements for print, creating new brand identities, designing packaging for products and constructing exhibition stands, using visual communication strategies became an everyday exercise. I worked as a Graphic Designer for a number of companies in Wales and eventually became Head of Design for the advertising agency McCann Erickson, Wales. Setting up my own design and advertising consultancy in 1989 gave me the opportunity to work for clients in the UK and Europe developing visual communication projects and brand design strategies for a number of sectors. In 2005 after giving several guest lectures to Visual Communication students on the intricacies of designing a brand identity and developing brand experience as part

of a marketing strategy, I discovered that I would leave my lectures with more questions of my own regarding how brands use visual communication and in particular ambient advertising to convey a persuasive message. In 2006, I completed a research document that became the basis for the content of the new BA(Hons) Design for Advertising course, at what was then, Swansea Metropolitan University. I became a lecturer on the Course, and in the summer of 2009, I built on my initial research by investigating the theories of Visual Communication in order to analyse how a successful Ambient Advertising Campaign is created.

It became apparent to me that there were many connections in the way commerce had used advertising methods to increase sales of products, or raise public awareness of causes and services throughout history. I decided that I needed to draw up a timeline of the influences and factors that had created an effect on the audience and the advertiser. This timeline played a major part in my original research as a dynamic thread that changed and developed as I searched for opinions and contributions of academics, students and industry specialists on the importance they attach to people and social, political and technological events that have affected advertising history. It has taken several years to complete running alongside this thesis. My advertising research had originally focused mainly on the UK, but as I quickly discovered the strong influence of the USA advertising agencies and their creative input during the 1950s and 1960s played a major role in the way advertising developed in the UK. Also, the fact that the USA is widely held to be the home of free enterprise, commercialism and technology meant it is relevant to my research. My initial inquiries led me to visit Leo Burnett Advertising Agency in Chicago, creators of the *Marlborough Man*, *Ronald McDonald* and *Put A Tiger in your Tank* advertising campaigns. In the

summer vacation of 2009, I visited Chicago, New York and Boston. Primarily, to view first hand the advertising strategies used in the USA; on the streets, TV, stores, airports, in fact the 'USA Media Environment', and to interview Abby Lovett at Leo Burnett. I was particularly interested in interviewing Abby as she had been responsible for the WWF *Earth Hour Ambient Campaign*. This is a campaign that still runs today. WWF's Earth Hour is an annual global celebration where people switch off their lights for one hour to show they care about the future of our planet. It's a symbolic and spectacular lights out display with a big message about wanting to protect the future of our planet. Since it first began in Sydney Australia in 2007, the number of countries taking part in Earth Hour has grown to an incredible 172 countries and territories – a number that keeps rising every year. Earth Hour is not about how much energy is saved during the hour, rather it's a chance to put the spotlight on the issues facing the planet, and to inspire millions across the world to live more sustainably.

## **Conclusion**

My interest in the historical development of advertising is fired by a need to know how and why the viewer reacts to ambient advertising and as a result, to use this knowledge to predict how ambient advertising may need to develop in the future. The advertising environment is changing rapidly. We have moved away from mass media to specifically targeted media. Brands are using social and public spaces, the latest technologies and social media to reach us the consumer with the advertising message. Their ingenuity and endeavor often read like the script of a science fiction movie or even George Orwell's book, *Nineteen Eighty Four A Novel*: Advertising is about ideology, always looking forward (Berger, 1972:130).

This became apparent during my meeting with Abby Lovett at Leo Burnett, Chicago, when my interview with her led to discussion of the future of advertising. 'We like to find out what matters to people', stated Abby. 'How we reach an audience with such a cramming of our public space will be an ongoing problem for the advertiser' (Lovett, 2009).

It was this interesting and insightful conversation with Abby, that led me to investigate further how brands use ambient advertising to communicate with their audience, on what can be, if successful, a global platform. Through the internet and sites such as *YouTube* together with social media networking platforms, an ambient advertisement has the possibility of becoming viral on a global stage within seconds of being uploaded by one member of the public. Before the advent of social networking sites and the internet the brand would hope to receive free publicity through orchestrated press releases that may take days to print and would appear depending on the decision of the editor of the publication. Now the public can make their own decisions about the images they want to share through social media platforms in an instant.

Therefore, for ambient advertising to be effective it has to be successfully communicated to its audience. The three parameters I am applying in my thesis; Visual Impact, Environmental Impact and Pedestrian Interpretation, could be used, not only to deconstruct an ambient advertising message, but could demonstrate how to construct a successful one.

## Introduction

This thesis is an investigation into ambient advertising and how the advertising message is communicated through visual imagery, the environment that it sits in and the interpretation of the pedestrian that encounters it, in a public place. I have made my investigation through the analysis of three case studies. *De Beers A Diamond Is Forever Ambient Campaign*, *John Lewis Ambient Campaign*, *Pepsi Max Ambient Campaign*. I will be using the theories of semiotics and visual communication together with social and anthropological theories to triangulate my investigation and reach my conclusion. I will be using three parameters to discuss how ambient advertising becomes a persuasive communication tool. The three parameters I am using are: **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation**. This is a theory that I have constructed to decode the ambient advertisement. I am using the term 'impact' for two of the parameters as it describes the powerful effect that ambient advertising has on the pedestrian. The three parameters will be used in the following ways:

### Visual Impact

I am using the parameter of visual impact in my discourse because each of the three case studies uses visual language to communicate the advertising message. Each ambient advertisement is an object, person or spectacle that uses visual tropes for example; hyperbole, metaphor and iconicity. The first encounter by the pedestrian is visual. The first sense used is sight. Therefore, investigating the visual aspect of ambient advertising is important to the discourse.

## **Environmental Impact**

I am using the parameter of environmental impact in my discourse because each of the three case studies is set within a pedestrian space. The sense of place and physical surroundings plays an important part in the overall interpretation of the ambient advertisement by the pedestrian.

## **Pedestrian Interpretation**

I am using the parameter of pedestrian interpretation in my discourse in the context of how the pedestrian cognitively explores and interprets the ambient advertisement and determines the success of its intended communication. These three parameters help us to understand how the ambient advertisement is constructed and communicates to the intended target audience.

## **Theoretical framework: Semiotics and Visual Communication**

As mentioned in the Summary earlier in the document I will be discussing the theories of semiotics as developed by Ferdinand de Saussure(1916), Roland Barthes (1964), Michael O'Toole (2011) and Laura Oswald (2012) in order to use semiotics as a tool to interpret and decode the visual language of the ambient advertisement. The metaphors that are created in the mind of the pedestrian when viewing an ambient advertisement are integral to the interpretation of the 'message' and therefore I have included the theories of metaphor and interaction theory by theorists such as Charles Forceville (1996), Gunther Kress (1996), Theo van Leeuwen (1996), George Lakoff (1980) and Max Black (1972).

Advertising is constructed to attract attention and be persuasive and therefore I have included the theories of persuasion (advertising) by Judith Williamson

(1978), Katherine Told Frith (1997), Guy Cook (1994) and Paul Messaris (1997) and Zaltman & Zaltman (2008) to decode and interpret the relevance of cognition and metaphor in the interpretation of signs of visual communication. In order to discuss the theories of environment and the anthropological aspect of space, in each of the case studies, I have included the theories of Marc Augé (1995) and Michel de Certeau (1984).

I am using semiotic theory to interpret visual images. Semiotics is the study of signs. Signs are all around us in our everyday lives. We encounter them as we go about our business at home or in the work place. Signs can also be communicated in everyday speech. But for my thesis I am concerned with visual signs. These include; objects, images, and also body language. All signs are open to interpretation and will depend on our cultural experience and knowledge to decode. Therefore, it can be difficult to create a sign that communicates to a number of people in the same way. Ambient advertising has to create signs that communicate to a particular target audience and therefore communicates by using appropriate signs that can be decoded by the pedestrian. Signs can hold signs within signs, for example I may buy a yellow jumper because to me, the colour is a sign of spring and new growth and communicates vitality and youth. To others it may be a reminder of a sad occasion linked to a past relative and therefore the connotation is a negative one. Sign interpretation is very interdependent on cultural reference. In the three case studies I am using in this discourse about ambient advertising, I am applying semiotic theories as a way of decoding the advertising messages held within the signs.

## **Theoretical framework: Social theories**

I am referencing the theories of social theorists in my discourse to understand human response and the cognitive process engaged by people when exploring visual information, social situations and environmental encounters. By including the theories of social theorists Erik Du Plessis (2008) and Robert Cialdini (2007) I will be able to discuss how people react and behave in social situations when viewing an ambient advertisement.

### **Theoretical framework: Space and Anthropology**

In this thesis I have explored the importance of space in relation to the ambient advertisement. In order to do this I have referenced the work of Marc Augé and Michel de Certeau. I'm exploring the concepts of both theorists to contextualize the use of space within the ambient advertising environment. In his book 'Non-places introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity' published in 1995, Augé discusses the concept of 'non-places' to refer to anthropological spaces of transience, in other words, that do not hold enough significance to be regarded as 'places'. For example: motorway service stations, hotel rooms, airports and supermarkets. The term 'non-place' itself is a subjective one. For example, a shopping mall is not a 'non place' to someone who works there everyday. Augé argues that 'place' offers people a space that empowers their identity where they can meet other people with whom they can share social reference for example a church or community centre. In contrast, a 'non-place' is a space where people do not live, in which the individual remains anonymous and lonely for example a railway station or airport lounge. In his book Augé avoids making value judgments on 'non-places' but looks at them by researching into human characteristics.

### **Relevance of Augé's theory to Ambient Advertising**

Augé argues that 'non-places' are transient spaces that do not hold enough significance as a place that empowers identity, or where people meet to share social reference. Augé's theory is discussed within in this thesis on ambient advertising in the context of the three parameters; visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation. These three parameters are applied to three case studies; *De Beers A Diamond Is Forever*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis*. The relevance of the theories of Augé are discussed in the following way:

The first parameter is **Visual Impact**. In each of the three case studies the object or spectacle is set within a 'non-place' space, where the pedestrian is transient. The pedestrian does not look at the object or spectacle as a meeting place, but happens to come across it whilst going about their normal everyday business, which could be shopping, travelling or sight-seeing. The object or spectacle in the visual impact parameter is itself transitory in that it is not a permanent fixture within the place. In each case study it is temporarily creating a visual impact within the space.

The second parameter **Environmental Impact** allows me to discuss the environment that the object or spectacle is placed within. In each of the three case studies each physical site could be described as a 'non-place,' that is an area that is a transient space, for example; the *De Beers* case study is set within a railway terminal, the *Pepsi Max* case study takes place on a bridge where there are a high volume of pedestrians present as the spectacle passes by them and so the space is dynamic in that it is changing as the spectacle moves. The *John Lewis* case study is set within an outdoor shopping precinct in a city centre that was a space that pedestrians would usually walk through. Each of the three case studies selected are transient, with pedestrians moving through the spaces or in

the case of Pepsi Max the ambient advertisement pass them. In all cases the pedestrian is exposed to the ambient advertisement in a place not positioned as a meeting place.

The third parameter is **Pedestrian Interpretation** as the ambient advertisement in each case study is set within a 'non-place,' that is an area that is not designed for the pedestrian to share social reference, the pedestrian is taken by surprise and their attention is drawn to the object or spectacle. The pedestrian observes and analyzes the object or spectacle that is in the transient space, which they are sharing. This requires the pedestrian to enter an internal and external personal discourse, which is often shared with other pedestrians through the use of paralinguage and conversation. How the pedestrian makes sense of the ambient advertisement within this transient environment is of significance. The pedestrian is transient themselves and how they adjust is an interesting insight into human characteristics, this is discussed in detail within the cases studies.

The distinction between places and non-places derived from the opposition between place and space as suggested by Michel de Certeau. De Certeau does not oppose place and space in the way that place is opposed to non-place. Space for him is the frequented place an intersection of moving bodies, he argues that it is the pedestrians who transform a street that has been geometrically defined as the place by town planners into space.

In his book 'The Practice of Everyday Life' published in 1984 de Certeau discusses the concept of strategy and tactics, a concept that is rooted in military theory. Strategy refers to the idea of key campaigns designed to achieve main objectives, for example winning a war. Tactics refers to techniques to win battles and carry out the strategy to win the war. De Certeau discusses strategy from the

purview of power, how it presumes control and sets itself apart like management in an organization, it is designed to carry through capitalist ideals. Tactics he discusses as being related to the non-powerful adaptation of the environment, for example a city planner may set out what streets there will be, but the cabbie will figure out the best way to navigate the lived reality of the streets. In the same way in modern-day culture the satellite navigation system in the car will specify a route, but quite often the driver will use local knowledge or intuition to adapt the route. The former is an example of strategy as the latter is an example of tactics. Tactics require adaptability and agility to unpredictable situations. Ambient advertising is designed to surprise and is often unpredictable and therefore the pedestrian deploys tactics to negotiate the object or spectacle in a 'non-place'. It could be argued that the positioning of the ambient advertisement in a 'non-place' turns it into a space. This is discussed in the section on ambient advertising effectiveness where an increase in the footfall for the *De Beers* location, Grand Central Terminal, is evidenced.

De Certeau discusses the fact that tactics are in a constant state of reassessment and correction, based directly on observations and of the actual environment.

This can be applied to ambient advertising as the pedestrian is asked to observe the object or spectacle in the space it occupies.

Interestingly, tactical theorist and USA Colonel, John Boyd (1927-1997) developed a model called OODA-loop. (Boyd:2010)

(O) orientate the most important developments in the environment.

(O) decide on the immediate cause of action.

(D) take that action.

(A) then revert immediately to observation of the environment to see how the last action might have change it.

There is readiness to take advantage of unpredictable changes called tactical agility, strategies are undermined by unpredictability and tactics make an ally of unpredictability. Space is an important link between all three parameters in this thesis. It is also an important link between the three case studies, for example, each of the case studies takes place in an area that could be described as 'non-place', each of the case studies alludes to the use of strategy by the brand to communicate a brand message and shows the use of tactics employed by the pedestrian as they encounter the ambient advertisement and observe, adapt, analyze and negotiate their way around the ambient advertisement and interpret its meaning. It could be argued that the three brands in the case studies are using strategy to raise awareness of brand values in that there is a plan and aim set out for the advertising message and it could also be argued that the interaction of the pedestrian in the space is tactical as it is unpredictable.

### **Relevance of Michel de Certeau's theory to ambient advertising**

De Certeau's theory of strategy and tactics can be applied to the three case studies that I have chosen for this thesis. For example, it could be argued that the strategy would be that of the brands *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis* and the tactics are those employed by the pedestrian who adapts to the object or spectacle set within the 'non-place'.

In the first parameter **Visual Impact** observation, adaption and analysis is an important function that the pedestrian carries out to interpret the ambient advertisement. The visual impact in each of the three case studies is surprising and the appearance of the object or spectacle in the space is unpredictable and could not have been foreseen by the pedestrian.

In the second parameter **Environmental impact** I have discussed how the

pedestrian has to adapt to the space that they find themselves in, because the space has been changed by the insertion of ambient advertisement. Whether it is the object or a spectacle, as a result of the ambient advertisement, the pedestrian has to process the change in the environment and adapt using tactics such as orientating themselves within the changed environment.

In the third parameter **Pedestrian Interpretation**, I have discussed how the pedestrian uses tactics to employ a constant state of reassessment and correction and analysis based on their observation of the object or spectacle in the changed environment. The pedestrian will take advantage of the unpredictable changes to the environment employing tactical agility to process, analyze and adapt to the changed environment caused by the interruption of the ambient advertisement.

In conclusion, ambient advertising is contextualized by the space it sits within and therefore space is of significance to my argument. Ambient advertising uses visual tropes to distort space in our towns and cities and creates a multivalent discourse for the pedestrian leading to the potential of interpretation of meaning. This allows the pedestrian to make creative interpretation of the changing spaces or 'non-places,' ones that would have no personality only function, into spaces with multivalent creative interpretation. The pedestrian's individual projection changes the space through creative interpretation. Ambient advertising can have the effect of changing a 'non place' into a 'place'. The three case studies in this thesis show how; a railway terminal, a road and shopping precinct are turned from transient spaces, where the pedestrian would normally pass through on their way to another destination, into a place where the pedestrian becomes engaged with an object or spectacle, where they are encouraged to enter into a discourse

often with each other and therefore engage in a 'like-minded' exchange with other pedestrians. This is an example of the pedestrian using tactics to interact with the ambient advertisement. Whilst it maybe the strategy of the brand to design an ambient advertisement to bring a persuasive message to its audience (the pedestrian), tactics are employed by the pedestrian to analyze, orientate, interpret and manoeuvre their way through the interruption. Although tactics are usually used in a military scenario to achieve the goal of strategy, it could be argued that the brand is aware of both strategy and tactics and includes the pedestrian and their part played in the message that is to be conveyed through the ambient advertisement.

## **What is Ambient Advertising?**

Ambient advertising strategies aim to highlight the unusual in the usual, the unexpected in the expected. Ambient advertising includes strategies through which pedestrians encounter enigmatic installations of various kinds within the public spaces of towns and cities. It could be described as the 'Brand' displaying its ethos in three-dimensional form by using material strategies to engender curiosity, wit and likability to entice us. It is a non-traditional method of creating an advertising campaign. It is designed to disrupt, intrigue, entertain and become memorable. It exists outside the normal rules of engagement of traditional advertising such as poster, television, radio and press, which are struggling to find a voice amongst the thousands of brand messages that fight for the attention of consumers as discussed by G.Lucas and M. Dorrian in their book *Guerrilla Advertising*:

Opportunities in the classical media are becoming more and more challenged for a number of reasons. First, there is the cost issue. Second fragmentations of the media; and third, related to that, the growth of new technology. (Lucas, 2006:19).

Examples of this form of advertising are usually witnessed by a relatively small amount of people in relation to mass media and traditional media terms. The ambient event then relies on the public, to share the event through social networking sites in a viral interaction that is carried out by using mobile phones and other hand-held devices to upload images onto the internet. This action increases the number of viewings of the ambient advertisement experientially. In this way 'the brand' pulls the consumer towards itself by an engagement of free will thus creating an atmosphere of inclusivity and belonging. Ambient advertising is attention-seeking, creative, risky and encourages its audience to be a part of the message. It is important to note that ambient advertising does not sit under the umbrella of traditional 'out-of-home'<sup>1</sup> advertising. That consists of many different media including; billboard, bus and taxi advertising, such media space is on a physically constructed and framed area. For example the billboard company JCDecaux supply rate card prices for billboard sites around the UK and Europe. They are based on the size of advertisement that can be; 96 sheet, 48 sheet, 6 sheet or 4 sheet. There are billboard sites that are called *Spectacular* that are three- dimensional and some are back-lit and illuminated from the front. The rate card cost also is based on the length of time that the advertisement appears on the billboard and the cost becomes higher for prime locations that have a higher pedestrian foot-fall or vehicle flow-through for example in the centre of major cities. Advertising space companies also hold details of the demographic for each of the sites that they own and this information is analysed to obtain the best

media spend and coverage for a brand that is advertising its product using this traditional media. This formula works in the same way for television advertising where channels use marketing intelligence to understand the demographic and audience numbers of specific programmes. This category of traditional broadcast advertising is classified as above-the-line as it is usually bought through a media company or media department of an advertising agency that negotiate a commission on the total cost of the advertising space.

T.R. Nevett argues in his book on *Advertising in Britain A History* that the uses of the methods of ambient advertising were used in ancient times:

Outdoor advertising has probably existed since the days of cave dwellers. Both Egyptians and Greeks used it as early as 5,000 years ago. (Belch, 2004:443). The first incidence of ambient advertising can be traced back to ancient Greece when prostitutes placed nails in the soles of their sandals to spell out the words 'follow me' in the sand. (Nevett, 1982:3)

Here Nevett discusses the concept of ambient advertising being used to sell a service in ancient Greece. This tells us that ambient advertising is not a new concept. It is also an interesting observation that this form of advertising was being used in an outdoor environment using the physical elements such as sand and nails that were the materials at hand. Contemporary ambient advertising mirrors this, in terms of using the environmental space and objects to help create the message. It appears that the ancient Greeks were also good at using intrigue to grab the attention of the potential customer. Brands use ambient advertising as part of the 'marketing mix'<sup>2</sup> and it is also used by Creative Directors in advertising agencies as part of the communication strategy. In 2007 the advertising agency JWT used ambient advertising as part of the brand communication strategy for *De Beers*. In preparation for Valentine's Day in Grand Central Station, New York,

they installed a display of red roses that spelled out the words *A Diamond is Forever*. (See Figure 14). Over the two weeks that followed the roses slowly died (See Figure 17), leaving the commuters to watch the petals fall to the floor and to work out the advertising message: that the roses were a symbol for 'love' and that if you give roses as a token of love they will die. But a diamond lasts forever therefore the love symbolised by diamonds also lasts forever. This campaign resulted in a 40% increase in foot-fall in the station over the two-week period and the brand also obtained over \$2.5 million in free media in terms of press and viewers watching online. The message carried in ambient advertising such as this is not obvious in an instant, it takes a while for the viewer to process the message, but once unravelled, the viewer is then rewarded by the fact that they 'get it'. They have interpreted the semiotic meaning correctly. Of course, what has occurred in the process is complex, it relies on the analysis of several multivalent perspectives by the viewer in terms of: an understanding of metaphor and symbolism, emotional impact, memory, entertainment, likeability, social proof. Also, it requires knowledge that being part of a western culture allows us to understand that roses are a gift of love on a particular day of the year and that diamonds are a gift of love and a metaphor for commitment and security.

As Naomi Klein who argues from an anti-capitalist standpoint, states in her book *No Logo* a glimpse into the future sees 'the brand' reaching further than our city spaces to advertise its products. Ambient advertising appears to have no restriction on physical space. It appears on streets, drawn onto the pavements, in the air as large blimps, as images projected on the sides of buildings, painted or printed onto people and animals and possibly as images projected onto the moon:

...As ads for Batman movies projected on sidewalks or into the night sky...and in 1998 NASA announced plans to solicit ads on its space stations. The soft drink *Pepsi's* marketing company's on-going threat to project its logo onto the moon's surface hasn't yet materialised, but *Mattel* did paint an entire street in Salford, England, "a shrieking bright bubble-gum hue" of pink-houses, porches, trees, road, sidewalk dogs and cars were all accessories in the televised celebrations of Barbie Pink Month. (Klein, 2001:12).

The example of Pepsi's plan for the moon shows there is no space that can't be negotiated, as Peter Moreville states in his book *Ambient Findability*, "Everyday objects and nature itself are becoming channels for push media." (Moreville, 2005:98).

Advertising, as all forms of visual communication, can be decoded into a series of signs that are contained within the frame of the message. This is clearly defined in the case of a billboard that is surrounded by a frame. The vertical and horizontal lines of the frame hold the advertisement subject in a fixed position. The proportions are a fixed size and format; 96 sheet, 48 sheet, 6 sheet, and 4 sheet posters. The frame has a trademark or logotype place at its base, identifying the owner of the advertising space. The image is mostly photographic and contained within the frame. Words are used to convey part of the persuasive message. These signs denote that 'this is an advertisement', the resultant connotation for the viewer is that this is a message intended to persuade. (See Figure 1).

In the case of ambient advertising, decoding the signs within an advertisement is more complicated. The viewer may struggle to find the obvious signifiers to allow immediate interpretation. This is not the case of the *Pepsi Max* ambient

advertisement that is more immediate as the brand name is positioned on the side of the London bus. (See Figure 26).

For the advertiser the choice of visual object, location and demographic of the audience is vital in instigating a positive reaction to the intended meaning of the message. As discussed later the pedestrian can become a signifier in the process of communication; as he or she becomes a conduit for the advertising message on behalf of the advertiser, unaware that they are part of the persuasive message. (See Figure 2). The viewer does this firstly by interacting physically with the message; by using their senses to see, touch, feel and in some cases smell the communication. Their behavior is noticed by others and draws attention to the advertisement. The viewer may look around and draw other viewers into a conversation. They may take photographs and pose next to the communication, as shown in the photograph of the John Lewis Ambient Advertising Campaign (See Figure 36).

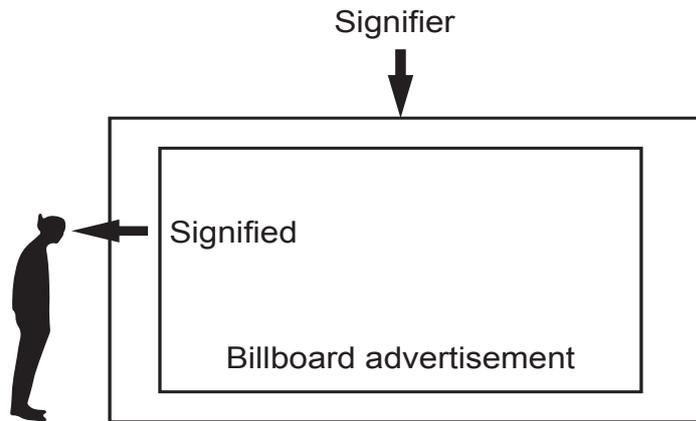


Figure 1 Traditional Billboard Advertising Diagram

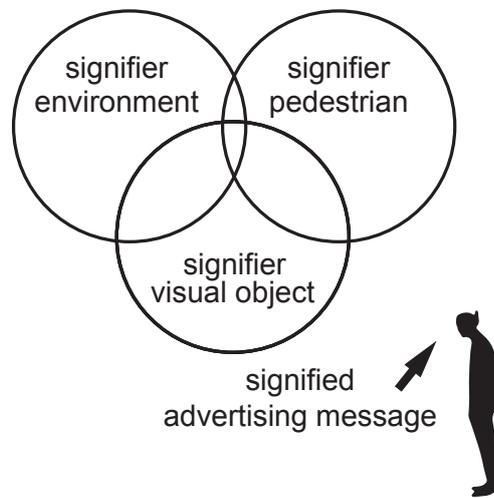


Figure 2 Ambient Advertising Diagram



Figure 3 Billboard Advertisement



Figure 4 John Lewis Ambient Advertisement

Our city landscape is full of 'street furniture'<sup>3</sup>; such as lamp posts, billboards, shop signs, bus stops, together with vehicles, all adorned with persuasive

advertising messages. In (Figure 3), we can see a typical 48 sheet billboard advertisement. This billboard is placed on the side of the road at a roundabout where it is passed by traffic and many pedestrians throughout the day. In (Figure 4), we can see the giant handbag that was part of the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement campaign. The oversized object is placed on the ground in the centre of a public shopping precinct where hundreds of pedestrians pass by and interact with it. As Mooney states in her book *The Open Brand*:

These messages are part of what is termed by advertising professionals a 'Push' advertising strategy. 'Push' meaning that advertising messages are pushed onto the viewer, as opposed to 'Pull' advertising, that is usually found in the palm of our hands in the form of a multi-platform communication device, more commonly known as a mobile phone. (Mooney, 2008: 46)

The push and pull strategies are traditionally known as conventional routes of advertising communication and are 'understood' as advertising messages by the pedestrian. It is the 'Brand' that is driving these advertising messages. Brands are constantly being challenged to attract the attention of their target audience, indeed it is their primary task to do so, to stand out, to differentiate in order to increase and sustain loyalty. Brands need to find new and exciting ways to draw attention to their advertising message. Belch states that:

Advertising sits within the 'Marketing Mix'. 'Marketing facilitates the exchange process and the development of relationships by carefully examining the needs, offering it at a certain price, making it available through a particular place of channel of distribution, and developing a programme of promotion place (distribution), and promotion-are all elements of the marketing mix. (Belch, 2004:8).

Here Belch is describing the 'marketing mix' often called the 4p's in marketing terms. Advertising is the 'Promotional' part of the 'marketing mix'. The promotion

represents how the brand or advertising message is communicated to the selected target audience often using a number of media platforms or touch points. Ambient advertising can be used as one of the touch points and is most likely to be used as part of an integrated advertising campaign that will use several media platforms that could include; TV, cinema, radio, direct mail, poster, digital and social media.

UK shopping malls and city streets are crammed with advertising messages. Global brands are but a few calling out for consumer attention. They use traditional advertising media, but are they successful at making the consumer retain or recall the message at point of purchase which is usually a store or online? In our cities we walk through the gallery of brand messages, which can be in the form of graphical visual imagery, audio and aromatic. All our senses are triggered by these brands. They invade our space as we go through the purchasing process first analysed by St Elmo Lewis as; Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (AIDA). (Doyle,2003:63) This is one of many models that analyse and measure the customer's journey from ignorance to purchase. The AIDA model is simple, which partly explains its longevity and widespread use. (Doyle, 2003:63) Although this model was originally designed for a mass market in a time when hand-held digital technology and more target specific advertising strategies did not exist, we can see below how its principles can still apply to ambient advertising today.

### **The principle of AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)**

AIDA was a model first published in the book *The Psychology of Selling and Advertising* by Edward K Strong in 1925. This model was developed by Elias St

Elmo Lewis and it is a model that has been universally praised and is used today in almost every advertisement or television commercial. The principles can be in ambient advertising. For example;

**Attention:** Attention is usually grabbed by the use of image, color, layout, typography, size, celebrity, model etc

In all three case studies discussed in this thesis the ambient advertisement is designed to attract attention. For example; the use of large scale words created in roses set in *Grand Central Terminal* as part of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, the *Pepsi Max* stunt featuring the magician *Dynamo* as he appears to levitate alongside the iconic London bus travelling across Westminster Bridge in London or the oversized purple handbag used by *John Lewis* to attract attention of the pedestrian in a shopping precinct in Cardiff.

**Interest:** Once attention is grabbed, it's necessary to create interest in the viewers' mind so that they will read more about the brand being advertised. In magazine advertising this is usually achieved through the use of a sub heading or through voice-over in TV, but in ambient advertising it is more likely to be as a result of other peoples' interaction and conversation or even the location that the ambient advertisement sits within. The pedestrians' interest is fuelled by curiosity created by the ambient advertisement.

**Desire:** The element of desire is usually created by the use of body copy normally this includes the details about the benefits of buying the brand or product, this could include features of the brand or specific facts and figures. In the ambient advertisement this is more likely to be an underlying human need to satisfy their

curiosity in what the ambient advertisement is trying to communicate. This is not always obvious in an ambient advertisement.

**Action:** Usually refers to point of purchase information for example a store or online website, the contact information of the brand will be given where they expects the viewers to take action immediately. In the ambient advertisement this is not obvious. As in all three case studies there is no email address or incentive or coupon apparent but it is driven by the 'attention, interest and desire driven by the ambient advertisement. I believe that it is the hope of the brand to create a memorable ambient advertisement that will filter into the unconscious of the viewer to be recalled at a later date when they receive further information through email, social media, even traditional media and point of purchase.

AIDA is discussed within the thesis and is relevant to ambient advertising, for example it could be the ambient advertisement that is used to first attract 'attention,' and drive 'interest' as part of an integrated advertising campaign, that is then supported by a social media campaign that drives 'desire' and a CRM (email) campaign that drives the 'action'. AIDA could be considered more of a creative strategy to build a campaign than a way to measure effectiveness.

As Klein describes in her book *No Logo* most of the time we become oblivious to these brand messages as they fight against each other for our attention in the hope of selling us a product or service:

'... These companies are forever on the prowl for creative new ways to build and strengthen their brand image...it requires an endless parade of brand extensions, continuously renewed imagery for marketing and, most of all, fresh new spaces to disseminate the brand's idea of itself.' (Klien, 2001: 5).

I believe that it is this need to discover new fresh spaces that has inspired ambient advertising. It is clear that traditional advertising is losing its voice and that as a result the 'brand' needs to find new ways to attract attention. New audiences expect to be entertained and engaged by the 'brand' as it has to relate to their needs. Audiences are technologically literate and as a result the 'brand' needs to find new ways to communicate with them. Ambient advertising reaches the emotions of the consumer; it has to in order to be memorable. Peggy Kreshel author of *Media Ethics Cases and Moral Reasoning*, understood this concept when in 1984 she developed her emotional model to examine the influences of emotion on buying behaviour. A number of previous models had ignored emotion as a factor in consumer response. She suggested that cognition could alter affect, in other words it is impossible to separate our emotional connections to a stimulus from the stimulus itself.

My research will demonstrate how the brand uses ambient advertising to reach its audience with an advertising message. It does this; visually, physically and emotionally. To be effective ambient advertising it needs to employ three parameters; **Visual Impact, Environmental Impact, Pedestrian Interpretation** to effectively create the advertising message.

## **Difference between Ambient and Guerilla Advertising**

Both ambient and guerilla advertising are non-traditional forms of advertising that sit under the umbrella of ambient media. There is a subtlety between the two forms of media and it is difficult to sometimes distinguish between them.

Both ambient and guerilla advertising provide brands with an alternative to traditional and often more expensive forms of paid 'Out of Home' media for example, billboards. Some of the earlier examples of ambient media included beer mats and petrol pump advertising. These earlier forms have become commonplace and no longer hold the 'surprise' that they originally had. The strength of ambient and guerilla advertising is their ability to take a pedestrian by surprise when they least expect it. It can be placed indoor or outdoor and is usually be located in the environment of the pedestrian. I would argue that one of the differences between ambient and guerilla advertising is that ambient advertising creates an impact that can be so striking that it changes the environment and gets the viewer to think differently. I would argue that guerilla advertising tends to use tactics that are less obvious and less spectacular for example fly posters and stickers but can also include publicity grabbing stunts that can be less obvious, I would say that the emergence of the 'flash mob' sits within this area. Both guerilla and ambient advertising encourages the communication of the advertising message from person to person in that way they are alike.

I would argue that ambient advertising tends to use scale more that guerilla advertising does by using hyperbole and making objects abnormally large to attract attention. Ambient advertising is set within an environment that is seen by

the viewer, as is guerilla. But as guerilla becomes part of an environment, ambient can often take space out of an environment often by its sheer size and interruption. I discuss this in more detail within the case studies. Guerilla tends to sit within the environment and is less easy to recognize as a 'spectacle'. Ambient on the other hand, is difficult to miss and attracts attention in a very obvious way. Usually, there is a high level of construction put into an ambient advertisement, whereas guerilla advertising can use simple reproduction techniques. For example, fly posters and stickers, items you would expect to see in an urban environment on a lamppost or pavement and therefore the message is often hidden or disguised as part of the environment. Guerilla advertising often ambushes a pedestrian rather than surprise the pedestrian.

If we look at the (Figures 5,6,7,8,) below it is possible to visually appreciate the difference between guerilla and ambient advertising. (Figures 5 and 6) is a guerilla campaign that took place in the Victorian seaside resort of Penarth, South Wales, on St Valentine's Day, February 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. For pedestrians walking along the pier it seemed that a balloon had been left tied to the railing. On closer inspection, it is possible to see that the balloon had a message tied to it that read '*My love is all you need, Jesus*'. This was a guerilla campaign executed by the *All Nations Church*. The campaign was subtle and could have been completely overlooked. On the other hand, the image of the 'Ball in the Wall' campaign seen in (Figures 7 and 8) for the 2015 Rugby World Cup is anything but subtle. This ball appeared overnight in the wall of Cardiff Castle in the city of Cardiff in 2015. It appeared to be stuck in the wall as if it had been kicked from the *Principality Stadium*. This ambient advertisement certainly grabbed attention as pedestrians stopped in their tracks to look at it and take photographs as we can see in (Figure

8). It certainly caught the imagination of the public and the local and national press and caused huge media attention throughout the world creating free publicity for the event.

It could be that the future of ambient and guerilla advertising is likely to move toward the use of new technology for example, augmented and virtual reality as the pedestrian carries with them, hand-held digital devices. It is possible to project images onto the real time environment that engage the pedestrian. For example the *Lynx* augmented reality campaign that saw angels fall from the sky onto commuters as they passed through London's Victoria station in March of 2011. Through the use of apps, such as *Blippar* or *Aurasma*, brands can engage with their consumers, but this technology does involve the pedestrian being part of "the surprise" as they would need to download the technology to their devices and then make a conscious decision to engage with the message. For example the *Pokemon Go* App technology allows the player to see images in their environment in real time where ever they are. I believe ambient advertising will always have its place, as it is dramatic and unconventional and interrupts the monotony of the street environment. It has the ability to create memorable and likeable feelings by the viewer who can then choose to transfer images in real time through digital platforms. Therefore, I believe it will continue to be used as an effective advertising media that can be used as part of an integrated advertising campaign.



Figure 5 All Nations Church Campaign (Angela Williams, 2011)



Figure 6 Close up All Nations Church Campaign (Angela Williams, 2011)



Figure 7 Ball in the Wall Campaign 2015 (Angela Williams, 2015)



Figure 8 Ball in the Wall Campaign 2015 (Angela Williams, 2015)

## **Why did I want to research ambient advertising?**

I was intrigued by Nevett's *Advertising in Britain A History* (1982) where he states that prostitutes had made marks in the sand with nails in the sole of their shoe spelling out 'follow me'. This appeared to me to be an anachronism, as I felt this was an example of the ancient Greeks using modern day advertising techniques, that of ambient advertising. As this appeared to me to be the one of first examples of ambient advertising, the idea of an advertising message being created in dirt in a public place for other pedestrians to interpret was a form of visual communication associated with modern day techniques. It was reading this passage in Nevett's book that led me to start my research into ambient advertising and how and why it is used to create an effective advertising message. Current authors writing about ambient advertising talk about it being a new form of advertising and yet here we read about the use of intrigue, disruption and engagement 2,000 years ago. By using a message stencilled in the sand makes the message a personal discovery, in the same way as a treasure map is exciting. The finder is enticed and their curiosity leads them to discover more. As you will read in my research this is the way that current ambient advertising works.

Another reason that I wanted to research ambient advertising is that ambient advertising is the most creative and entertaining form of commercial persuasion for the reasons discussed below. It uses well-crafted and spectacular pieces of artwork and performance that will be discussed in detail in my three case studies, *De Beers, Pepsi Max and John Lewis*. Ambient advertising uses visual tropes such as hyperbole and metaphor to attract attention and draw in the pedestrian as discussed in all three case studies. Ambient advertising needs to be

entertaining to capture and sustain the attention of the pedestrian. When we first notice the performance or artefact we are taken through a number of emotions; intrigued, troubled but desperate to decode the message, which is encoded. As humans we have a need to problem solve and therefore in advertising, as spectators we are rewarded once 'we get it' by a feeling of satisfaction, the 'ah hah' moment. Ambient advertising also performs another function in that the participant is intrigued, surprised and even shocked by the engagement: It is as if the rules of the open space, as they know it has changed. It performs the function of entertaining the participant, the perceived boredom and monotony of everyday living has been opened up, giving new scope to the participants' familiar world, thus creating new possibilities of how to view the world. In his book *Ways of Seeing* (1972) John Berger argues that advertising is about future ideology, about the possibilities of a better life 'Often they refer to the past and always speak of the future.' (Berger, 1972:130).

This concept is demonstrated in the proposition "Power of Dreams" as used by *Honda* in their advertising campaigns. Through the use of this proposition the *Honda* brand alludes to the future possibilities. As dreams are uncensored and have no limits this concept is then associated with the *Honda* brand. In 2008 *Orange* used the slogan "*The future's bright - the future's Orange*", as the proposition for their advertising campaign. By the use of the words 'future' and 'bright' positive connotations were created for consumers looking to buy new mobile phone technology. In both these cases words are used as verbal signs to signify meaning. Judith Williamson talks about her interest in decoding advertisements in terms of referent systems, she states that 'I couldn't reconcile

what I knew with what I felt. This is the root of ideology, I believe. I knew I was being exploited, but in fact I was attracted'. (Williamson, 1978:9).

Here Williamson is stating how she is drawn to an advertisement through its visual persuasion even though she is aware that what she is looking at is an advertisement that is trying to persuade her about an ideology. The participant in ambient advertising also engages with this future ideology even when they may not recognise the ambient advertisement at first, as an advertisement. Once they decode the advertising message and the sign/s is interpreted and the advertising message revealed, the connotations of the brand become apparent for example status and belonging. The pedestrian does this through recognition of the brand and what that brand represents in terms of its tangible and intangible values. For example, *Marks and Spencer* may have the emotional value of quality, substance and longevity these values are based on what we know about the brand *Marks and Spencer*. Of course brands are vulnerable and their values can change when social or economic events change the perception of the brand. An example of this would be *Burberry*. It is well documented how the perception of this 'high end' brand changed once it was adopted by the 'chav' culture in the UK as referenced in the documentary *Secret of the Superbrands (Fashion)* (BBC 3, 2013.)

Burberry, the luxury goods group, has seen a sharp decline in UK sales due to the popularity of its trademark camel check among so-called 'chavs', a pejorative term for a low-income social group obsessed with brand names, cheap jewellery and football. (The Telegraph, 2004).

This shows how brands are vulnerable to the social environment. What is central to a brand's social engagement is its relationship to an individual. Ambient

advertising has to strike an emotional chord with the participant in order to be effective. It may surprise, shock, amuse or sadden. Erick Du Plessis argues:

...emotion plays a critical role in guiding instinctive reaction to events happening around us'...the more intense the emotional charge of associated memories, the more attention we pay. If the charge is positive, it is likely we will feel attracted to what is happening. If it is negative, we will feel repelled...advertising works by establishing feelings associations and memories in relation to a brand." (Du Plessis, 2008:xiii)

What Du Plessis is arguing here is that we are more likely to remember an advertisement that gives us a positive experience, as we are attracted to it and therefore it is more likely to be memorable. For example, each year *John Lewis* broadcast their Christmas advertisement that heavily relies on a positive emotional response from its audience. The *John Lewis* advertisement is eagerly awaited each year. It is broadcast on television as well as shared through media-sharing sites globally. This is another reason for my investigation. Ambient advertising can be a global phenomenon. Therefore, messages have to be conveyed across cultures.

Ambient advertising invades our space and disrupts us from our daily business, whether it's walking, eating, shopping or travelling to and from work. That is in our normal everyday activities. Ambient advertising disrupts the usual pattern, therefore having an effect on the pedestrian and in turn allowing the pedestrian to become part of the disruption which is required as part of the brand message. In Tokyo in 2003, passers-by found themselves looking at two men playing a giant game of football whilst suspended above the ground, harnessed to a giant billboard which was "impossible to ignore" (Lucas, 2006:104-15). Traffic came to a standstill and people stopped to take photographs. This stunt caught the eye of

*The Wall Street Journal* as well as local and national press (See Figure 9). It was a creative idea that disrupted the daily life of the viewer, demonstrating how ambient advertising is a powerful communication tool. My investigation will go on to demonstrate how ambient advertising is used to persuade and influence the behaviour of the viewer.



Figure 9 (The Wall Street Journal, 2003)

## **HYPOTHESIS**

**To what extent does the Visual Impact, Environmental Impact and Pedestrian Interpretation, create an effective advertising message?**

This research is an investigation into the ambient advertising that is placed in spaces in our towns and cities. The theoretical framework is that of an interpretive investigation based on intertextual connection between; the object/artifact/performance, the environment and the pedestrian. My research will demonstrate how these three parameters overlap to form the effective advertising message. It is a constructivist and participatory approach. I am using three case studies *De Beers*, *John Lewis* and *Pepsi Max* to investigate how the ambient advertising campaign is constructed. I will be using the theories of semiotics, social theories and visual communication theories to triangulate my investigation and reach my conclusion. These will be discussed in detail in the next section.

In this thesis I am making my interpretative analysis of ambient advertising through the use of three specific parameters. They are as follows:

**Visual Impact** refers to the visual focal point of the ambient advertisement. It is primarily the object itself. This could be a piece of artwork, installation or performance. In the case studies I have used in this research, it refers to the *De Beers* Roses installation at Grand Central Terminal, New York. In the *John Lewis* case study, it refers to the giant handbag. In the *Pepsi Max* case study it refers to the performance given by the magician, Dynamo.

**Environmental Impact** refers to the effect of the architectural surroundings. In the *De Beers* case study, this is the impact created by the environment of building that is the Grand Central Terminal. In the *John Lewis* case study, this refers to the

city centre of Cardiff and the *Pepsi Max* case study, refers to the environment of the City of London as the ambient advertisement physically moves through its journey across central London.

**Pedestrian Interpretation** refers to the way that the pedestrian interacts with the ambient advertisement and how they respond and interpret the visual tropes and signs to form an understanding of the advertising message.

In my conclusion, I argue that when the three parameters are combined together they are perceived as the whole message.

## **THEORISTS**

In this section I give a brief overview of the theories of the authors above. I will be discussing their theories in greater detail throughout my case studies.

### **Group 1 Primary**

The primary theorists I have chosen to support my argument are from the fields of semiotics. By considering language and visual language I hope to form a discourse around the ambient advertisement through three case studies. Both theorists are structuralists; Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) deals with how language can be open to interpretation. Saussure is important in my thesis as one aspect considered is about how language can be interpreted by the consumer in an ambient context. Michael O'Toole (2011), a semiotician whose *Three Functional Model* explores how people interpret three dimensional objects in terms of Compositional, Representational and Modal helps us to interpret the ambient advertisement's visual and mood of the ambient advertising message.

### **Group 2 Secondary**

The Secondary theorists that I reference to support my argument are semioticians, social theorists and practitioners working in the field of advertising and marketing. These include; Roland Barthes (1964), whose work on Denotation and Connotation provides a theory of how people interpret visual signs. Erik Du Plessis (2008), whose *Cupboard Theory* on how the brain stores positive memories helps us to understand why creating an ambient advertisement that creates positive memories is relevant to its success and the work of the Laura Oswald (2012) whose company applies semiotics to marketing practice

works with brands using semiotic theory to develop successful advertising campaigns that are relevant in today's consumer society. Marc Augé (1995) is a French Anthropologist who explores the theory of "non place" to refer to anthropological spaces of transience. Michel de Certeau in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* outlines the distinction between strategies and tactics used in everyday life by people as they negotiate everyday tasks such as walking and dwelling.

## **Group 1**

### **Ferdinand de Saussure**

As a structuralist Saussure deals with how language can be open to interpretation. Saussure is important in my thesis as the one aspect is about how language can be interpreted by the consumer in an ambient context. The Swiss born semiotician and founder of modern linguistics discusses in his 1916 book *Course in General Linguistics* the fundamental issues about the nature of language and the methodology of linguistics. Saussure developed ideas about language that were related to the open interpretation of linguistic signs. He was key in the role of binary analysis in the production and interpretation of meaning. Semiotics is particularly key to understanding the work of design and advertising that sits within the marketing mix:

The dialectical foundations of structural semiotics have particular and urgent implications for marketing semiotics, because they account for the ways codes articulate the world of noise and chaos systems of relationships characterized by distinction and difference, For instance, the binary distinction between brands form the basis of positioning strategy, persuasion and consumer choice in the market place. (Oswald, 2012: 8).

Here Laura Oswald, who runs her marketing business, *Marketing Semiotics* explains the importance of the use of semiotics in positioning a brand. Semiotics is used to differentiate a set of brand values and to attract a particular target market. In terms of brand design for instance, this can be achieved through colour selection, typographic style, and illustration of art direction of photography.

Saussure viewed semiotics as a part of social psychology. He argued that language was a series of codes that contained meanings rather than relationships between sign and its referent in the real world. This argument was grounded in the roots of culture and cognition. He emphasized that language is made up of signs and the codes that organise signs in discourse. Saussure drew attention to the role of codes in the production of meaning as culturally constructed, not of nature. Saussure suggests that the link between the signifier and signified is arbitrary. (See Figure 10)

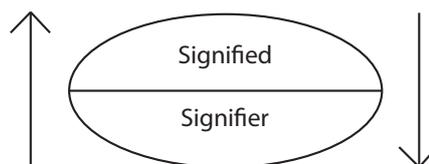


Figure 10 Saussure Model of Sign



Figure 11 Manhattan (The New York Times,2002)

Semiotics is a theory that could be applied to ambient advertising as quite often the ambient advertisement employs a form of interpretation that is arbitrary which means it is open to interpretation. For example, in 2002 Microsoft used 16,000 butterfly stickers that appeared on buildings and signs throughout Manhattan, New York City, to launch a new product, MSN 8.0. (See Figure 11). The multivalent representation of the butterfly in Microsoft evokes ideas relating to exploration and transformation which are the hallmarks of creativity that is a central part of Microsoft's ambient message. Ambient Advertising relies on the arbitrary multivalency of imagery. It creates signs that signify meaning in the mind of the viewer. The use of semiotics in ambient advertising can be a powerful tool. It can be used cross-culturally once the advertiser understands the main drivers needed to create the signified, it is possible that the ambient message, can engage with and influence the mind of the consumer to support the concept of the brand message in a positive attitude. As I discussed earlier, positive experience is likely to be more memorable and therefore recalled at the point of purchase whether that be in a store or online. Saussure's theory is based on culture and signification as codes to create our reality in terms of our understanding of meaning and reality. Advertising plays on ideas relating to myth and ideology. Our cultural understanding wants, needs and desire may be focused on the myth of

for example a better future, being a good parent, having a beautiful home. Brands aim to tap into the myth. An understanding of the semiotic process can give brands the tools to find out the ideology of the target market they wish to attract. But a myth is not truth it is only an idea or concept. A myth is a signifier. The advertising of products has always considered the mythic value of its campaign ideas. In his book *Adland A Global History Of Advertising* (2008) Mark Tungate states that:

In 1954 Leo Burnett created the Marlboro Man for Philip Morris. The myth of the independent freedom-loving American this also ties in Steinbeck's *American Dream*. It relies on the concept that if you worked hard, freedom and wealth can be yours. In terms of Saussure's binary theory of Signifier and Signified, the Marlboro Man is the Signifier of the cultural myth created in the mind of the consumer. Signified is the concept of freedom and independence. (Tungate, 2008:73).

The use of the signifier and signified is a powerful tool used in advertising as Tungate notes here, it is useful in perpetuating myths. As shown in the use of the butterfly metaphor in the 2002 *MSN 8.0* ambient campaign the butterfly is used as a signifier that there is a birth of a new Microsoft product and that will cascade like a swarm through the city. What is signified here, is the brand ethos. In the same way the *Marlboro Men* advertising campaign (See Figure 12) uses the signifier of a cultural myth to create a bold and powerful message that signifies the concept of freedom and independence.

You get  
a lot  
to like

- filter
- flavor
- flip-top box

# Marlboro

THE FILTER CIGARETTE IN THE FLIP-TOP BOX

**NEW FLIP-TOP BOX**  
Firm to keep cigarettes from crushing. No tobacco in your pocket.

POPULAR FILTER PRICE

(MADE IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, FROM A NEW MARLBORO RECIPE)

This Marlboro is a lot of cigarette. The easy-drawing filter feels right in your mouth. It works but doesn't get in the way. You get the man-size flavor of honest tobacco. The Flip-Top Box keeps every cigarette in good shape and you don't pay extra for it.

Figure 12 Marlboro Men Campaign 1958 (Stanford School of Medicine, 2016)

## Michael O'Toole

In his book *The Language of Displayed Art*, influenced by the English Linguist, Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory, O'Toole discusses his semiotic model, which he applied to the visual arts. His semiotic model adapts Halliday's three functions of communication: Representational, Modal and Compositional:

Functional Semiotics assumes that every piece of communication has three main functions: 1) to engage our attention and interest, 2) to convey some information about reality, and 3) to structure these into a coherent textual form. (O'Toole, 2011: 5).

The functional model forms the basic strategy of discourse through engaging the interest of the viewer and providing information in a structured format. In other words, it is a model that helps the viewer enter into a discourse about the painting or sculpture without having prior knowledge about the work of art. The Modal function helps us discuss how a work of art engages our attention, thoughts and emotions, how we relate to the picture and how the picture relates to us. O'Toole argues that our interpretation may differ but he claims that the responses evoked are 'virtually universal' (O'Toole, 2011: 5). The Representational Function actually depicts what is happening in the painting or sculpture. O'Toole suggests that the viewer should work through a painting or sculpture by 'Episode' building to finally discussing the whole work last. O'Toole goes on to say:

There is no hard and fast rule about this; the virtue of the chart we are constructing is that you can start your exploration or description absolutely anywhere in the "box", and move from rank to rank and function to function as particular features strike you. (O'Toole, 2011:14).

The Representational function serves to portray figures, actions and scenes, that constitute communicable content. The Compositional function relates to the arrangement of forms within the pictorial space, about line and rhythm and colour relationships:

Certain decisions about the arrangements of forms within the pictorial space, about line and rhythm and colour relationships, have been made by the artist in order to convey more effectively and more memorably the represented subject and to make for a more dynamic modal relation with the viewer. (O'Toole, 2011: 22).

The compositional function relates to the interplay of formal elements that allow the work to operate as a coherent text. Michael O'Toole's approach as demonstrated in his book *The Language of Displayed Art*, allows us to discuss the meaning that is derived from and integrated use of signs.

## **Group 2**

### **Marc Augé**

Many of the studies of Marc Augé were applied to the movement of people and the exploration of globalization. His contributions considered the philosophical potential of an anthropology of "non-places" (a phrase he coined) like airports, motorways and supermarkets, that are characterized by constant transition and temporality. His ideas are discussed in his book *Non places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* published in 1995. Augé uses the concept of 'supermodernity' to describe the logic of late capitalist phenomena. Augé argues that we are in transit through "non-place" for more and more of our time and this is a new form of solitude. The concept of "non places" is a theory I have explored

in this thesis as it is a concept that could be applied to the geographical location that the three cases studies, *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis* are set within. As each is space is regarded as places through which the pedestrian is transient, for example; a railway terminal (*De Beers*), a road (*Pepsi Max*) and shopping precinct (*John Lewis*). The pedestrian space is interrupted by the ambient advertisement that encourages the pedestrian to share social reference with other pedestrians. The concept of space and how it is used and interpreted by the pedestrian is a key consideration in my argument that is set out within the three parameters that I have used to discuss ambient advertising. They are; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation**, each of these parameters allows me to discuss the way the ambient advertisement changes the space it occupies and questions the solitude of the pedestrian as they interact with the ambient advertisement and other pedestrians.

### **Michel de Certeau**

De Certeau's investigations into routine practices such as walking, talking, reading, dwelling, and cooking, were guided by his belief that despite repressive aspects of modern society, there exists an element of creative resistance to these restricted activities carried out by ordinary people. In his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (1984), de Certeau outlines an important critical distinction between strategies and tactics in this battle of repression and expression. According to de Certeau strategies are used by those, he refers to as, “producers” such as organisational power structures, whether they are small or large, such as the state or municipality, the corporation or the proprietor, a scientific enterprise or the scientist. He argues that strategies are the remit of the powerful. Whilst tactics on the other hand, are employed by those who are subjugated, or the

remit of the non-powerful. By their very nature tactics are defensive and opportunistic, used in more limited ways and seized momentarily within spaces, both physical and psychological, produced and governed by more powerful strategic relations. The concept of strategy and tactics is a relevant one to my argument in that the brand uses various strategies when deploying an ambient advertisement whilst it is the pedestrian who uses tactics to negotiate the space that has been changed by the ambient advertisement. By investigating three case studies *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis* and by using the three parameters to discuss each one; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation**, I discuss how the brand uses strategies including; location, visual tropes and the pedestrian themselves to convey brand messages and how the pedestrian develops tactics to negotiates the space, object or spectacle.

### **Roland Barthes**

The French intellectual Roland Barthes, set out his theory of semiotics in *Mythologies* in 1957. It was a new theory where Barthes interrogated the world around him in his structuralist context that has now passed into mainstream. His once fresh insights are now commonplace to the media savvy public. Roland Barthes was one of the first to realise the advantages of the clear intentionality inherent in advertising for elucidating the relations between word and image. In his classic article *Rhetoric of the Image* he stated:

We shall start by making matters considerably easier for ourselves: we shall study only advertising images. Why? Because in advertising, the image's signification is assuredly intentional: it is certain attributes of the product which a priori form the signifieds of the advertising message, and these signifieds must be transmitted as clearly as possible; if the image contains signs, we can be sure that in advertising these

signs are replete, formed with a view to the best possible reading: the advertisement is *frank*, or at least emphatic.

(Barthes, 1986/1964: 22).

In this quote we can see that Barthes discusses the intention of the signifier and explains that in advertising it is important that these signifiers and the signified should be communicated clearly to its audience. The Barthes' system of signification comprises of two planes; Denotation and Connotation. (See Figure 13) Denotation being the surface or literal meaning and connotation being the subjective or emotional association with a word or object. Connotations are the social meaning to what we see. He calls this the 'Myth'. We can have shared 'Myths'. We can take these apart by decoding them. They should not be taken for granted but can be tested by substitution

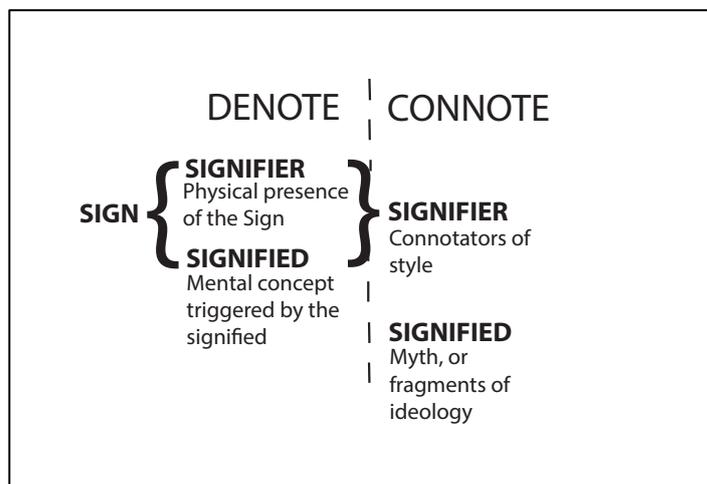


Figure 13 Barthes Model of Denotation and Connotation

Barthes recognises that we can arrive at our own independent insights. The difference between Denotation (what is represented) and Connotation (how it is represented) help us to decode a cultural belief system that a social group

shares. In ambient advertising the visual impact as well as the physical surroundings of the pedestrian all form part of the framing of the sign that leads to connotation. In his 1964 *Elements of Semiology* Barthes talks about the theory that the signifiers of connotation, which we shall call connotators, are made up of *signs* (signifiers and signified united) of the denoted system. Naturally, several denoted signs can be grouped together to form a single connotation (ambient advertisement) – provided the latter has a single signified connotation; in other words, the units of the connotated system do not necessarily have the same size as those of the denoted system; large fragments of the denoted discourse can constitute a single unit of the connotated system (this is the case, for instance, with the tone of a text, which is made up of numerous words, but which nevertheless refers to a single signified):

While the distinction between literal and figurative language operate at the levels of the signifier, that between denotation and connotation operates at the level of the signified. We all know that beyond its 'literal' meanings (its denotation) , a particular word may have connotations...In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between signifier and its signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signifieds: a *denotative* signified and a *connotative* signified . Meaning includes both denotation and connotation. (Chandler, 2002:137)

Here Barthes theory of semiotics demonstrates that deconstructing tropes, denotations, connotations and myths can be revealing. He also highlights the issues surrounding cultural ideas, when often the dominant culture can be taken for granted when conveying a visual message.

## **Erik Du Plessis**

Erik du Plessis is the Chairman of Millward Brown South Africa and author of the *The Advertised Mind: and Insights into How Our Brains Respond to Advertising*. He specialises in brand and advertising research. Compiling research performed by Du Plessis and Millward Brown, *The Advertised Mind* theorises that the strongest factor in successful marketing is whether an advertisement creates an emotional response in its target audience. Du Plessis bases his conclusions on recent discoveries in neuroscience, particularly the limbic system which suggest that emotion establishes a firm memory of an advertisement and predisposes consumers to buy the brand that is being advertised. Du Plessis also refers to Adtrack's database of responses to over 30,000 TV commercials, and explores how this paradigm shift can maximize return on advertising spend.

In his book *The Advertised Mind*, Du Plessis talks about the importance of memory and the creation of Gestalt<sup>4</sup> interrelated information in the brain:

Both recognition and recall are techniques that dredge memory for traces of awareness of an advertisement or brand, but recognition is direct technique, while recall approaches the memory indirectly. (Du Plessis, 2008:164).

Here Du Plessis discusses the techniques of triggering memory of the brand, through recall and recognition. I have included Du Plessis's theories in my research, as his work on positive memory and cupboard theory, in which he describes the subconscious as an 'overstocked cupboard' (Du Plessis, 2008:xiv). This is a theory that suggests that by stimulating positive associations the brand it helps to ensure that the right feelings, associations and memories of a brand fall out of the cupboard (subconscious) when people think of a brand. Ambient

advertising can create positive memories that maybe recalled at the point of purchase. He considers how likability of an advertising campaign can create an emotional response that in turn creates a behavioral reaction:

Advertising seems such a trivial event in the context of all our potential experience of a brand, but it plays two important roles that make it a powerful marketing tool. First it can create new associations for a brand. In this case, a positive emotional response and repetition will increase likelihood that the new impressions will become established as part of the brand's equity. Second, advertising can help to keep existing brand associations fresh in people's minds, simply by stimulating the automatic referencing process, or, better still, by focusing attention on those associations in a new way. (Du Plessis, 2008: xiv)

Here Du Plessis explains the important role that all advertising plays. By creating new associations for the brand and keeping existing brands at the forefront of peoples' mind. Du Plessis's concept of positive associations is appropriate to include as part of this discourse on ambient advertising as it helps us to understand the relevance of creating positive associations, in order to generate a response by the viewer. His argument related to creating memories that can be recalled at point of purchase is significant.

### **Laura Oswald**

The Chicago based company *Marketing Semiotics* uses a structuralist approach when working with brands to create effective advertising and branding. In her book *Marketing Semiotics*, Oswald states that Structuralism is founded on the assumption of a dialectical organisation of phenomena into binary pairs:

Binary analysis is used by Marketing Semiotics to bring a structured approach to analysis of data. It is used to de clutter a mass of information.

Structuralism is founded on the assumption of a dialectical organization of phenomena into binary pairs. The binary analysis of consumer data, whether a set of advertisements, interviews or cultural texts, provides access to the distinctive features of competitive brands in a category, it sheds light on the underlying value system structuring culture and accounts for the production of cultural myths and archetypes. (Oswald, 2012:11)

What Oswald describes here, in simple terms, is a new pedagogical approach to understanding how consumers make cultural associations with products or brands, in terms of two things. She argues that this method helps the researcher to identify how the consumer positions the product or brand in cognitive terms. For example, a researcher would identify the key benefits tangible and intangible associated with a chocolate bar; these could be tasty and fun. These two categories would then be used to identify distinctive features of the product. This may then lead to further research taking into account various target audience or demographic information, in order to lead to an understanding of product or brand perception through the plotting of binary pairs for example; tradition/trendiness and maturity/youth:

I introduce marketing semiotics, the science of signs and meaning in the marketplace, to the strategic brand management toolbox. (Oswald, 2012:4).

Here Oswald describes how semiotics is used to inform the basic marketing principles of needs, want and demands of the consumer. She argues that the use of binary analysis of culture data provides a window onto the myths and archetypes. I will be investigating both myth and archetype throughout the case studies in this thesis. Therefore, referencing Oswald's theory is relevant to my argument. In her book *Marketing Semiotics*, Oswald argues that semiotics helps

the brand to strengthen its sense of identity. She states that semiotics can be used to bring meaning:

...because it sheds light on the cultural codes that structure the phenomenal world into semantic categories and implicates consumers in the brand world.” She suggests that semiotics should be used in the planning of a marketing campaign in order to influence the consumer and to “to build, strengthen and clarify brand meanings.” She goes on to argue that “Semiotics can be applied systematically to the full spectrum of brand management process, including: research, market segmentation, brand positioning, creative strategy and the design of products, packaging and retail site. (Oswald, 2012:intro).

What Oswald has identified and applies in her Chicago based practice is the relevance of the coding of visual communication to a consumer audience. To be able to create a visual sign that has a meaning to the consumer can have a powerful effect. It can link positive memories, create metaphors in the mind of the consumer that can be recalled at the point of purchase. In her book *Marketing Semiotics* Oswald states that:

Freud also points to the role of the drives to move meanings from one signifier to another within these representations, as in the transfer of meaning from one term to another in metaphors... When applied in the field of marketing, semiotic analysis is an interpretive methodology ...the marketing semiotician seeks the essence of a brand, a product, or a consumer segment that transcends any particular ad campaign, consumer interview, or trip to the store. (Oswald, 2012:26).

Here Oswald is arguing that the whole essence and ethos of a brand can be created through semiotic signs and that the signs created can be powerful enough to create a cognitive impression on the consumer. An example of this would be *Volvo* who hold the concept of ‘safety’ in the mind of the consumer. Or *Hoover* who hold the concept of ‘cleaner’ in the mind of the consumer. Both are powerful brands that have created a set of values about the brand, in the mind of the

consumer. These values have been created over a period of time through symbols created through semiotic signs. I am including Laura Oswald in my Literature Review as a secondary theorist as her work as advertising and marketing professional who applies the theories of *Semiotics* in her business is relevant to my discourse.

## METHODOLOGY

Central to my argument in this thesis is my belief that three parameters; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation** are key to understanding ambient advertising. A significant theme that links each ambient advertisement in this thesis is that each one is set within a transient space. I am using the term transient space as opposed to public space as the space that each ambient advertisement is set in and the nature of the experience for the pedestrian as they move through the space is temporary, it is short-lived and momentary. A public space is often regarded as a space that is communal or owned by the public. To form my central argument I have observed and reflected upon three ambient advertising campaign case studies, they are; *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis*.

In the three case studies that I am discussing in this thesis, the locations used for each ambient advertisement are spaces owned by business or public authorities, they are not spaces that are owned by the pedestrian. As our public spaces become fewer, transient spaces become more evident in our society as the pedestrian occupies them, if only momentarily. I discuss the use of 'place' and 'non place' (Auge, 1995:79) as a theory in further detail in the section *Theoretical framework: Space and Anthropology* in the Introduction to this thesis. The three parameters were adopted because each one identifies characteristics of the pedestrians' experience when they encounter an ambient advertisement.

Discussion of each parameter through an analysis of the three cases studies has given me scope to discuss why these three parameters are key to my central argument. Other parameters such as time and memory are examples of potential

research areas for further development. These are discussed later within this chapter. To some extent they have been considered, for example, within the *De Beers* case study, time is considered as being part of the transience of the ambient advertisement itself as in this case study decaying roses are used to show the period of time that passes in order to convey a metaphorical message. The concept of the flow of time gives a deep philosophical and psychological dimension to our experience of time and in ambient advertising I feel this could be an area extensive enough to warrant additional future research.

Memory is discussed in the thesis in terms of the importance of the creation of positive memories for the pedestrian as argued by *Du Plessis*, in his book *The Advertised Mind: Ground Breaking Insights Into How Our brains Respond To Advertising* (2008) positive memory plays an important part in the cognitive process and brand recall at the point of purchase. According to *Du Plessis* by creating positive associations with a brand forms the basis of creating positive memory for the consumer, this could again form the basis for further research but as this thesis is focusing on how the pedestrian experiences ambient advertising the choice of the three parameters; visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation, support my central argument for my investigation into the creation of a successful ambient advertisement. In summary, the pedestrian's engagement with an ambient advertisement is experiential through the visual object or spectacle that they encounter, the environment or space that the ambient advertisement is placed in and how they individually and as a group engage, react to and share their experience of the ambient advertisement. In future research I would like to focus on the other parameters of time and memory,

as I feel they could form part of an ongoing discourse of ambient advertising as it evolves.

In this thesis I have used a Constructivist paradigm. It is an approach based on the observation of how people learn through what they experience and by reflecting on those experiences. In the thesis I have discussed how the pedestrian experiences ambient advertising through the three parameters. The Constructivist Paradigm grew out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology which is the study of the structures of experience and consciousness, and Wilhelm Dilthey's and other German philosophers' study of interpretive understanding called hermeneutics (Mertens, 2005 :12) citing Eichelberger, (1989), which is the theory and methodology of interpretation. My thesis is an attempt to construct an interpretation of ambient advertising.

Constructivist approaches to research is based on understanding "the world of human experience" (Cohen & Manion, 1994:36), suggesting that "reality is socially constructed " (Mertens, 2005:12). As a constructivist researcher I am relying upon the observation of the object of study (ambient advertising) and interpreting my research through my own knowledge and experience.

"Constructivists do not generally begin with a theory rather they generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings" (Creswell, 2003:9) throughout the research process. In other words they construct an argument from observation. The constructivist researcher is most likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis or combination both qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed methods). Constructivism is a theory based on observation and scientific study about how people learn. It's a paradigm based on the idea that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through

experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. This Constructivist approach to my thesis has allowed me to analyse how the pedestrian experiences ambient advertising and how they might develop multivalent interpretations of the object or performance. This is different to peoples' actual interpretations, as I have not used quantitative research, for which I would have had to interview participants. Below is a description of how I have used this constructivist approach through the three parameters and case studies.

### **How I implemented the constructivist approach.**

Firstly, I selected three ambient advertising case studies from a range of documented ambient advertisements that I put under detailed consideration. (My rationale for my choice of cases studies is detailed in a later section of this chapter). Secondly, I researched each case study from a qualitative standpoint. I did this through access to books, journals, artifacts, online video footage, news articles, brand websites and location visits, where I made documented enquiry through notes and photography. Thirdly, I selected the three parameters; Visual impact, Environmental impact and Pedestrian interpretation and discussed each in terms of; visual semiotic, social behavioral and anthropological theories, to discuss how each parameter effects the impact and success of the ambient advertisement by exploring possible interpretations. These three parameters were chosen for the following reasons;

#### **Visual Impact**

In all three case studies visual impact is how the pedestrian first encounters each ambient advertisement. By analysing visual impact as a parameter, it allowed me to discuss and make possible interpretations of the effect of; the shape, form,

size, line, structure, texture and colour of each ambient advertisement as object or moving spectacle set within a transient space.

### **Environmental Impact**

In all three case studies the ambient advertisements sat within a transient space is used by the pedestrian. Analysing how physical space is used to convey the ambient advertisement message is important to support my argument because I am arguing that it makes a powerful contribution to the overall interpretation of the advertising message. The environment and in particular space and the transformation of that space by the inclusion of the ambient advertisement in all three case studies is central to my argument, as in each case study the environment is changed by the presence of the ambient advertisement. This parameter allowed me to discuss and make multivalent interpretations based on the effect of the physical surroundings in terms of transformation, structure, presence, ambience, light and usage by the pedestrian in each of the ambient advertisements.

### **Pedestrian Interpretation**

In all three case studies each ambient advertisement relies on engagement with the pedestrian. Firstly, by grabbing their attention through the first two parameters. Through the pedestrian interpretation parameter I have been able to discuss possible multivalent interpretation that may be created by the pedestrian through the analysis of visible emotional response, paralanguage, performance, stance, gaze, reaction by the pedestrian when encountering the ambient advertisement.

## **Why I adopted a Structuralist position**

I have adopted a Structuralist approach to explore how ambient advertising uses signs to bring meaning to the underlying ambient advertising message. In uncovering these layers I am investigating the effectiveness of ambient advertising which I will argue impacts on the conscious and unconscious aspects of the pedestrian experience. In my thesis I have endeavored to decode ambient advertising by looking at the relationships of imagery and words and the intertextual links through the three parameters: visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation. By using a Structuralist approach to this investigation it has allowed me to decode the 'signs' that are encountered by the pedestrian as they observe or engage with an ambient advertisement as Structuralism seeks to maintain close connection between the signifier and signified and therefore I hope, by using this approach, to decode the meaning of the ambient advertisement.

Structuralism is a paradigm used in sociology, anthropology and linguistics. It is a methodology that suggests that elements of human culture must be understood in terms of their relationship to a larger, overarching system or structure. It seeks to explain the way in which we can discuss and understand all the things that humans do, think, perceive and feel. Structuralism is derived from Ferdinand Saussure's linguistic model of *Sign* that claims that language is to be seen as a system of signs existing independently from both the mind and physical reality, that they are arbitrary and that by using this methodology it is possible to decode layers of meaning in the world around us that represent the experiences of people and society in order to access truth and object reality. In this thesis I explore the decoding process by examining the multivalent layers of meaning that exist in an

ambient advertising campaign. Those meanings are derived from interpreting relevant cultural codes, that are constructed from human experience, which are inherent within the ambient advertisement. Saussure's concept of Sign is formed by two elements: the Signifier and the Signified. The sound of the word represented as the signifier and the word itself as the signified, together they form the Sign (See diagram 5a). This approach has allowed me to discuss the meaning of the ambient advertisement. I have adapted a Structuralist position in my thesis using reference to the theories of Saussure, whose theories were later expanded into advertising by Roland Barthes. The objective of my thesis is to investigate the effect that the three parameters have on creating the ambient advertising message. By adopting a Structuralist approach to decode ambient advertising I hope to discover how the three parameters effect the ambient advertising message.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Overview**

As discussed in the paragraphs above the aim of my thesis is to discuss the effect of ambient advertising through the three parameters of visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation. Taking a Constructivist approach I have collected qualitative research on three case studies; *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis*. These three case studies became the underpinning that would form the basis of my research.

### **Data collected and method of collection**

Data was collected by using a combination of primary research, in terms of observational and field notes (for the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement) and secondary research extracted from online journals, websites, articles, artifacts and books for all three case studies. Photographs and observations were taken in 'real time' at the location and date of the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement. Other research into the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement included investigation of local press media and online media websites including the *South Wales Echo*, *Western Mail* and *Wales Online*. The *De Beers* and *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisements were analysed retrospectively and sources for this came from online archived photographs, online news articles and videos. One of the problems anticipated in this approach was the inability to carry out primary data on two of the case studies, *De Beers* and *Pepsi Max* so analysis was a reflective process. However, access to factual and visual information about the *De Beers* and the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisements was available online via a number of different sources e.g. *YouTube* and numerous global news sites, allowing my observations to be objective to a certain degree, obviously taking into consideration subjective analysis depending on the stance of news articles at that time.

The *De Beers* video explained the case study from the advertising agency and brand point of view and was published on August 17, 2008. It received over 333,181 views. It set out the objectives of the campaign and suggested how those objectives were achieved by the ambient advertising campaign. A *Pepsi Max* video published on June 24, 2013 that received 6,981,092 views was narrated by *Dynamo* and is filmed from the standpoint of the performance, not from the position of the *Pepsi Max* brand, but as a magician's performance. The

only clue to the brand's involvement is the *Pepsi Max* logo at the base of the frame, the advertisement on the side of the bus and *Dynamo* drinking from a can of *Pepsi Max*. I made visits to the site of the location, Westminster Bridge, London, during my research period to observe the site. I made two site visits to Grand Central Terminal, New York, to make primary observations of the location post the installation of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, as part of a reflective process to study the space and environment. Other sources of information for the *De Beers* campaign were *YouTube*, online news sites and articles.

### **Method of Data analysis**

As previously discussed, each case study was considered within the three parameters; visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation. The constructivist approach that I have used has allowed me to create a triangulated view of each aspect of the ambient advertisement from varying perspectives to form my central argument that each parameter is key in the construction of a successful ambient advertisement. In order to decode each parameter I applied the theories of semioticians, social behavioral and anthropological specialists. By applying their theories to each parameter it gave me the language to analyse each of the parameters that formed the ambient advertisement as a whole and look at the overall message. It is an interpretive analysis attempting to find an understanding of the meaning of the ambient advertisement through the analysis of the visual, the environment and the pedestrian interpretation. I am endeavoring to use a set of ideas (the three parameters) to form the basis of 'something' that acts as a model of representation that forms an interpretive function to interpret ambient advertising.

## CHOICES OF CASE STUDIES

### Similarities in the case studies

In all three case studies each ambient advertisement had been well documented in the press in terms of print publication and online so the reach for each campaign was been global. This was important to my research because I was interested in cultural differences in the communication of ambient advertising. These three ambient advertisements gave me the opportunity to observe how each was designed to reach its target audience at a localised and global level. I could achieve this through the investigation of social media and online news sites. Each campaign was set in a large city where there was access to many pedestrians who varied in terms of demographics. This allowed me to gather primary (*John Lewis*) and secondary documented research on the behavior of the pedestrian as they encountered the ambient advertisements through recorded information that was either photographic or via a *YouTube* video. Each advertisement was similar in that each was highly spectacular although in different ways; one an installation, another a moving person and another a static object. All three ambient advertisements received much attention. Each one allowed me to study, analyse and interpret through the three parameters; visual impact, environmental impact and pedestrian interpretation. Another similarity was that each advertisement was created for a global brand and therefore there was a well-documented brand narrative available that I could call upon to discuss possible brand messages that were being created by the ambient advertisement.

## **Differences in the case studies**

Each of the case studies though were striking in appearance and therefore similar. They differ in the way they were communicated. Each campaign was set in a different city; New York, London and Cardiff therefore allowing me to discuss the cultural differences in terms of location and demographic. The ambient advertising campaigns differed in use of intended cognitive response. For example, The *De Beers* campaign used visual metaphor that originated from words as opposed to the visual message of the other case studies. It allowed the pedestrian to encounter it as it changed over a long period of time; days as opposed to an instant impact. It relied on the same group of commuters watching the deterioration of the advertisement and allowed them to slowly ponder over its meaning as it changed its appearance. *The Pepsi Max* Campaign relied on shock and theatrical performance by a performer as a form of attracting attention. It challenged the pedestrian's existential sense of self as they viewed the vulnerability of the body suspended from a moving object. The *John Lewis* Campaign used the concept of visual tropes in terms of hyperbole and surrealism as an attention-seeking device causing the pedestrian to ponder in order make sense of their physical presence in relation to the object itself. Each difference allowed me to enter a discourse on the different ways in which an ambient advertisement can emotionally reach its intended target audience, the pedestrian.

## **The position of my role as practitioner/academic**

I have sought to balance my role within the thesis by reflecting upon the mix of industry and academic experience that has spanned over thirty years as a Graphic Designer then moving forward to become Advertiser, Marketer and

Brand Consultant and lecturer. The latter part of my career has been that of Programme Director of the BA/MDes Advertising and Brand Design course at Swansea College of Art (UWTSD). I was closely involved in the inception of the course and its following development that spanned ten years and has seen many graduates going on to work in the creative industries. This balance of experience has allowed me to combine my professional knowledge and practical experience of branding and advertising with my academic knowledge. The key stance in my thesis is a balance between theory and application. Being once in the fortunate position of having a career within the profession has not only helped me to reflect upon my advertising practice but has also given me an insight into how theory could be applied to practice.

Over the period of my career I worked with various brands, often acting as a conduit for their brand message through design and advertising communications. This experience has given me a unique insight and was the inspiration for my research. I wanted to discover how brands are using ambient advertising to convey an advertising messages on a much deeper level than I had originally perceived during my practice. For me, it was not enough to 'have a good creative idea,' I wanted to discover if it was possible to uncover a formula that could be used to create a successful ambient advertisement. In order to discover this I had to find a method of decoding existing ambient advertisements. It was at this point I began to read about the work of the semioticians who had used semiotics to decode other forms of visual language for example painting, sculpture and photography and printed forms of advertising. After research into this area I had discovered a way to decode the visual impact of the ambient advertisement, but I felt that the environment, use of public space and how the pedestrian responded

to the ambient advertisement was important and so I researched the work of behavioral and social and anthropological theorists. I also studied one of the case studies (*John Lewis*) first hand. If I had not been a practitioner before starting this research, I believe my standpoint would be different. I feel that I sit squarely between the two, offering an insight into both the professional world of advertising and branding and its relevance in the context of an academic discourse concerning the nuances of visual language and how we as humans respond to it, in terms of an ambient advertising message.

As a practitioner I feel that I have moved from application to the study of theory. As an academic I have moved from theory to application in my practice. Through this research I now feel that I have the understanding that not all practitioners in industry necessarily have, that is the theory that underpins the communication of ambient advertising. Through this research I have gained the knowledge that theory is important to application and should in fact inform application.

My focus is evident throughout the text of the thesis. I refer to my experience as a practitioner in the introduction to the thesis. I have highlighted my academic approach to the subject through my research undertaken in the three case studies. These case studies have helped clarify and confirm my ideas about many aspects of the work of the practitioner. I have analysed and argued my ideas through my research and have demonstrated and clarified what I believe is the process of decoding an ambient advertisement and support my claim to knowledge with the validated support of the theories of semiotic, social and behavioral and anthropological theorists and marketing and advertising practitioners.

This research has had a long period of incubation. My quest for clarity and effectiveness around my work began many years ago. In my introduction I discuss my search for the underpinning rational for creating an effective ambient advertisement. My thesis aims to show my understanding of the subject in order to improve in my professional practice and academic knowledge and enable me to impart that knowledge in order to better practice and academic knowledge.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Case Study 1: *De Beers – A Diamond Is Forever*

In this chapter I will be discussing how the *De Beers - A Diamond Is Forever* case study is centred on language and the visual impact of an object in its physical location, how its presence makes the spectator think of cultural associations with language as they are asked to explore its connotations. I will be discussing the background of the *De Beers* company and how its brand ethos is communicated as part of the advertising message. Within the section on **Visual Impact** I will be discussing the design, form, construction of the ambient advertisement. In the section on **Environmental Impact** I will be discussing the importance and relevance of the physical and sense of place. In the section on **Pedestrian Interpretation** I will be discussing the associations and connections that the pedestrian makes as they explore the object and the language used to convey the advertising message.



Figure 14 De Beers - A Diamond is Forever Ambient Advertising Campaign NY (Chris Maijorino,2008)



Figure 15 Grand Central Terminal, NY (Angela Williams, 2014)

## Background

In 2008, the Creative Director of JWT, Chris Maiorino, created an ambient advertising campaign in Grand Central Station, New York. (See Figure 14). The ambient advertising campaign also known as 'site specific media' was created for their client *De Beers*. By using 25,000 roses, their intention was to engage participants in an emotional response to their message, *A Diamond Is Forever*. By using one of the popular non-everlasting items people buy to send a message of love. After two weeks the installation started to disintegrate (See Figure 17), leaving the participant with the message that a diamond is forever, but a rose is not. The installation was designed by the celebrity floral designer Antony Todd and commissioned in celebration of St Valentine's Day. According to Warc.com as a result of this campaign the Grand Central Terminal saw an increased footfall of 40%. *De Beers* obtained \$2.5 million of free media attention, since hundreds of stories appeared about the installation on line and in newspapers. New York commuters watched the progress of the roses daily, whilst others followed online. (See Figure 16)



Figure 16 Grand Central Terminal (YouTube, 2008)



Figure 17 *De Beers* Campaign at Grand Central Terminal NY (Chris Majjorino, 2008.)

The *De Beers* Group has been involved in all aspects of the diamond industry since its formation in 1888. Today, the *De Beers* Group is the largest diamond mining company in the world, producing over 40 per cent of the world's gem diamonds by value, from its own mines in South Africa and, in partnership with government, in Botswana, Namibia and Tanzania. *De Beers'* gem mining operations span every category of diamond mining - open pit, underground, alluvial, coastal and under sea - while its exploration programme extends across six continents. In 2000, *De Beers'* Snap Lake project in Canada's Northwest Territories became the Group's first Canadian diamond mine. The *De Beers* Group's Diamond Trading Company (DTC), based in London, sorts, values and currently sells about two thirds of the world's annual supply of rough diamonds. Over the last 60 years. *De Beers* has also undertaken the advertising and promotion of diamond jewelers around the world. This has brought benefits to diamond producers, manufacturers, and retail jewelers and, ultimately, the consumer. On 16 January 2001, the *De Beers* Group and *LVMH Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy*, the world's leading luxury products group, announced an agreement to establish an independently managed and operated company (*De Beers LV*) to develop the global consumer brand potential of the *De Beers* name. ( De Beers Group of Companies, 2014):

*Advertising Age* magazine named *A Diamond Is Forever* the best advertising slogan of the twentieth century. The *De Beers Diamonds are Forever* advertising campaign, which started in the 1940's, was to become one of the most effective of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It enabled *De Beers* to manipulate demand as well as supply. With the help of their advertising agency, they created a mindset, which later swept the world, in which diamonds came to be perceived, not simply as precious gems that could be traded to volatile market prices, but as inseparable part of life. Most specifically, diamonds became a significant love token, marking engagement that

could lead to married life. (Tungate, 2008:87).

What we can possibly take from this observation by Mark Tungate, is that the *De Beers* brand has acquired considerable power in terms of brand recognition. He talks about the brand creating a way of thinking about 'love' and 'romance' and having the power to manipulate the market forces of supply and demand. It could be argued that *De Beers* own the word 'love' in the mind of the consumer as their product, the diamond, becomes synonymous with 'love.' He also comments on the high significance of marriage and the giving of a diamond to mark the occasion as being part of a global culture.

### **Visual impact**

In the ambient advertising advertisement in Grand Central Terminal, the proposition *A Diamond is Forever*, is used to attract the attention of the pedestrian. The message uses several signifiers to convey the proposition *A Diamond Is Forever*. Each of these signs can be interpreted. These signifiers are tangible, you can see them and touch them. What they signify is intangible, the intangibles are designed to link into our emotional response. Du Plessis argues that:

For emotion to fulfill its evolutionary role of ensuring we pay attention to the right things, it must work quickly and simply. Essentially emotional response to any event makes us feel positive or negative, attached or repelled. We may use different words to classify the strength and nature of the emotional response once it has happened, but the emotions themselves are easily recognised, if not easily described...people may have trouble describing what love feels like, but they can easily discriminate between love, fondness and pleasure when they see the words in front of them." (Du Plessis, 2008: xvi).

What Du Plessis is saying here is that our response to stimuli has to be

immediate to create an emotional response, whether that is positive or negative. The message also has to be simple as although we may not be able to describe emotions, we can distinguish the difference between them. The intention of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement is to create a positive emotional response.

We can understand from the *De Beers* ambient campaign, that in order to create a visual impact on its target audience, the pedestrian would need the signifier to make the signified, to help the viewer understand what is being signified in terms of a positive emotional response and that their understanding of the image of a rose would mean romance and love:

The products that we consume express who we are, they are cultural signifiers. The type of watch we wear, the brand of athletic shoes, or the kind of car we drive tell others a lot about us. Advertising not only tells us about the products we consume it also tells us what those products signify in our culture. (Frith,1997:3)

Here Frith is commenting on the way that we use brands to express something of ourselves and our position in social culture. There are other signifiers situated within the *De Beers* ambient advertising message. Their intertextuality of the structure is designed to reinforce the advertising proposition by the use of shape, colour, form and setting. They can be deconstructed into key elements and analysed. Note that I have included the pedestrian in the signifiers. Leymore (1975) explains this holistic view of advertisement in this way:

Now if the product is the mental representation conjured up by the advertisement and supported by the story and the pictures, then the background, which includes users in their various settings, color, accessories, layout and so on is the signifier.( Frith,1997: 4)

Here Frith is stating how the background to an advertisement can also be a signifier. I argue in this thesis that the environment and pedestrian are also signifiers in the ambient advertisement.

<b>Red Roses</b>	<b>Typography /lettering</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Blue background</b>	<b>Diamond shape</b>	<b>Public space/architecture</b>	<b>Pedestrian</b>
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Figure 18 *De Beers - A Diamond Is Forever* signifiers

Through an analysis of all the elements within the ambient advertisement (See Figure 18); including the object itself, the foreground, background, public space and the pedestrian, it is possible to reveal secondary social or cultural messages in which the primary message is embedded. Understanding how to create a cultural subtext within an advertisement can be a powerful tool in creating an intriguing advertising message. If the cultural messages are not taken into consideration, a campaign proposition could be misunderstood.

The context of an ambient advertisement is crucial to its signified meaning. In the case of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, it is three-dimensional. This means that foreground and background are as important as each other in our interpretation of the advertising message. The message contains verbal and visual messages. It uses colours and shapes.

Katherine Toland Frith in her book *Undressing the Ad* (1997), argues that in order to analyse a print advertisement it should be broken down into three stages.

1. Surface meaning.
2. The advertisers' intended meaning.
3. The cultural or ideological meaning.  
(Frith, 1997:7)

The surface meaning consists of the overall impression that a reader might get from quickly studying the advertisement. This can be applied by simply listing the main factors associated with the ambient advertisement: Red roses, typography /lettering, words, blue background, diamond shape, public space/architecture and pedestrian.

### **Red roses.**

A rose is a flower, grown in soil, in many parts of the world, it has soft tightly compressed petals, when they open they are large. The rose has a green stem and thorns protrude from the stem. The roses in this ambient piece are red but roses grow in many varieties. Roses may also be purchased in florists. Roses are associated with romance. They are expensive and therefore communicate value.

In the West, the colour red is seen as a colour that represents; excitement, danger, love, passion and to stop. In India the colour red represents purity, in China red represents good luck and celebration and in Africa red represents death and mourning. (Globalization Group, 2015).

The cultural and ideological meaning of the use of red roses in the ambient advertisement leads one to the assumption that the pedestrian would respond to the colour red as a western sign for passion, excitement, love and danger. Judith Williamson argued in her book *Decoding Advertisements*, that use of colour in advertising is a form of currency of signs:

A selecting of certain elements, things or people from the ordinary world, and then rearranging and altering them in terms of product's myth to create a new world of advertisement." This is the essence of all advertising components of 'real' life, our life, are used to speak a new language, the advertisements. Its language, its terms **are** the

myth; for as we have seen, they are too full of coincidence of colour co-ordination to be real.” (Williamson,1978:23).

Here Williamson describes how advertisements are aesthetically arranged using position and colour to create the myth. In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, the roses are intended to signify love and passion. They start life as bright red, full of life, vitality and health. They are the colour of blood that is the life force of all human beings. But as the week passes the roses start to die and the colour turns from the vibrant red to golden brown and eventually the dark grey the signifier of death and mortality. The roses echo the life cycle of human life. The movement from young to old, from energy and passion to being lifeless and dead. The ambient advertisement is evoking emotion, but not directly, only through the promise of future or long-term pleasure. It is evoking of pleasure of the promise of a diamond that does not die, but that will last forever. The diamond is used as a metaphor for a love that will be eternal as Judith Williamson argues: “It is not the ad that evokes feeling, it simply involves the idea of feeling” (Williamson: 1978:31). Over the period of the campaign the roses become a sequence of visual metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson argue in their book *Metaphors That We Live By* that:

...the idea that metaphor is a matter of cognition than language... the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. (Lakoff & Johnson,1980:5)

The metaphors created by the disintegration of the roses could be those of fading, dying, mortal. Cognition being the mental act or process by which knowledge is acquired, including perception, intuition, and reasoning. They also state that:

The most important claim we have made so far is that metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words. We shall argue that, on the contrary, human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical. This is what we mean when we say that the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 6).

Here Lakoff and Johnson discuss how we think in metaphor. How words and images conjure other words and images in our mind. It is arguable therefore, as stated by Lakoff & Johnson, that the visual metaphors in the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, centered around a language construct, *A Diamond Is Forever* create metaphors in the mind of the pedestrian.

### **Typography/lettering.**

Letters form the words *A DIAMOND IS FOREVER*. This statement is arranged in two lines, splitting the ‘diamond’ from the ‘forever’. The font used is a serif face with slab serifs. The letters are laid out in uppercase. The typography is held on a frame and cast a shadow against the blue background. The diamond shape anchors the statement by appearing at the end of the statement, in the same way a full stop is used in punctuation. The typography is designed using to be bold and visually striking.

### **Words**

The words used are ‘A’ ‘DIAMOND’ ‘IS’ ‘FOREVER’. These words are used to form a sentence recognisable to anyone who can read the English language. A diamond is an expensive precious stone. Forever conveys a message of eternity and commitment.

### **Blue background**

The background to the lettering is made of a dark blue material. It is non-reflective and appears to be made of fabric. It supports the tracks. It gives height to the ambient piece. The colour dark blue is solid and is used in contrast to the red of the roses. Blue velvet has cultural connotations.

### **Diamond shape**

A diamond shape appears after the word 'forever'. The Forever mark alludes to the diamond itself. It is a sign that represents the facet of the gemstone that transfers a graphic symbol to a deeper meaning that has the connotation of value and expensive qualities. Max Black argues in his *Interaction of Theory Of Metaphor* (See Figure 19) that:...a metaphysical statement has two distinct subjects, to be identified as the 'primary' subject and the 'secondary' one. (Forceville,1996:5).

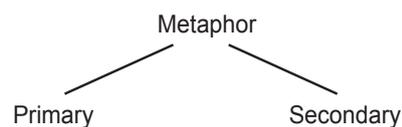


Figure 19 Max Black diagram of Interaction Theory of Metaphor

This diagram can be applied to the *De Beers* campaign. In the context of a particular metaphorical statement, the two subjects 'interact' in the following ways. The presence of the primary subject (roses) incites the (viewer) to select some of the secondary subject's properties (love, passion, romance, loyalty, eternity); and invites him or her to construct a parallel implication that fits the primary subject; and reciprocally induces parallel changes in the secondary

subject. The intertextuality of the signs and their signifiers encourage the viewer to construct a complex parallel and change what they are physically seeing into an emotional response referring to a loved person.

As discussed earlier in the thesis the marketing model AIDA<sup>5</sup> was developed by St. Elmo Lewis in 1898 to analyse and measure the customer's journey from ignorance to purchase. Lewis lays out a sequence that describes the process a salesperson must lead a potential customer through in order to achieve a sale. Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. Stage three, 'Desire' is designed to satisfy needs, eventually leading to action of seeking out the product to purchase.

In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, the roses firstly start as a positive aspect of 'love' healthy blossoming, vital, alive. As time passes the viewer (pedestrian) witnesses the roses change in colour from the vibrancy of red to brown and black as they die. The viewer (pedestrian) is asked to construct this parallel that Max Black refers to. The viewer is witnessing one thing the physicality of the roses dying, whilst at the same time reading the words *A Diamond Is Forever*. The juxtaposition of these two is not arbitrary. The metaphor is constructed in the mind of the viewer (pedestrian) and the message 'makes sense'. In the *YouTube* video (see Figure 16) of the ambient piece we witness a pedestrian saying " I get it... a diamond lasts forever, whilst roses don't". Through the video we witness the moment as the pedestrian understands the meaning of the proposition. This is communicated by facial expression in terms of a smile as they and she portrays pleasure. Liking an advertisement is key to remembering it:

By 1986 we had databases of over 1000 commercials. Two academic studies we done using our data. The both showed that the best predictor of the rate at which a commercial concerted 'exposed audience' to 'people remembering the

advertisement ' was whether the audience liked the commercial or not. In other words people watch commercials they like. (Du Plessis, 2008: xx).

Du Plessis states the importance of likability in the success of an advertisement. He argues that advertisements that are likable are more likely to be remembered. It could be argued that The *De Beers* ambient advertisement has been created to be likable, so that it becomes memorable in the mind of the pedestrian.

Gerald Zaltman, in his book *How Customers Think* suggests that metaphors play an important role in developing marketing strategies:

the significance of metaphors for marketing managers comes from their centrality to consumers' in other words the metaphors are created by consumers. Understanding consumers metaphors enables managers to imagine the nature of consumers' needs with respect to innovations outside the consumer experience and beyond the reach of more conventional, literally orientated research tools.(Zaltman,2003.92).

In short, metaphors are the primary means by which companies and consumers engage one another's attention and imagination. It is an interesting argument that Zaltman puts forward. By using his theory it is possible to argue that the brand is aware of the metaphors that will occur in the mind of the viewer, before the advertising is put in place. Those advertisers interpret the needs of the consumer through their metaphors. He goes on to argue,

The metaphors a company uses in its advertising messages strongly influences how consumers interpret the messages or see a product's value. Thus firms must take great care in selecting metaphors. Similarly, the right metaphor can cause consumers to 'see' information in an ad that is not actually present anywhere in the ad's text or graphics." (Zaltman,2003:92).

Here Zaltman states the importance of selecting the metaphor created in the mind of the consumer as the metaphor created can influence the consumer. An example of this in the *De Beers* ambient advertisement would be the metaphor for 'love'. (The word does not appear in the text). A heart shape, the symbol for 'love' is not used in the visual element of the piece. Yet the emotional metaphor that the pedestrian feels is guided to associate with the ambient advertisement's message of 'love'. In advertising we recognise that positive emotions are important to brand recognition and loyalty. It is an important part of the recall process at 'point of purchase.' According to Du Plessis in his book *The Advertised Mind* that 'positive memories form neuron clusters in the brain'. (Du Plessis, 2008:50).

Therefore, it could be argued that the *De Beers* brand should be easier to recall when for example a customer is thinking about buying a diamond. Emotional response is critical as Du Plessis argues:

the more intense the emotional charge of associated memories, the more attention we pay. If the charge is positive, it is likely we will feel attracted to what is happening. If it is negative we will feel repelled. (DuPlessis, 2008:p:xii).

This concept that positive associations linked to the brand helps consumers make brand choices at the point of purchase is a theory supported by Zaltman who states that:

These associations must come to mind when we think about a brand, ideally when we are considering a purchase, if they are to have any effect on our behavior. (Ted Talks, Zaltman on Coca Cola Exercise. 2011).

Here Zaltman argues that this cognitive process of positive associations that help to recall the way we feel about a brand, is important when making buying decisions. The theorist, Abraham (Harold) Maslow (1908–70), U.S. psychologist,

also developed ideas relating to psychology and consumer behavior. (See Figure 20). As a leader of the humanistic school of psychology, he postulated a “hierarchy of needs” to explain human motivation. He wrote *Motivation and Personality* (1954). This text is often used as the starting point or background to understanding consumer motivation. In his model Maslow suggests that only a few people get to satisfy their higher level of needs. The most basic need to fulfill is survival, which consumers achieve through the consumption of; food, water, air, water and warmth. Once a level of safety and survival has been attained, we need to fulfill our social needs: to belong to a community, to marry, or join groups of friends and like-minded people. The final two levels are esteem and self-actualisation. Fewer people satisfy the higher level of needs. Esteem means that you achieve something that provides internal satisfaction.

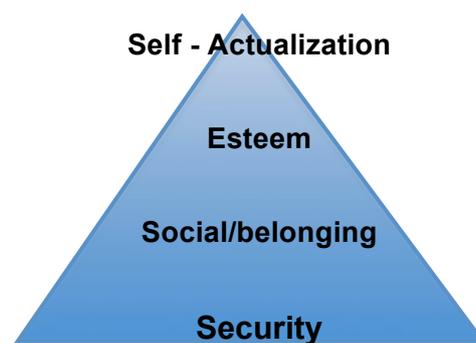


Figure 20 Abraham Maslow's Pyramid of Hierarchy of Human Needs

Below I have explored the *De Beers* ambient advertising campaign through a number of possible interpretations using the categories of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of human needs which highlights the polysemic nature of his theory. For

example, social/belonging could be referring to a group of people who buy *De Beers* diamonds or a group of people who are 'in love.' Status is an important human emotion. A *De Beers* diamond has a high-end value and could therefore be regarded as a purchase that could achieve considerable status. Self-actualization is difficult to obtain as it is about the happiness and contentment of human psychology often regarded in Eastern cultures and religion of high importance. The *De Beers* campaign could be hoping to tap into the emotion of contentment and fulfillment of a future commitment with a life partner. Therefore, they are offering, in the context of Maslow's study, the possibility of self-actualisation.

### **Safety**

Psychologically the security of love is a powerful emotion. When we are loved we are cared for, making us feel secure, a basic human need according to Maslow. Love is also a pleasurable emotional response. Erik Du Plessis argues in his book *The Advertised Mind* that:

...everything is filtered through our emotional responses for interpretation by our rational capabilities," ...the emotional filter for perceptions a consumer receives from an advertisement draws on the brand's soma: that is the emotional aspect of the memories the consumer has about the brand. In other words, the communication loop itself is filtered by past memories of the brand. (Du Plessis, 2008:79).

Here Du Plessis states that brands rely heavily on positive emotion as a motivator. When a consumer associates himself or herself to a brand they are saying something about themselves. As argued by the multi-award-winning

designer and author Wally Olins, who was one of the world's most respected and experienced practitioner of branding:

...cities, regions and nations are developing full-scale branding programmes, partly to encourage self-confidence and self-esteem and their own sense of place...Identity in its various manifestations has grabbed our hearts and minds, because we are desperate to express our need to belong... (Olins, 2008 :18).

In this quote Olins is referring to the theory of belonging as identified by Maslow in his *Hierarchy of Needs*. The theory is based on the concept that as human beings we have a strong emotional need for identification through belonging. Some consumers create this sense of belonging through the purchase of brands that they feel match their own set of personal values. For example, a consumer may buy a branded handbag because they can identify with its brand values such as quality, authenticity, narrative, ethics, sustainability and price. Olins, in his book *On Brand*, refers to this as Toteism, where he mentions a tribe living in Africa who are called the *Mercedes* tribe, because they all drive Mercedes cars.

Maslow sets out the importance of belonging in his *Hierarchy of Needs*.

Consumers see themselves reflected in the brand they wear or use. It is a projection of their status and sense of 'fit' in the world. Brands are constantly trying to establish emotional ties with consumers. In her book *No Logo* Naomi Klein quotes Scott Bedbury, Starbuck's Vice President of Marketing to demonstrate the power of the brand and how it links to people's feelings of belonging and status. Whilst arguing for anti-consumerism she recognizes how powerful the emotional connection can be:

Nike, for example, is leveraging the deep emotional connection that people have with sports and fitness. “With Starbucks, we see how coffee has woven itself into the fabric of people’s lives, and that’s our opportunity for emotional leverage ... A great brand raises the bar – it adds a greater sense of purpose to the experience, whether it’s a challenge to do your best in sports and fitness or the affiliation that a cup of coffee that you’re drinking really matters.” (Klein,2001:21).

Here Klein discusses how a brand like *Starbucks* uses a commodity, in this case coffee, to sell lifestyle and achievement. They do this by creating emotional connections with the consumer in terms of health and well-being.

### Typography /lettering

Typography and letterform are integral to the communication of the visual message and creation of metaphor in the mind of the pedestrian. The serif typeface is a representation of the font used in the *De Beers* brand logotype (See Figure 21).

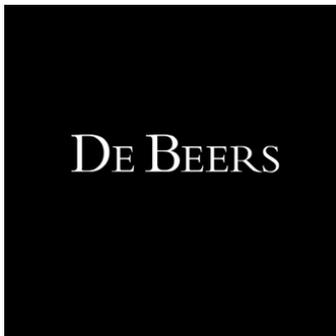


Figure 21 *De Beers* Logotype  
(De Beers Group of Companies, History, 2014)



Figure 22 *De Beers* Campaign typography  
(Chris Maijorino,2008)

In Figure 22 we can see that the orientation of the typography used in the proposition is landscape and forms a rectangular shape. The typography has become very much the conduit of the message. There is a semiosis in the image. Roses become letters and words. This is a surrealist image where each rose

becomes part of the shape and form of a letter. It could be suggested that the art directors of this *De Beers* ambient piece were also using proportion and scale as a means of creating an ideological meaning. The serif on the typeface are horizontal strokes; serif faces do tend to help horizontal eye moment. Making the sentence easier to read. The typography used here has been selected to create a specific message. Every typographic font designed can be described as having its own personality, and can be further defined by the 'attitude ' that is created through size, weight, proportion, width and spacing as it is viewed on the background. How it is used in this case creates a bold statement. According to the renowned designer Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, (Ruenzel & Fennel,1991:133) Designing is not a profession but an attitude. Indeed as the lens through which we see the world, attitude shapes our approach to design.

## **Words**

The cultural and ideological meaning of the words *A Diamond is Forever* is vitally important in the dissemination of the advertising message. Without the understanding of the ideology contained within the words the pedestrian cannot disseminate the message. The words are used to convey the metaphor. George Lakoff had discovered linguistic evidence showing that metaphor is pervasive in everyday language and thought:

Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around the world, how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor...language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like (Lakoff and Johnson,1980: ix)

Here Lakoff and Johnson describe how metaphors define our everyday realities and help to create our own view of the world. Creating visual and verbal metaphors are an important factor in conveying an ambient advertisement in terms of how the pedestrian engages and cognitively process the object or spectacle. The pedestrian experiences the power of metaphor in the words *A Diamond is Forever* that is part of the *De Beers* ambient advertising message. We would need to look at the individual words in the context of the overall message, and then review their connotations. My aim here is to demonstrate the thinking process when we read the sentence as many metaphors can be created in our mind when reading the sentence. My research argues that this visual metaphor in the *De Beers* campaign also plays an important role in the dissemination of ambient advertising message.

The copywriter/art director team within the advertising agency, charged with the job of creating memorable copy, will have been aware of the positive metaphor that is being created by the words used in the message. The words are used to communicate a proposition – it is a sales proposition that the gift of a *De Beers* diamond is the only gift of love. The role of the Creative partnership in an advertising agency is to get inside the mind of the consumer and understand how they really think in order to make emotional connections. The proposition for an advertising campaign will develop from the words and metaphors created by them. If we think in terms of metaphor to this extent, then the creative team need also to be aware of the impact of metaphors that they choose to create in the mind of the reader or in this case the pedestrian. According to Zaltman and Zaltman:

Deep metaphors start to develop at birth and are shaped by our social environment. In this sense, they are innate capacities or propensities, as are other capacities such as those for language, emotion and three-dimensional vision. They are deep because they largely operate unconsciously. They are metaphors because they re-present, or play around with nearly everything we encounter. They unconsciously add, delete and distort information while continuously giving us the impression that we engage our world exactly as it is. (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008:xvi)

Here Zaltman & Zaltman are describing a complex idea, that of deep metaphors, they suggest these deep metaphors start at birth and are shaped by experience of life. They discuss how they can distort and transform our view of the world. For example; in the *De Beers* case study a deep metaphor for a rose could have many connotations depending on personal experience. These metaphors Zaltman and Zaltman argue are deep in the unconscious. Equally important, deep metaphors capture what anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists call *human universals*, or near universals, the traits and behaviors found in nearly all societies. That is, people from very different backgrounds and different parts of the world use the same relatively few deep metaphors. We are 'deeply alike' states (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008:7).

The theory of deep metaphor is of particular relevance to the *De Beers* ambient advertisement as its location in Grand Central Terminal, New York, place it in an area of great geographical and cultural diversity. I will be discussing this further in the sections on Environmental Impact and Pedestrian Interpretation.

The words *A Diamond is Forever* are large in size. The creative agency has used hyperbole to exaggerate the message. Use of hyperbole gives stature and

importance to the words themselves. It makes the proposition powerful and as a result affects the way it is perceived by the pedestrian.

In his book *The Language of Displayed Art*, Michael O'Toole (2011) discusses how sculptors and architects use chthonicity having verticality or thrust to 'create the sense of presence that we feel as we stand before a sculpted form.' (O'Toole, 2011:35).

In the *De Beers* ambient piece, the execution of the words in ambient advertisement is designed to create an authoritative presence. How we relate to scale and proportion to our own bodies can make us feel dwarfed by the massive form. This all contributes to the way we perceive the ambient advertisement. It's relevance, importance and sense of occasion that we attach to it.

## **Colour**

In the *De Beers* ambient advertising campaign, dark blue has been chosen for the background to the written message. The ideological meaning of the colour depends on cultural background. Blue is a colour that we are familiar with in terms of nature. If we look at Earth from space, blue is the colour of the sea that covers most of our planet. It is associated with the sky surrounding us. Blue is a colour that forms a strong relationship between our natural habitat and us. Blue is embraced as the colour of authority, and is used by a number of brands in their brand image. Amongst them are the NHS, Private Health Care, Metropolitan Police and Government organisations. Blue has more complex and contradictory meanings than any other color for example dark blue is often associated with trust, dignity, intelligence and authority.(<http://www.colourmatters.com>)

As discussed by Thomas:

Choosing every element of the advertising message including colour starts the conversation between addresser and addressee. The colour of the background signifies a number of metaphors in the mind of the pedestrian depending on their cultural background. In western society; trust, dignity, intelligence and authority are the metaphors that are being conveyed through the signifier 'blue. (Thomas, 1967:17).

Here Thomas is arguing that in terms of semiology a colour starts a conversation with the viewer and that conversation will rely on the cultural experience of the viewer. The colour blue is used in the *De Beers* ambient advertisement in this way. It has a connotation for the viewer that could be subjective relying on a personal emotional association that the pedestrian may have relating to the colour blue. In other words, the colour blue is a sign that signifies meaning to the viewer depending on their cultural or emotional experience. The connotation of the colour holds meaning for the pedestrian. This will vary from pedestrian to pedestrian. Barthes believed that there are 'shared' stories or connotations.(See Figure 23).

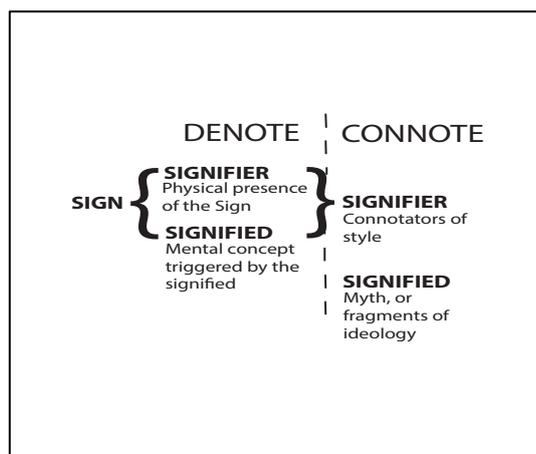


Figure 23 Barthes Model of Denotation and Connotation

We can test the theory of connotation by substituting a different colour, an example would be to choose yellow instead of blue and assess the impact and perception of the pedestrian. The symbol would be different and this would change its connotation and therefore a different metaphor would be created in the mind of the pedestrian, depending on their cultural ideology. Shannon and Weaver stated in the 1940's that all communication could be theorized into codes. Understanding the theory of codes can help us to decode the message in order to reconstruct the message to have the desired effect on the pedestrian. Is it then possible to place together a number of elements that will create an effective advertising message that can contain the component parts required to effectively create a willingness on behalf of the pedestrian to disseminate the advertising message.

### **Diamond shape**

The diamond shape on the background (See Figure 22), alludes to the *De Beers* logotype and it also makes a reference to the actual diamond brand that *De Beers* is hoping the consumer will recall at the point of purchase. The shape has been used to give a nudge to the cognition of the brand at the point of purchase. The purpose of marketing a brand is to get the consumer to feel 'Belonging' as described in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. In their book *Marketing Metaphoria*, Zaltman and Zaltman (2008) refer to the brand needing to make a connection with the consumer:

Connection (disconnection) encompasses feelings of belonging or exclusion: being kept in or out of the loop, identifying with heroes, drawn to celebrities, or breaking up a relationship. We express psychological ownership when we say my brand, my team, my candidate, my kind of person, and MySpace. Feelings of distance and separation from

others reflect disconnection, as when losing a friend, missing a pet, or losing a job... Themes of connection and disconnection factor prominently in consumers' thinking. (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008:22).

Here Zaltman & Zaltman describe how connecting with the consumer in relation to their experience of the world is vital in creating a successful advertising campaign. In terms of the *De Beer's* campaign the shape of a diamond is a visual anchor in the mind of the consumer. It is a simple icon that can remain in the memory. As Du Pleassis states:

It has been estimated that more than 80 per cent of what we as individuals 'know' has been learnt incidentally, rather than through a formal and conscious learning process. (Du Plessis, 2008:59).

In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement the pedestrian is learning incidentally that a diamond shape is associated with a *De Beers* diamond. Although the diamond shape appears almost incidentally to the right of the sentence 'A Diamond Is Forever', it is a vital clue to the pedestrian in the process of decoding the image before them. After all, it is a *De Beers* diamond that the marketers want the pedestrian to remember and recall at the point of purchase.

Using the diamond shape will help in the recall process. Olins discusses the importance of symbols in any visual communication:

Symbols are immensely powerful. They act as visual triggers which work many times faster and more explosively than words to set ideas in the mind. Many symbols are, as we know from Jung and others, an intrinsic part of the human vocabulary of expression and comprehension. Symbols can unleash the most complex and profound emotions. (Olins, 2008:30).

Here Olins is commenting on how quickly a symbol can be recognised and serve to create meaning to a target audience. Well designed logos are often simply executed in order to become memorable. The *De Beers* logo is recognised globally. It is used as a sign to signify the essence of the brand and signpost consumers to the product.(See Figure 24).



Figure 24 *De Beers* logotype (De Beers Group of Companies, History. 2014)

### **Environmental Impact**

The ambient advertisement is set in the world renowned Central Station Terminal, New York, which is a landmark location, made in stone and marble and lit by crystal chandeliers. Built in 1913 it houses exquisite restaurants and shops. This is a prestigious location known on a global stage. A wide demographic of pedestrians use the space from visitors to commuters. Varying in socio-economic background, gender and age. The pedestrians passing through this venue, will be from cultures all over the world. It is the intention of an advertisement to signify an intended meaning. This can be a difficult task, as the signified or cultural or ideological meaning relies on the cultural knowledge of the viewer. We make sense of advertising messages by relating them to our culture and belief systems held in common by most people, not all people. Therefore, advertising is open to interpretation based on personal knowledge and experience. We may find

ourselves disagreeing in our personal analysis based on our up-bringing and cultural differences. A boy born and raised in the mining valleys of South Wales will have a different view of the world than a boy born and raised in Delhi, India. Their religious views and ideology may be completely polarised. Their experience of family life, education, consumerism and will be different. Therefore, how they make sense of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement may be totally different. The job of the creative director is to create an image that will communicate the proposition to the largest amount of people within their selected target audience.

The *De Beers* ambient piece was erected preceding and during St Valentine's day which is celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> of February all over the world, but mostly by the West. The original *St. Valentine* was a liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saint named Valentinus. Poets added modern romantic connotations several centuries later. The day first became associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. By the 15th century, it had evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards known as '*valentines*'.

The *De Beers* ambient advertisement is 'site specific'. The site is a space used by commuters in Grand Central Terminal Station, New York. This area was turned into 'advertising space'<sup>6</sup> once the *De Beers* ambient campaign was placed in the building the space became transformed by the entrance of other pedestrians.

Below Augé gives us his definition of advertising space and space itself:

The expression 'advertising space' applies to an area or to a length of time 'set aside for advertising in the various media'; 'buying space' refers to all the operations carried out by an advertising agency in connection with 'advertising 'space'.

The craze for the word 'space' applied indiscriminately to auditoriums or meeting rooms ...aircraft seats and cars, express not only the themes that haunt the contemporary era (advertising, images, leisure, freedom travel) but also the abstraction that corrodes and threatens them, as if the consumers of contemporary space were invited first and foremost to treat themselves to words. (Augé,1995:83).

In other words 'space' as a word in the modern world has many connotations.

'Space' is also a central factor in a successful ambient advertising campaign.

Once the *De Beers* ambient advertisement is placed in the space, the purpose of the space has changed. It moves from a passive to interactive space. According to de Certeau a space is a 'frequented place', an intersection of moving bodies'. (Auge,1995:79). Grand Central Terminal certainly fits this description. As the pedestrians move through the space they transform it. By placing the ambient advertisement within the space it is also transforming the landscape as seen by the pedestrian creating a polysemic view. Over 750,000 pedestrians passing through it on a daily basis and this increases to 1,000,000 in the holiday period. The average age of the commuter is 41 and 93% of them are college graduates with a mean household income of \$95,000. With over 7,500 pedestrian passing through every hour, this space certainly can justifiably boast that it is "the busiest stop in the New York subway system." (Grand Central Terminal, 2011).

The building's facade on 42nd Street has a true beaux-arts design. Large arches flanked by Corinthian columns are topped by a large sculpture group designed by Jules-Alexis Coutain. The 50ft / 15m high group depicts Mercury (the god of commerce) supported by Minerva and Hercules (representing mental and moral strength). Inside, the main concourse is most impressive, it is 470ft long, 160ft wide and 150ft high (143 x 49 x 43 metres). The ceiling is painted by the French

artist Paul Helleu. The design with zodiac constellations was taken from a medieval manuscript. It is painted backwards, so the stars are shown, as they would be seen by God, not by man. Light enters the main concourse through six 75ft / 23m arched windows. The western double staircase in Botticino marble was designed after the large staircase in the former Opera building in Paris. It connects the main concourse with the entrance on the Vanderbilt Avenue. The floor of the concourse is of Tennessee marble, the walls of Caen stone.



Figure 25 Grand Central Terminal, NY (A View on Cities, 2012)

The *De Beers* ambient advertisement is given an ideological depth by situating it within a building that has the ‘iconic’ images of gods of commerce. Although the pedestrian may not be aware of whom the statues depict, the style of the sculpture and material lends a sense of credibility to the advertising activity taking place within the walls. As stated by Denis Thomas in 1967, in his book *The Visual Persuaders*:

Consider the power of the symbolic value of brand names, and all that these imply - Rolls-Royce, Hilton, Chanel, Lux: and words used in advertising, like “reliable”, “long-established”, “modern”, “trustworthy”, “quality”...and so on. All these are attitude-inducing and hence behavior-inducing,

because they are intimately related to the values and norms of the society in which, will-nilly, we find ourselves.(Thomas,1967:69).

As demonstrated by this quote by Thomas, by placing the *De Beers* ambient advertisement in such an environment as Grand Central Terminal (see Figure 25), it could be argued that the values of the surroundings are being attached to the brand, becoming entwined as intrinsic to the brand values. The classical architecture has connotation of weight, strength and sincerity giving weight to the advertising message. By using Barthes theory of substitution, we can see how placing the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, for instance, in a Walmart supermarket car park would have different connotations for the advertising message. Instead of Tennessee marble the backdrop may be wire fencing. Instead of stone sculptures the space may be over-looked by neon and plastic advertising promotions. Instead of archways made of Caen stone there could be burger vans. Instead of Corinthian columns the ambient piece could be dwarfed by street lighting and instead of being beautifully lit by natural daylight, the tungsten of the streetlight would give mood to the spectacle. Barthes argues that if you substitute an image or setting with another it can change the connotation of the image or setting making the interpretation of the sign completely different. For example in a picture of the same 18<sup>th</sup> century woman dressed in black wearing a white apron standing by an open fire, may need the viewer to interpret the woman as a maid. If she was wearing a silk gown and carry a book the viewers' interpretation would be different. The public space and environment play a large part in the visual clues to the brand values and how the pedestrian may perceive and interpret the advertising message.

The effect of the *De Beers* ambient advertising campaign is intrinsically

connected to its surroundings. The architecture and space that the ambient advertisement sits in, all forms a mass of information, a Gestalt, in the mind of the pedestrian. In other words, a set of individual elements when joined together can create one sign. The surrounding environment acts also as a signifier for the advertising message. It is as an important contributor to the overall message as the advertising piece itself. In his book *Non places Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Augé quotes the distinction that Michel de Certeau's makes between 'place' and 'space' whose concept of 'space' is a 'frequented place,' 'an intersection of moving bodies.' It is the pedestrian who transforms the street (geometrically defined as a place by town planners) into a space" ( Augé, 1995: 79). In this quote, de Certeau is referring to the use of space by the pedestrian. As they walk through or even sit in the space they are defining how it looks and works by transforming it. They physically transfer its shape and form in a dynamic way, ever changing as in the context of the pedestrian in Grand Central Station when they encounter the *De Beers* ambient advertisement. Augé goes onto discuss how the traveller through a space become part of the spectacle themselves in some way constructing what they see in their minds eye, as well as what they see before them. He calls this a series of 'snapshots' (Augé:1995,86) to be recalled at a later date when recollecting what has been viewed. This view from the spectator's point of view, is part of the spectacle. In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement the pedestrians not only take on board the object itself but also the surroundings, other people and themselves as part of the landscape that they are viewing. In the case of the *De Beers* ambient advertisement the pedestrian becomes part of the Gestalt or whole picture. For example, by stopping, pointing out, photographing and making conversation, the pedestrian is

attracting attention and forming part of the 'buzz' that is creating the effect of the ambient advertisement.

At Grand Central Terminal the paralanguage of the pedestrian could have portrayed positive or negative reaction to the ambient piece. We know from the work of Robert Cialdini that how people react and behave in a social space can have a big impact in the way others behave. Cialdini calls this the principle of 'Social Proof'. It states that:

one means we use to determine what is correct is to find out what other people think is correct... the tendency to see an action as more appropriate when others are doing it normally works quite well. (Cialdini,2007:116)

This can be used as a powerful weapon of influence. When we see a lot of people doing something, then we feel it must be the right thing to do. Paralanguage is important in terms of the pedestrian becoming a participant in the advertising message. The pedestrian's reaction to the piece creates a chain reaction of further reaction by other pedestrians as Guy Cook states in his book *The Discourse of Advertising*:

In face-to-face communication, important meanings maybe conveyed by eye contact, gestures, body movement, clothing, touch, body position, physical proximity, voice quality, volume pitch range and laughter... these and many other factors also carry meaning which may reinforce or contradict the linguist meaning of the signs which they accompany. (Cook,1992:66).

Here Cook describes how people use their bodies and facial expressions to communicate with each other. The reaction of other consumers can impact on a consumer's experience of a piece of ambient advertising. In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement the fact that pedestrians stop to look at the piece

encourages others to do the same. It is the job of the advertising agency to create an exciting visual piece that attracts enough attention in the first place. The opposite reaction can also happen as in the classic example of bystander inaction. One that has produced much journalistic, political and scientific debate is the case of Catherine Genovese who was murdered in New York City in March 1964. Her assailant had chased and attacked her in the street three times, over a period of thirty-five minutes before his knife finally silenced her cries for help. Incredibly, thirty-eight of her neighbours watched the events of her death unfold from the security of their apartment windows without lifting a finger to call the police. People were stunned by the details of the incident and many discussed the possible reason for such inaction by the bystanders. It was psychology professors Bibb Latane and John Darley who came up with the hypothesis of social proof. In times of uncertainty, the natural tendency is to look around at the actions of others for clues. We can learn, from the way the other witnesses are reacting, whether or not it is an emergency. 'Social proof' is very powerful when applied to ambient advertising. Pedestrians will look to others to decide how to behave in a social situation.

Ambient advertising deliberately creates an atmosphere of uncertainty, to disrupt the pedestrian from their day-to-day business. Pedestrians interacting with an ambient advertisement will look to the other as to how to react to it as Cialdini points out to us in his book *Influence the Psychology of Persuasion*:

When people are uncertain, they are more likely to use others' actions to decide how they themselves should act...the principle of social proof operates most powerfully when we are observing the behaviour of people just like us. It is the conduct of such people that gives us the greatest insight into what constitutes correct behaviour for ourselves.

Therefore we are more likely to follow the lead of a similar individual than a dissimilar one.” (Cialdini, 2007:140).

In other words, consumers can influence each other and the *De Beers* ambient advertisement also relies on the interaction, interpretation by the pedestrian not only on the advertisement but on the reaction of other consumers. According to Cialdini they should also be ‘similar individuals’. It was Marshall McLuhan in his book *Understanding Media* (McLuhan, 1987:254) who created the phrase ‘Global Village’ when he talked about electric technology and the instantaneous movement from every quarter to every point at the same time.

Grand Central Terminal, New York has such a diversity of pedestrian commuters. As the message is a positive and uplifting one, pedestrians may be more likely to engage with the piece, “The most influential leaders are those who know how to arrange group conditions to allow the principle of social proof to work maximally in their favour” (Cialdini, 2007:156). The creators of ambient advertising are certainly significant in this context. In this section I have discussed the second parameter, the relevance of *Environment Impact* on the effectiveness of the *De Beers* advertising message. In the following section I will discuss the third parameter that of *Pedestrian Interpretation*.

### **Pedestrian Interpretation**

The *De Beers* ambient advertisement is designed to create metaphor in the mind of the pedestrian. The essence of a metaphor being the understanding or perceiving of one thing in terms of another. A metaphor therefore consists of two ‘things’; as Forceville argues a ‘literal’ primary subject and a ‘figurative’ secondary subject.

It is possible to visually interpret ambient advertising using a number of semiotic models including the systemic-functional model developed by O'Toole, that of Representational, Modal and Compositional functions. Through this thesis I will investigate how constructing a successful ambient advertising campaign relies on attracting attention and creating strong images and metaphors in the memory of the pedestrian. They need to be positive to stay in the memory and tumble out at the point of recall, usually the point of purchase. We know that the image has to be striking and create metaphors that link and create understanding in the memory often linking to deep metaphors that make connections, ones that are positive and create positive memories and associations of the brand. In order for the pedestrian to interpret the message, they need to make connections and associations with the brand values. They need to enjoy and find pleasure from the experience in order for them to want to engage with and remember the message. A positive engagement with the ambient advertisement is major factor of the ability to remember it.

In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement, we can see that the advertisement itself consist of words made of roses on a blue background, placed in a public space, on one level, does have a literal and figurative message. But within that one central metaphor is contained a number of metaphors as I have shown by breaking down each part of the advertisement into elements that have again been sub divided into surface meaning, intended meaning and ideological meaning.

Creating positive metaphors is crucially important in the interpretation of the advertising message. Zaltman and Zaltman (2008) argue that creating 'Deep Metaphor' in the mind of the viewer can create an emotional reaction. This can be an important trigger to the advertising industry. The advertising industry focuses

on the number of people exposed to an advertisement within a period, because marketers can measure that number readily and reliably. The industry devotes less attention to the more important but difficult measurement of whether an advertisement engages viewers constructively and has an enduring emotional impact. In the *De Beers* ambient advertisement we know that it does not follow the formulaic exposure of the traditional advertising message. It relies on the pedestrian seeing it maybe once or over a period of a week if they commute. They are exposed to the message contained in the advertisement. But the Terminal in relative terms is a small audience. The campaign's success relies on creating a strong visual communication that creates a response that drives the viewers to disseminate the advertisement themselves via social networking to an audience that is potentially global. The advertising agency would hope to create a communication that is so impactful that it becomes newsworthy and the message travels throughout newspaper editorial and website editorial across the world. The advertising agency's creative hope is to create an award-winning piece that will receive publicity via books on advertising. It could be argued that the impact of the ambient advertisement will have an impact on the pedestrian's view of the brand equity that relates to the sum of the feelings that the pedestrian has of the brand. That the creation of a positive memory can have a positive impact on a consumer in the process of recall at the point of purchase. In this case study I have observed how the advertising message is received and interpreted by the pedestrian. It is apparent that in order for the pedestrian to disseminate the advertising message, they must 'want' to do that. The impact, analysis and emotional response need to be a positive one, if the advertising message is to be remembered. Entertainment and enjoyment are important activities that

encourage positive emotional responses in the interpretation of the message. An enjoyable interpretation could mean a more powerful emotional connection. One important factor in the 'wanting' to remember and disseminate the message will be about 'liking' the advertisement.

Du Plessis argues in his book *The Advertised Mind* that it is emotion that governs all our behavior:

driving our unconscious reactions, but also determining what becomes conscious. Emotion feeds into, shapes and controls our conscious thought (DuPlessis, 2008:4).

Here Du Plessis recognises how emotion can be a driving factor in controlling our thoughts that often lead on to actions. Understanding this positive emotional response can help us to decode the ambient advertisement. Laura Oswald (2012), the author of the book *Marketing Semiotics*, and director of the Chicago based company *Marketing Semiotics* argues that:

Ethnography anchors consumer interviews in the rich semiotic context of their environments. Through the semiotic analysis, we translate consumer insights into strategic direction for our clients. Consumers and marketers draw upon universal codes to communicate meanings because these codes form social scaffolding, the sine qua non, of communication. When implementing these codes in day-to-day consumption and marketing activities, consumers and marketers then manipulate these codes to communicate a distinct point of view or internalize a personal interpretation of the message. (Oswald,2012:27).

In this quote Oswald (2012) is pointing out that people's cultures, habits and mutual differences can be studied and interpreted, then used by marketers to reach a particular audience with a marketing message. In the quote below she is describing the complex thought patterns of the consumer and how they interpret

signs, bringing them into their daily lives by changing and adapting messages that actually show what the consumer wants, demands or needs:

The speech, gestures, actions, shopping behavior, and the disposition of their possessions in the home form a complex, multi-dimensional text. The semiotician draws out the codes structuring meaning in the text and exposes emotional and cultural tensions that motivate consumers to deconstruct these codes in their daily lives. The manner in which consumers bend and personalize the cultural codes sheds light on unmet consumer needs, emerging trends in the culture, product category, and target segment. Such findings form the basis of our strategic recommendations to clients in areas such as product innovation, design, and creative strategy.” (<http://www.marketingsemiotics.com/our-process/ethnography/>)

This quote by Oswald (2012) is referring to the concept that ethnographical study could possibly predict gaps in the market for future product development. This could also be a useful strategy for designing ambient advertising campaigns in the attention economy.

## **Conclusion of Chapter One**

I have used the three parameters; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation** to investigate and interpret the *De Beers* ambient advertising message. I discuss how the choice of location for the ambient advertisement and the choice of demographic of the pedestrian passing through Grand Central Terminal are important in the construction of the advertising message. I argue that these elements play as much a part, in the communication of the advertising message and the interpretation by the pedestrian, as the advertising object itself. I have argued that by the use of semiotic analysis it is possible to decode the way that this ambient advertisement has engaged with a

pedestrian's cultural ideology to such an extent that it creates a memorable brand message that the pedestrian will want to remember. As suggested in the quote below by Laura Oswald, a number of elements are responsible for constructing a memorable advertisement that creates resonance with a consumer in a broad culture:

In *Marketing Semiotics*, I integrate the structure of meaning into broader consumer culture in which it is embedded. (Oswald,2012:8).

In this quote Oswald (2012) author of *Marketing Semiotics* is suggesting that a number of cognitive and physical factors influence the definition of value in the mind of the consumer. This is important in terms of the ambient advertisement effectiveness as we can see from the following quote by Warc:

A sculpture of roses spelling out "A Diamond is Forever" was mounted on the De Beers diamond-shaped logo and displayed in Grand Central Station (and online). Visitors could see it throughout each stage of the flowers' decay, eventually leaving only the logo behind. Posters highlighting how long other gifts would last were positioned along the walkways. It was estimated that 100,000 people viewed the installation per day and \$2.5 million of media value was received. (Warc.com)

We read here the number of people who viewed the ambient advertisement itself as well as the value of the media publicity it received that created awareness for the *De Beers* brand. The subject of effectiveness is discussed in greater detail in the conclusion of this thesis.

In this chapter I have discussed an ambient advertisement set in Grand Central Terminal, New York. It is an ambient advertisement that has used language to create a metaphor in the mind of the pedestrian. The pedestrian has been allowed to ponder on the meaning to discover 'the message'. In the next chapter, I will be discussing two case studies; the first is the *Pepsi Max* ambient

advertisement, set in the city of London. It is an ambient advertisement that uses the archetype of the magician and illusion to shock the pedestrian. Here the pedestrian is required to react immediately to the spectacle as it passes them by. The second case study in the second chapter is *John Lewis* ambient advertisement campaign, set in the centre of the City of Cardiff. This is a static installation that uses hyperbole in the form of a visual trope to attract the attention of the pedestrian and leads them into a discourse about their own physical size and space in relation to the object. This ambient advertisement also requires immediate response by the pedestrian, as in the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertising campaign.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Case Study 1: *Pepsi Max*

In the first case study in this Chapter I will be discussing an example of ambient advertising that relies on a theatrical performance and is designed to shock the spectator. It differs from the previous *De Beers* case study in that the *De Beers* ambient advertisement is designed to give the spectator time to consider the linguistic and visual metaphor. Here the spectator's response is immediate. I will also be discussing in this chapter how the parameter of **Visual Impact** is used to create the spectacle and the importance of the visual tropes created by the signs at the centre of the spectacle. Within the parameter of **Environmental Impact** I will be discussing the relevance of the physical location that the spectacle is set in and how this creates an impact on the overall advertising message. Within the parameter of **Pedestrian Interpretation** I will be discussing and analyzing how the pedestrian is interpreting the spectacle. In my conclusion I discuss how all three parameters are interdependent in terms of creating the overall advertising message.



Figure 26 *Pepsi Max Campaign London* (Daily mail, 2013)



Figure 27 *Pepsi Max Campaign London* (Daily Mail, 2013)



Figure 28 *Pepsi Max*, pedestrian participation (The Blaze, 2013)



Figure 29 *Dynamo* appears to levitate (Information Nigeria, 2013)



Figure 30 *Dynamo* with police outrider (Londonist, 2013)



Figure 31 *Pepsi Max* pedestrian recorded reaction (Vimeo, 2013)

## Background

*Pepsi Max* is an extension of the global brand *Pepsi*. It launched an ambient advertising campaign on the streets of Central London in the summer of 2013. The global positioning of the *Pepsi* brand is 58<sup>th</sup> in the world in a global market worth \$12,969M (WPP, 2013). It's main competitor *Coca Cola* being ranked 5<sup>th</sup> with a market value of \$67,983M. On Sunday 23 June *Pepsi Max* launched the latest iteration of its 'Live for Now' campaign with Bradford-born TV magician *Dynamo* levitation trick alongside a London bus on a journey through the capital city of London received much attention (See figure 28). *Dynamo*, whose 'Magician Impossible' TV series is sponsored by *Pepsi Max*, fronted the new campaign under the '*Live for Now*' brand positioning that was first launched in the UK in 2012. The campaign included an on-pack promotion on cans and bottles of *Pepsi Max* during July and August, giving consumers the chance to win hundreds of prizes and to unlock exclusive never-seen-before tricks from *Dynamo*, using the augmented reality app *Blippar* which created an exclusive one-to one magic experience for consumers. This technology was used on *Pepsi Max* 600ml bottles running over the *Pepsi Max* logo. Viewers were then directed to the *Pepsi Max* site to watch more *Dynamo* video content and enter online competitions. For the launch event, *Dynamo* hung from the side of a number 543 Double-Decker bus, on its journey along Millbank, past the Houses of Parliament and across Westminster Bridge, while many passers by watched in amazement. (See Figure 30). The side of the bus carried a *Pepsi Max* poster advertisement containing the hashtag #livefornow. Sebastian Micozzi, *Pepsi* UK marketing director, said:

For us, this stunt was a fantastic way to launch the partnership with *Dynamo* for *Pepsi Max*. There are lots of

synergies between *Dynamo* and *Pepsi Max* and this passion for living for the now and making every day exhilarating is precisely why we are working with him." (Marketing, 2013)

Here Micozzi is describing the impact that the interaction of both, *Dynamo* and *Pepsi* has in producing a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects. He is also referring to the similarity in personality of the character *Dynamo* and the brand personality of *Pepsi Max* in that they have a similar ethos; passion and exhilaration.

### **Visual Impact**

Semiotics, the language of signs plays an important part in the successful communication of the *visual impact* of the advertising message on behalf of the *Pepsi Max* Brand. Of course the effectiveness of the advertising message will depend on how that code is interpreted by the viewer, and that will in turn depend on the cultural knowledge and experience of the viewer as I have established in the previous case study on *De Beers* that different objects, colours, shape and forms have different meanings to people from different cultural backgrounds. For the brand to create a sign that has meaning for its audience these codes will have to be taken into consideration as part of the creative brief. Knowledge of the demographic of the pedestrian through the gathering of marketing intelligence, in a particular geographical site is of utmost importance if the advertising message is to be effectively communicated. Understanding people and how they find meaning in aspects of their daily lives is something that Berger points out to us his definition of Semiotics below :

Semiotics is an imperialist science that believes that every discipline is really a sub-discipline of semiotics. It focuses

upon how people find meaning in various aspect of their lives.(Berger,1972:13).

Here Berger is discussing how signs help people understand their surroundings and their environment. Understanding the construction of the signs in the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement helps the spectator to decode the advertising message and discover the intended meaning.

A brand needs to create a visual impact that is memorable. As Du Plessis (2008) suggests in his 'Cupboard Theory' likable memories of the brand create an emotional response. A good emotional response is more likely to be memorable. This is important as the brand relies on the consumer memorability for brand recall at the point of sale within a store or when a consumer is carrying out online shopping. As pointed out by Du Plessis in the quote below:

It can create new associations for a brand ...a positive emotional response and repetition will increase the likelihood that the new impressions will become established as part of the brand's equity.(Du Plessis,2008:xv).

Here Du Plessis is discussing how visual impact can be memorable and these memories are stored in the memory until a consumer reaches a point of purchase, for example an online store or supermarket where he describes the memories as tumbling out, so that the consumer product of choice will be that one, that the consumer remembers. He goes on to say:

When a consumer thinks about buying a soft drink, their brain is able to recall the brand at point of purchase. " ... the job of advertising is to make itself remembered so that it can some way influence the purchase decision. And the job of those planning advertising campaigns is to plan them in such a way that they will be remembered. (Du Plessis,2008:9).

Here Du Plessis points out the importance of creating a memorable advertisement. It takes a strong positive image to create a memorable impact. Advertisers use visual, audio and sensory communication, the use of colours, sound, imagery, smell as well as people, as we see here in the *Pepsi Max* case study by the use of the magician *Dynamo* to create memorable visual imagery.

In their book *Marketing Metaphoria* Zaltman and Zaltman (2008) suggest that deep metaphors can be evoked by the advertiser. These deep metaphors impact on the consumer. For example, in his advertising work on the *Coca Cola* brand he suggests that people have personal memories associated with the brand that relate to family and home. They state that when a sample of people were asked to talk about what *Coca Cola* meant to them they found that it often brought up images of being at home with their parents or grandparents, enjoying a family occasion. They argue that “Deep metaphors start developing at birth and are shaped by our social environment.” (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008:xvi). This deep metaphor theory evokes the emotion of safety and security and could arguably be related to Maslow’s *Hierarchy of Needs*, where the feeling of safety and security is the most basic human need. As Zaltman and Zaltman argue in their book *Marketing Metaphoria*: “deep metaphors play powerfully yet silently in the unconscious minds of consumers, are relatively few and are universal.” (Zaltman, 2008: xviii)”. This is an extremely important point. They are suggesting that the deep metaphors created could be applicable to a wider audience. This would be an important consideration for the design of the ambient advertisement, particularly for the global brand *Pepsi Max* as the brand would be hoping to reach a wide demographic and global market.

It is possible to argue that brands want their target audience to connect with the emotion of belonging that is another powerful emotion. People feel belonging when the brand represents the same values as them. For example, we may want to belong to the *Fair Trade* brand if we feel that its ideas and corporate responsibility matches with our morals and ideals. Others may want to belong to the *Mercedes* brand as he or she may feel that its brand values matches with their own personal values or status. This concept of human need was theorized by Maslow as shown in the quote below:

A hierarchical view of human need developed by Abraham Maslow often used as the start point or background to understanding basic consumer motivation. (Doyle,2003: 200)

The idea being that a set of values associated with the brand are ones that the individual feels are relevant to their values and lifestyle and are therefore happy to associate with. The *John Lewis* Christmas advertising campaigns are successful at creating metaphors by using positive imagery that creates an emotional response. They talk about the need for authenticity in their campaigns. They want consumers to trust the brand. This is a concept discussed by Charles Forceville in his book *Pictorial Metaphor*: “The metaphorical utterance works by ‘projecting upon’ the primary subject as a set ‘associated implications’,” (Forceville,1996:6). Here Forceville is describing how an image once seen can provoke emotions through memories, associations or cultural references for the spectator. The *John Lewis* Christmas advertisement in 2015 entitled ‘Man On The Moon’ supported the charity *Age UK*. Their advertisement featured an elderly man sitting alone outside his house on the moon. This advertisement was

designed to engage the audience and provoke an emotional response. The images projected the feelings associated with loneliness onto the viewer.

## **Dynamo**

The likability and recognition of the magician *Dynamo* is vital in achieving the memorability of the *Pepsi Max* advertising message. *Dynamo* is a theatrical performer. His stage is most often that of the street rather than a theatre. But his style of magic is designed to shock and surprise his quite often, unsuspecting audience. Antonin Artaud author of *The Theatre and Its Double* (1938), believed that performance should shock and surprise audiences so enabling them to face their own fears. It could be argued that the illusion performed by *Dynamo* suggests to the viewer that the impossible is possible. From the expressions on the faces of the pedestrians, as seen in (Figure 31), they appear to be enjoying the surprise and the sense of fear for *Dynamo* adds to the enjoyment of the performance.

I would argue that *Dynamo* is in fact, a brand himself. He is a brand placed within a brand creating the advertising message. *Pepsi Max* is being introduced to the pedestrian by another internationally recognised brand. It is important to understand the narrative that surrounds *Dynamo* as brand narrative is another tool that makes it memorable. According to Wally Olins (2008), in his book *The Brand Handbook* there are four pillars of branding these are: Narrative, Differentiation, Consistency and Communication. In this case I am focusing on the narrative of *Dynamo*. *Dynamo's* real name is Steven Frayne. He was born in 1982 in the town of Bradford West Yorkshire. He grew up on a rundown Delph Hill housing estate. He used his sleight of hand skills, passed onto him by his

grandfather, to fend off bullies. Soon his reputation grew. His style of magic is street-based involving the pedestrian. His performances were filmed on the streets of London and at backstage events. His small inconspicuous frame is due partly due to having Crohn's disease as a youngster. (W, UKTV, 2013).

### **Dynamo the Archetype**

In this *Pepsi Max* ambient advertising campaign we see *Dynamo* as the archetypal magician. He performs tricks and stunts that appear to be impossible. These are performed quite often on the streets of major cities around the world. He has chosen to perform these stunts and tricks not in front of an audience on a stage, but on the city streets. Below Zaltman & Zaltman give us Carl Jung's definition of an archetype which he describes as universal:

The psychologist Carl G. Jung argued that archetypes are patterns, symbols, and images that represent qualities of mind inherent in and shared by every person, regardless of culture. Hence, archetypes are universal and operate in what Jung called our "collective unconscious." (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008:36):

Here Jung describes an archetype as a concept that sits in our collective unconscious, one that is shared universally. Archetypal metaphors have a powerful impact in ambient advertising. As I have discussed in earlier chapters, for an advertising message to reach its target audience, it needs to create a message that can be, as much as possible, universally understood. Using an archetype to do this, is a route to universal understanding as the advertising messages travels globally and instantly through social media shared technology. Jung's views have greatly influenced marketing research and practice. People have developed his ideas into numerous so-called human archetypes such as

hero, outlaw, magician, innocent, shape-shifter, explorer, creator, care giver, sage, jester and ruler. Each archetype has its own defining characteristics and variation that marketers have used in building their brands. An example of this would be the *Harley-Davidson* brand that is associated with breaking rules, symbolising 'the outlaw'. *The Marlboro Man*, associated with the Western frontier, symbolises 'the adventurer' and the *Omega* watch as worn by *James Bond 007* represents 'the hero.'

In the *Pepsi Max* stunt, *Dynamo* is dressed conventionally and casually. He wears beige trainers, brown chino trousers, a white and black T-shirt embossed with a star pattern, a black hooded jacket. He is unshaven and wearing sunglasses. His clothes and appearance fit in with 21<sup>st</sup> Century street fashion culture. In fact, what he wears is designed to 'fit in' rather than 'stand out' in the crowded London street. It is only when the spectacle takes place that he draws attention. Each item of clothing that he wears; shoes, clothes, sunglasses and hairstyle is a symbol that denotes a signifier which will have connotations in the mind of the intended viewer, possibly a likeness of his or herself in a reflection of the pedestrians' own style and image. (See Figure 29). *Maslow* discusses 'social needs' as one of the levels of his *Hierarchy of Needs* model. It is a concept that people want to belong to a group of like-minded associates, one that reflects their way of thinking. *Dynamo* is dressed to belong in the street environment. Brand association through basic human needs is a tool used by marketers to create feelings of belonging and self-esteem with their target audience. The *Collins Dictionary of Marketing* states that esteem means that you have achieved something that makes you recognized within and beyond your community and gives personal satisfaction (Doyle, 2003:200).

The image that *Dynamo* creates is almost 'Christ-like' in its pose. His arms are outstretched, showing openness and visibility. Visually, it creates a strong impact on the viewer, as the pose is iconic and one that is recognised throughout the world. There are many connotations of this image for the brand, for example, it could be that *Pepsi Max* is a brand that is elevated to superior status, or a brand that can achieve the 'impossible'. The sign itself is a polysemic in nature, having many possible meanings or connotations for the viewer. This stunt plays to *Maslow's* ideas of Esteem and Self-actualization. Esteem because the spectacle itself commands prestige and respect from the spectator. It is an achievement to appear to be able to levitate off the ground. (See Figure 29). This is something that mortals cannot achieve. It is relevant to *Maslow's* theory on self-actualization, because it allows the spectator to contemplate the aspirations of defying gravity and achieve a supreme experience. It could be argued that the reference to the 'Christ-like' pose (See Figure 27) evokes associations with the miracles that were performed as told, through bible stories that were also regarded as impossible by the on-looker. This campaign was seen by the pedestrian and then transmitted via mobile telephones and tablets through social networking sites and media sharing sites such as *YouTube* a global audience.



Figure 32 Crucifixion pose (Jesus Story, 2014)



Figure 33 *Dynamo* with police outrider (Londonist, 2013)

The pose, it could be argued has religious connotation. For example, the painting by Spanish Baroque painter Murillo Bartolome Esteban, illustrated in (Figure 32) shows the followers of Jesus, at his feet. The *Pepsi Max* photograph of the ambient campaign shows us pedestrians taking photographs and video at the feet

of *Dynamo*. (See Figure 30). It could be argued that the spectator is aspiring to be part of the spectacle as they are included in the performance and their photographs are uploaded on social media and content sharing sites, a modern day global art gallery. The connotation of the ambient advertisement, through its use of iconic visual imagery is elevating the *Pepsi Max* brand to iconic status.

The use of height in the *Pepsi Max* campaign is relevant to its overall visual communication and therefore perception and interpretation by the pedestrian. A concept that is relevant to this is chthonicity, which Michael O'Toole discusses in his book *The Language of Displayed Art*:

(from the Greek chthonos, earth) means earthbound and lacking in verticality or thrust; reclining figure or fallen warrior is more chthonic than a walking figure (O'Toole,2011 :35).

In the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement, *Dynamo* is thrust upwards giving him status, whilst the pedestrians are earthbound. In his book he explains this concept of chthonicity through the example of P.Bondarenko and Associates: Gagarian Monument built in 1980 in Gagarian Square, Moscow. He describes the concept as deifying in the context of when an object is risen up off the ground it gives it higher status and more importance. This visual sign in the *Pepsi Max* campaign is by the use of levitation. *Dynamo* levitates to the top of the London bus. Seemingly impossible to entice the pedestrian to be attracted and engage in conversation as they are incredulous to the visual imagery in front of them.

Unit \ Function	REPRESENTATIONAL	MODAL	COMPOSITIONAL
WORK	Narrative themes Scenes Portrayals Interplay of episodes	Rhythm Gaze Frame Light Perspective	Modality Gestalt: Framing Horizontals Verticals Diagonals Proportion Geometry Line Rhythm Colour
EPISODE	Actions, events Agents–patients–goals Focal/side sequence Interplay of actions	Relative Prominence Scale Centrality Interplay of Modalities	Relative position in work Alignment Interplay Coherence } of forms
FIGURE	Character Act/Stance/Gesture Clothing Components Object	Gaze Stance Characterization	Contrast: Scale Line Light Colour Relative position in episode Parallelism/Opposition Subframing
MEMBER	Part of body/object Natural form	Stylization	Cohesion: (Parallel/Contrast/Rhythm) Reference

Figure 34 Michael O'Toole Fig 1.5 Functions and systems in paintings p.25 (*The Language of Displayed Art*)

The strength of the visual impact lies in its visual coherence. All elements come together to create the whole visual impact.

In O'Toole's book the *Language of Displayed Art* he discusses visual coherence in the context of how all the elements of a painting work together to engage us in a discourse, as shown in (Figure 34). The three functions *Representational*, *Modal*, *Compositional* form the composition of the painting. Each function and unit helps the viewer to interpret the overall image. An image is *Representational* by using scenes, actions and character, stance, gesture and objects in which the viewer has an understanding of what is represented in the painting. The *Modal* function is where he includes, gaze, stance light and perspective, which gives the viewer the impression of the mood that is conveyed by the painting. The *Compositional* Function includes visual tropes such as alignment, framing, colour and line. These help the viewer to interpret the relevance and overall message of

the painting. O'Toole argues that by using his Functional Modal it is possible for spectators to interpret and make comments on a painting.

This theory could be applied to the *Pepsi Max* Campaign. Representational relates to Dynamo's stance and character. The Modal function represents his gaze and body language and Compositional, the alignment, colour and position of his body and clothing in his surroundings. All of these visual elements or functions work together to form a coherent visual message as described below by O'Toole:

I am convinced that we construct the meaning as much from the small details and their interactions as from the overall configuration- and that semiotic approach helps us understand the process. (O'Toole, 2011:54)

As O'Toole describes here, this idea of constructing meaning can be applied to ambient advertising, as it is the whole of the scene that creates the ambient advertisement; the bus, the magician, the location and the pedestrian. The stunt will attract attention as a man levitating alongside a London bus is outside the realms of reality, as we know it. The pedestrian is interpreting the image that they see. O'Toole describes modality as one of the functions in his Functional Semiotic Model often as a starting point to begin a discourse on a work of art. This can be applied here as it is the mood created by the spectacle that creates an impact on the pedestrian. We know from earlier chapters on the work of Du Plessis that creating memories are very reliant on positive experience. It is important that in order for an advertisement to be memorable it needs to be likable. The most important factor of this *Pepsi Max* ambient campaign is that it is entertaining and enjoyable. If we look at the faces of the pedestrians in the crowd their body language shows pleasure. As O'Toole states that 'both representation and

modality depend on composition'. (O'Toole,2011:54). The composition of an ambient advertisement enhances the enjoyable experience for the viewer and therefore increases likability.

### **Environmental Impact**

The location for the *Pepsi Max* ambient campaign is in the capital city of London. Most of the sights of the city are iconic and are recognized across the globe. They have been used in films, books and TV programmes. A London bus is used as part of the campaign. It is globally recognized by its red colour. The London destination is marked clearly on the front of the bus: Victoria. The red has the connotation of London capital city. The destination has the connotation of the bus station but also a previous Queen of England. As *Dynamo* appears to levitate next to the top of the bus his reflection can be seen quite clearly in the window. The sights of London are also reflected in the windows of the bus as the spectacle passes by the pedestrians. *Dynamo* appears to be smiling and although the pose seems impossible to maintain, he appears to be enjoying the performance. His appearance is confident and self-assured. O'Toole indicates that the pedestrian's viewpoint changes as they move around a piece of art or sculpture and this can be said to be the same when interacting with the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement as it moves along the road:

The viewers physical and psychological involvement shifts as each viewpoint makes a new challenge, constructs of us a new and insecure viewing subject." (O'Toole, 2011:58)

O'Toole's Functional Semiotic Model 'Compositional Function' is described as the arrangement of forms within a pictorial space. He talks about the arrangement by the artist. It is possible to use this 'Compositional Function' theory to argue that

the *Pepsi Max* brand has arranged the space around the ambient advertisement. By choosing the route the bus travelled through London; passing the Houses of Parliament and crossing Westminster Bridge. I am arguing that there was a construction or arrangement of the environment in which the ambient advertisement took place. It is not random, but selected as the landscape around the ambient advertisement will also be part of the visual language of the ambient advertisement itself. The ambient advertisement was also viewed by the pedestrian through the lens of their cameras, creating a different viewpoint again. It could be argued as suggested by Augé that the pedestrian is a traveller through the space and only sees a 'glimpse' of the spectacle and that this 'glimpse' would be piled hurriedly into the memory to be recalled at a later date (Augé:1995,86). But an ambient advertisement is designed to interrupt the landscape and draw the pedestrian toward the spectacle of *Dynamo* levitating alongside the bus. Transforming the space into a place. These images were cascaded via social media on the day of the event. Those framed images were selected by the pedestrian through their viewfinder and viewed by a global audience. The pedestrian was therefore selecting the composition almost as an art director for the brand would and then disseminating the image and therefore the advertisement for the *Pepsi Max* brand. There are three factors of selection of composition at work here. That of the brand's choice of location and therefore composition of the ambient advertisement and that of the pedestrian, who created their own framed composition through the camera lens. I believe that all parts of the composition are of equal importance in creating an effective ambient advertising message: The bus, the magician, the pedestrians and the London

landmarks all play their part in the visual construction of that message. As

O'Toole states in his book *The Language of Displayed Art*:

All of the visual signs become a "Gestalt," a German word that acts as a term for the complex relations between a whole visual image and its parts." "Gestalt theory" claims that we always have overall perception of forms and objects, and that when we focus on their parts we perceive them in relation to the whole." (O'Toole,2011:23)

This is relevant to the *Pepsi Max* campaign, as I argue that the pedestrian as part of a Gestalt is important in the construction of the ambient advertisement. They form part of the Gestalt by being within the space in which the ambient advertisement takes place. Their stance, gaze and paralanguage is seen alongside the spectacle and captured on camera. They draw attention to the ambient advertisement and in doing so, become part of the visual message.

O'Toole states that:

Certain decisions about the arrangement of forms within pictorial space, about line and rhythm and colour relationships, have been made by the artist in order to convey more effectively and more memorably the represented subject and to make for a more dynamic modal relation to the viewer. In other words the three functions always work together. They are inseparable, and we only separate them in our description as a convenient way of focusing on the particular systems which operate for each function one at a time. Thus only when the composition is related to what is represented and how it is conveyed to the viewer can it enrich the dialogue; otherwise it is just one more self-aggrandizing monologue." (O'Toole, 2011:22)

O'Toole is arguing that we need to consider all three functions to make an accurate interpretation of a painting. In ambient advertising I am arguing that all three parameters should be considered when interpreting the advertisement.

## **Pedestrian Interpretation**

In this section I will be discussing the effect that the ambient advertisement has on the spectator. All signs in this advertisement are relevant to the overall message. As the bus that *Dynamo* holds onto moves, the surrounding environment is changed. The experience of the pedestrian is changed. The pedestrian does not have a tactile experience in the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement. It is their visual sense that is being stimulated. As we look at *Dynamo* apparently levitating we can also see people on the bus looking through the window, incredulously. Each one is using a mobile phone or hand-held device to capture the scene. The ambiguity of what they are seeing is creating a striking image that they want to capture. It is the Modal (O'Toole 2010) aspect that is apparent here. The pedestrian in the space is being affected emotionally by what they are seeing. Their behavior reflects their response to the ambient advertisement in terms of how they relate to it, and how it relates to them. In this ambient advertisement *Dynamo* himself creates very powerful metaphors by creating the unreal and supernatural by appearing to levitate up the side of the London bus. Levitation and human flight is an impossible human capability. The metaphor he creates is that of immortality, 'god-like' not human but possibly super human. He creates an image of fantasy. The whole spectacle evokes an emotional reaction; possibly that of surprise, amazement and even envy. It is an incredulous and spectacular demonstration. It has the element of danger and it could be argued that the pedestrian becomes fearful for *Dynamo* but also enjoys watching the spectacle. It is an unusual phenomenon, a three dimensional magic trick. It is a performance put on to attract the attention of the pedestrian. Like all good pantomimes the audience is encouraged to participate. The pedestrians in

this case participate by their gaze and gesture to each other and toward the spectacle. As the pedestrian will try to make sense of what they are viewing the image is retained, lingering in their mind. O'Toole states in his *Functional System Model* that the rhythm, gaze, stance, frame, perspective, line, light scale and colour plays an important role in the Modal aspect of the interpretation of work of art or sculpture. When talking about his Functional Model, O'Toole describes the Modal in terms of how we engage emotionally. In other words how it can affect our mood and experience. Modality puts a 'slant' on the reality, he or she is depicting (O'Toole, 2011:193).

He refers to the fact that all elements work together to engage us. What the pedestrian sees in the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement is a gestalt made up of a number of visual signs; the magician, the bus, the surroundings and other pedestrians. Pedestrians might recognize *Dynamo* and they are rewarded emotionally by this recognition that may tap into his or her feelings of status, esteem and belonging. He or she may not recognize *Dynamo* but become thrilled and excited by the stunt. If we look closely at the photographs and video of the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement we will note that the pedestrians' reaction is a positive one. We know this from the facial expressions of the pedestrians and the audio from the sound track on the *YouTube* video. People can be heard cheering and calling to each other to view the stunt. It is important to remember at this point that the ambient advertisement has been placed in a specific location; this is not a random choice, but one that is orchestrated. The setting is the capital city of the UK, London. The effectiveness of the campaign depends on careful art direction of all aspects that form the whole picture. The other objects and landmarks set within the scene forming the gestalt are iconic, they have global

recognition; for example, *Westminster Bridge*, *Parliament Square* and the *Houses of Parliament*. These are large inanimate objects that are distinguished by their colour, shape, line and form. They are signs that are universally recognised. This example of ambient advertising is important in terms of the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement's effectiveness. However, we can read from the quote below by Warc that the ambient advertisement was effective as part of an integrated campaign:

The 'Unbelievable' YouTube channel drove increased value share, market share in 2014 and 2015, and £9m of additional sales; Max saw improvements that outperformed the category across nearly all of its equity measures YOY with increases even more pronounced amongst Millennials. (Warc.com)

The case study effectiveness related to this campaign is discussed in greater detail in the conclusion of this thesis.

## **Case Study 2: *John Lewis***

In the first case study in this Chapter, I discussed the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertising campaign and how the body; its position, place and environment can effectively be used to surprise the spectator. In this section the focus will be on examining the relationship of the spectator's body to a static object set within a main pedestrian area within the city of Cardiff. In this case study the pedestrian is encouraged to move around the object and interact with it through touch and self-awareness of its size in relation to their own body. I will discuss how the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement which appeared in 2009, in Cardiff, designed to advertise the launch of the first *John Lewis* department store in Wales, creates a surreal experience for the spectator. It does this through the use of hyperbole. By placing an everyday consumer product in an unusual setting and exaggerating its size, it provokes curiosity. The interaction between the object, a giant handbag and the pedestrian, within the city landscape, creates for the pedestrian self-awareness of proximity and size. (See Figure 36).



Figure 35 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement Campaign Cardiff (Angela Williams, 2009)



Figure 36 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement Campaign Cardiff (Angela Williams, 2009)



Figure 37 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement Campaign Cardiff (Angela Williams, 2009)

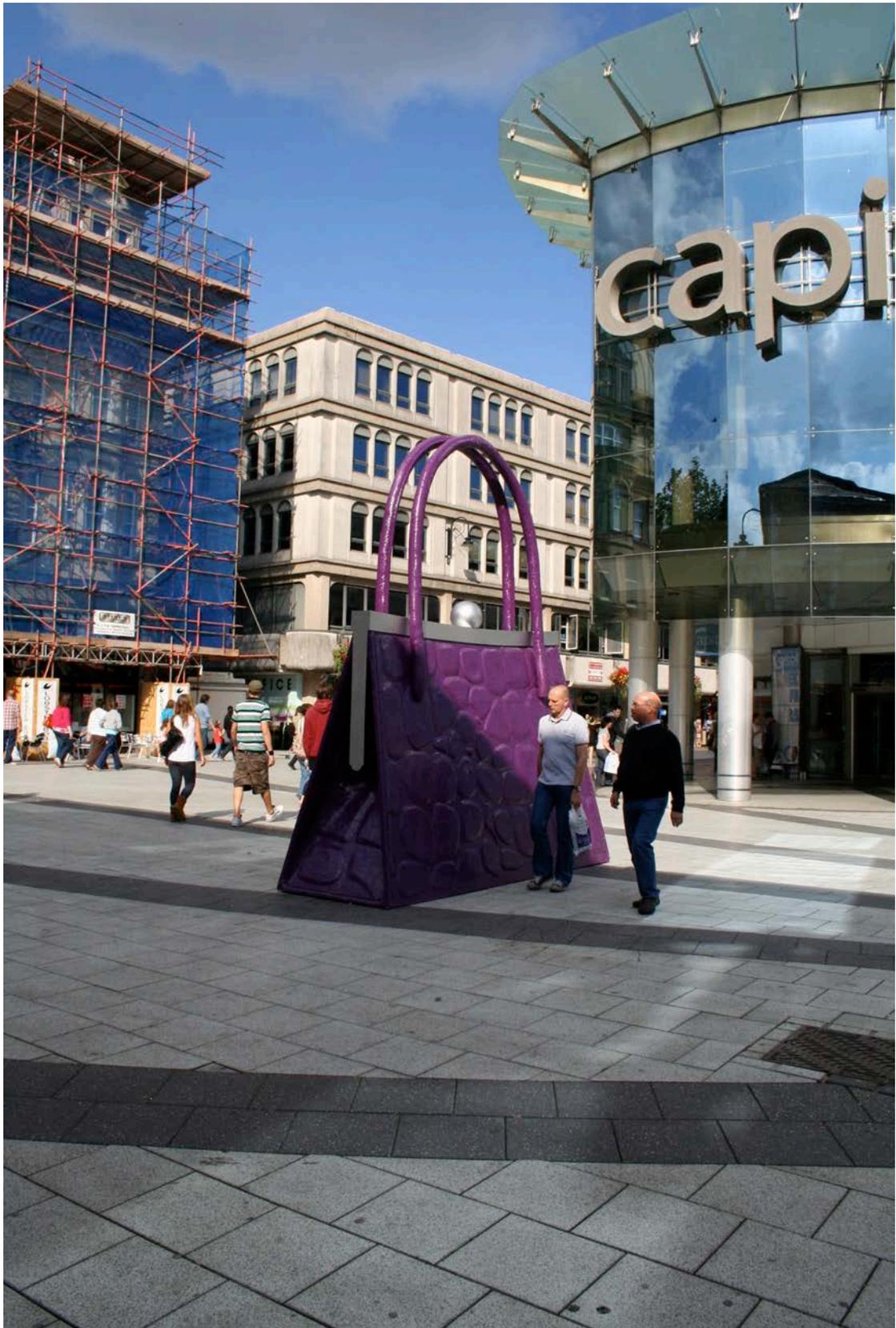


Figure 38 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement Campaign Cardiff (Angela Williams, 2009)

## Background

The *John Lewis Partnership* is a chain of department stores that operate throughout the UK, it was created by John Spedan Lewis, in 1885. His groundbreaking philosophy was fired by his obsession with fairness and humanity. Accompanied by his need for social justice and his business ingenuity, he became a trailblazer in the retail industry. In 1915 he created a retail model called the 'third way' where staff and owners together formed a democratic co-operative, where they are given a share of the profits of the business. This was seen as a radical move at the time. The *Partnership* philosophy and ethos is still the same today as it was from its commencement and the slogan 'never knowingly undersold' is still used today as part of the marketing strategy and advertising communication. It has 32 department stores across the UK employing 88,700 permanent staff and a turnover of annual gross sales of £10bn ([johnlewispartnership.co.uk](http://johnlewispartnership.co.uk)). The *John Lewis Partnership* story is one of success and inclusiveness.

## Visual Impact

The most striking visual image of this ambient advertisement is created by its use of hyperbole. (See Figure 37). The object at the centre of the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement is a replica of a purple handbag, which has been exaggerated in size to gigantic proportions. (See Figure 38). It is a reproduction model that has been recreated in the most accurate detail mimicking the real object, an *Osprey* handbag. (See Figures 40). The object makes such a bold visual statement that the pedestrian is surprised and intrigued by the spectacle before them. Hyperbole is a visual trope that has been successfully used in many other ambient

advertising campaigns. For example, the ambient advertisement below for the *Energizer* battery set in Malaysia (Figure 39). Designed by Naga, *DDB* it is an ambient advertisement that is a replica of giant battery holding up the concrete structure. It is a giant metaphor that represents the power and strength of the product. Notice how the battery has become personified by giving it a face and limbs. It has its thumb up giving the viewer the sign that everything is ok, giving reassurance and therefore a feeling of safety, an emotion that Maslow argues is important in his *Hierarchy of Human Needs*. It is impossible to miss the advertisement because of its size. It could also be argued that it embodies the tangible benefits of the product, power and strength. As Frank Weyers writes in his book *Salvador Dali Life and Work*:

It was not until artists such as Salvador Dali or Rene Magritte discovered the surreal in the real and depicted it in their pictures was the way prepared for producing 'surreal objects with a symbolic function' as Dali called them. The surrealist object extended the traditional concept of sculpture in that the artist worked without formal rules and could only pursue his own associations. (Weyers, 2005:30).



Figure 39 Energizer Battery Ambient Advertising Campaign (Advertolog, 2002)

This is relevant to the John Lewis example in that the object in the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement uses surreal expression through exaggeration to attract

the attention of the pedestrian, as suggested by Weyers where surrealism relies on symbolic function as opposed to literal meaning. Hyperbole is used to create a visual impact. As I have already discussed in previous case studies the ambient advertisement is open to interpretation by the viewer, depending on his or her own recognition, knowledge and cultural experience. Therefore, it is important that the brand understands the demographic of the geographical area in which the ambient advertisement is situated. Perception is a concept that depends on recognition by the senses, such as sight of some external object or phenomenon.

Initially, the pedestrian uses the sense of sight to view the *John Lewis* handbag ambient campaign. Arguably to the pedestrian its oversize and exaggeration is its first impression. It is created in the image of the real *Osprey* bag.(See Figure 40). It is an icon of the real bag, an image only, not a real handbag. Its size is perceived as being an important sign. Size, in this case is a metaphor for importance in terms of expense and value. In their book *Depth Psychology: Influence of Time and Culture* it is argued that:

Hyperbole is also defined as exaggeration, extravagance and want of due proportion. However, the use of hyperbole is also an excess that can evoke sublimity, greatness. Thus, excess and impropriety can –in cases of masterly use –become great, sublime.” (Colomb,Santaniello,Lehrer,1999:273)

This quote supports the argument that *John Lewis* ambient campaign uses hyperbole to great effect. Its exaggerated proportions, colour and texture attract the attention of the pedestrian; the object is used as a sign to signify the unusual to the pedestrian. (See figure 38). Through its proportion and size it projects self-confidence. It displays greatness. As the pedestrian encounters the object he or

she is aware of their sense of body size, proportion and self-awareness.

In his book *The Language of Displayed Art*, O'Toole discusses sculpture functions and how they relate to the viewer *Modally, Representationally* and *Compositionally* and how these functions form a coherent whole in terms of relating the sculpture to its physical context. His theory could be applied to the *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign in order to assess its impact as it is a three-dimensional object, as is a sculpture. The *John Lewis* ambient advertisement creates a modal impact in that it creates an emotion in the pedestrian in terms of how the viewer feels when they view it. The object is a representation of an *Osprey* handbag. It does this through its structure, shape, form, colour and texture and the typography *Osprey* (See Figure 42). Its composition takes into consideration the setting in terms of environment and how pedestrians are able to move around it as they view it.

O'Toole argues how we respond to a sculpture when we first view it:

In the first place, it makes us acutely and immediately aware of our own body...representations of animals like horses, lions and serpents evoke a response to their scale and to our typical physical, as well as emotional, relationship to them. Even inanimate objects and the abstract forms of modern sculpture have a scale and to which we relate to with our bodies, feeling dwarfed by a massive form or a landscape wrapped in plastic, or being charmed by our domination of miniature forms. (O'Toole,2011:32)

O'Toole is suggesting that the size of a sculpture has great bearing on the emotional reaction felt by the viewer. He is suggesting that the size of the sculpture makes the viewer aware of his or her own body size.

It is important to note that when we examine the *John Lewis* ambient

advertisement, we see how people are standing next to the object almost visually measuring their stature and height against the inanimate object. (See Figure 38). The pedestrian is examining his or her place in that space against the space taken up by the object. The space or environment is defined as a whole by the object and pedestrian within it. As Augé suggests 'it is the pedestrian who transform a street' (Augé:1995,79). The *John Lewis* ambient advertisement was not placed in an arbitrary way but was placed specifically in an open pedestrian space on Queen Street, Cardiff, which is a pedestrian route that runs through a main shopping precinct. The ambient advertisement was used as part of a marketing strategy to draw attention to the opening of *John Lewis's* first store in Wales. It could be argued that the visual metaphor created by the giant handbag is that of the *John Lewis* brand, being placed within the city. It is a visual giant sitting amongst the pedestrians and dwarfing them as they walk past or engage with it. (See Figure 37). The visual trope, hyperbole is used here to attract the attention of the pedestrian.

In his book *The Language of Displayed Art*, O'Toole discusses 'thrust' and 'Chthonicity' in terms of the impact that three-dimensional objects have on the viewer. Chthonic meaning earthbound and lacking in upward thrust. He says that this too, has a bearing on how we relate to a sculpture with our bodies. In the *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign, the object thrusts upward into the skyline above the heads of the pedestrians. He discusses the idea of a 'physical aura' (O'Toole,2011:34), that is created in the space surrounding a sculpture and the viewer. In reference to the concept of a field of subtle luminous radiation surrounding an object it could be argued that the *John Lewis* handbag creates a 'physical aura' as it changes the physical space of the street by filling in the area

that would be occupied by the pedestrian.

### **Environmental Impact**

As discussed in the paragraph above The *John Lewis* ambient advertisement has effected the physical environment, the atmosphere and the visual reality by changing the landscape of the shopping precinct. For the pedestrian the object has transformed the public space. What was an empty public pathway now contains an object. (See Figure 35). The pedestrian has to move around the object as it has taken away some of the ground space of the paved area. The pedestrian uses tactics as referred to by de Certeau(1984) to negotiate the change in the physical environment and adapt to it. The ambient advertisement is a solid structure. It is large and is taller than the average person sitting in the centre of the public space and occupying it. Its purple colour is striking and can be seen reflected in the glass windows of the buildings around it, increasing its impact on the viewer. The purple colour is bright and bold and the solid mass attracts the attention of the pedestrian. Iconicity, a visual trope that is used to morph the reality, has come into play, as the handbag is changed in terms of size and proportion. The giant handbag looks out of place amongst the buildings that surround it and the pedestrians who walk past and around the exaggerated spectacle are dwarfed by its size and volume. The object appears to be unrelated to any of the buildings that surround it. There is no signage near it and there appears to be no curator of the object.

In terms of O'Toole's Representational Function, the object represents an *Osprey* handbag. It is an exact replica of the one that can be purchased in the *John Lewis* store. The texture and colour of the object matches those of the real *Osprey*

handbags. The object is designed to be a representation of an expensive 'designer' fashion accessory. There is no brand label for *John Lewis* accompanying this object, so the pedestrian is left to reach their own conclusion about the object and what it may represent. The object evokes curiosity in the viewer, which is a well-used and successful strategy in all advertising. There is no sign-posting to the *John Lewis* store near the object. Again the viewer is left to ponder on what the object is representing or pointing toward. The fact that the object is placed in the shopping centre of the city is also a symbol that alludes to the puzzle that the pedestrian is being asked to solve.

### **Pedestrian Interpretation**

In O'Toole's Modal function, that refers to the mood that a painting or sculpture portrays, he argues that it makes sense to start with the impact of the whole painting or sculpture and gradually work down to the details. I have referenced his theory to discuss the pedestrian interpretation.

The *John Lewis* ambient advertisement is a high impact visual object representing a purple *Osprey* handbag (See Figure 40) sitting on a paved public space in the centre of Cardiff. Buildings surround the object and pedestrians interact with it as they pass by because of its situation at ground level. The proportion and size is exaggerated and gives the impression of importance through its upward thrust and lack of chthonicity, in other words being earthbound. It's centre of gravity, solidity, interplay with space, line, relief and plasticity are part of the system which O'Toole calls *MASS*. The verticality, steep angle or shallow angle and horizontal are part of the *EQUILIBRIUM*. The handbag's modality can be assessed in terms of its life-like, exaggerated,

attenuated and abstract qualities. O'Toole argues that:

The degree to which the reality represented is 'slanted' to carry a spiritual, moral or didactic message is a system of modality that sculpture shares with painting. Because of our, and the sculptor's direct bodily response there is often a greater immediacy about the message and connotations of a sculpture than is experienced with a painting. Similarly, stylistic modalities of authenticity, exaggeration, attenuation or abstraction will tend to be more obvious and sculpture or high degree of one of these features generally evokes a far louder outcry among the press and public. (O'Toole;2011:37)

Here O'Toole is arguing that the impact of the viewer's body in relation to an object creates a stronger emotional impact. It's as if we physically connect with the presence of the object and the larger the object, the stronger the emotional reaction. We can see this when we study the expression on the viewer's faces in (Figure 36). The pedestrian can be seen smiling. In (Figure 38) the expression on the face of the pedestrians is one of curiosity. When we examine the faces and body language of the pedestrians in the *Pepsi Max* ambient campaign the expression was one of surprise. (See Figure 31).

This idea is also supported by the theory that when our reality is violated, this in turn changes our behavior. Robert Cialdini (2007) discusses the concept of 'social proof' in his book, *Influence, the Psychology of Persuasion*:

One means we used to determine what is correct is to find out what other people think is correct. The principle applies especially to the way we decide what constitutes correct behavior. We view a behavior as more correct in a given situation to the degree that we see others performing it. Whether the question is what to do with an empty popcorn box in a movie theatre, how fast to drive on a certain stretch of highway, or how to eat the chicken at a dinner party the actions of those around us will be important in defining the answer. (Cialdini, 2007:116).

Here Cialdini refers to how we look to others to know how to behave in social situations. He is saying that we are looking to others for behavior indicators to know how to behave ourselves and possibly how to interpret a situation. In the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement, the pedestrians can be seen looking at other pedestrians for a guide as to how to behave or react to the object.

Social proof is the principal already extensively applied to influence consumer behavior in a range of contexts. Cialdini mentions small-scale examples such as:

bartenders salting their tip jars with a few dollar bills at the beginning of the evening to simulate tips left by prior customers.(Cialdini, 2007:117).

In the *John Lewis* ambient advertisement the principle of 'social proof' is relied upon to create interest and generate curiosity by the pedestrian as I observed when I study the ambient campaign first hand. I noticed how the pedestrians engaged with the object. Firstly by viewing it, then being drawn toward it. They touched the object and were intrigued by its tactile quality. I personally observed that pedestrians talked about the object to each other and gauged reactions by looking at each other to decide how to behave and respond to what they were seeing. They interacted with the object and as they did so, other pedestrians were drawn into the arena as they endeavored to interpret the object all becoming part of visual language that was developing in 'real time'. Their paralanguage became an indicator to other pedestrians and created more curiosity and inquisitiveness about the object. I observed that the pedestrians used their intuition when deciding to approach and observe the object. Intuition is instinctive and this may have led them to believe that this could be an advertisement but there were no markings, no brand logotype for *John Lewis* displayed only the *Osprey* logo that

further aroused their curiosity. (See Figure 42).

The ambient advertising campaign was effective and its presence coincided with the opening of the new *John Lewis* store in Cardiff. According to Wales online the opening was very successful:

More than 100 people queued from early in the morning to be first into the new £35m John Lewis on The Hayes last Thursday. More than 12,000 transactions were made that day, with managing director Liz Mihell revealing sales exceeded target by more than 20%.”  
(WalesOnline,2009)

The effectiveness of this ambient campaign is discussed in detail in the conclusion of the thesis.

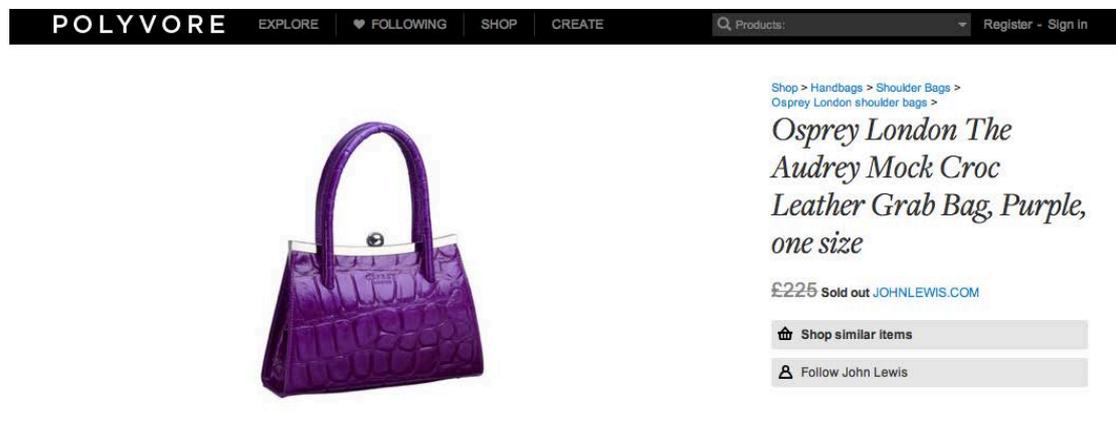


Figure 40 Osprey handbag online advertisement (Polyvore, 2009)



Figure 41 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement Cardiff

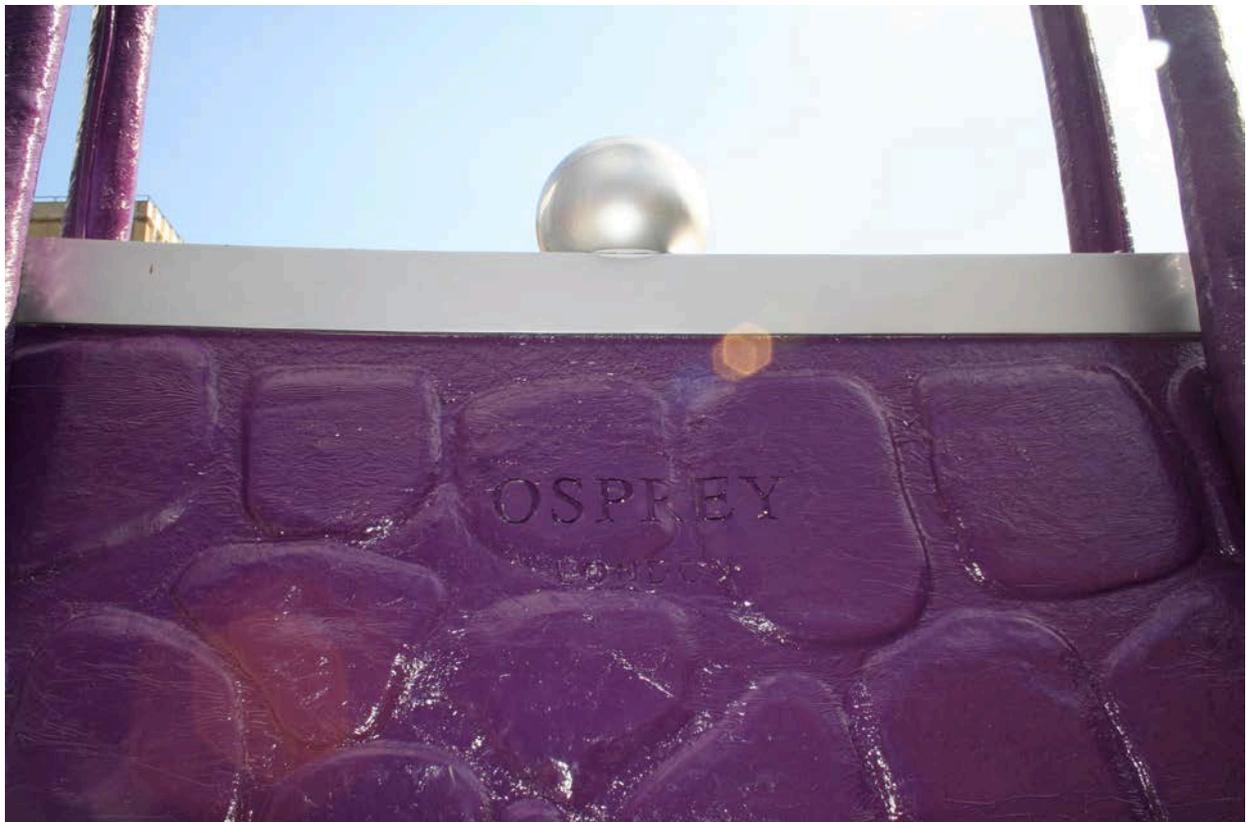


Figure 42 *John Lewis* Ambient Advertisement close up

## Conclusion of Chapter 2

In the first section of Chapter Two I have used the three parameters; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation** to investigate and interpret the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertising message. I have discussed how this case study differs from the *De Beers* case study in that the ambient advertisement is a moving spectacle as opposed to a static object. The *Pepsi Max* stunt requires an immediate response whereas the *De Beers* ambient advertisement allows the pedestrian to process the metaphor that is created by the visual image and use of words.

I have discussed the visual impact of the stunt and the relevance of the use of archetype in the form of the magician, *Dynamo*. I have argued that the use of the pose and appearance of *Dynamo* creates semiotic signs that cause the pedestrian to observe and react to the spectacle. I have argued that the pedestrian becomes part of the spectacle as they take photographs and are in turn captured through the camera lens. I have discussed the importance of choice of environment and geographical location. The use of iconic London tourist sites; the London Bus, for example, directs the viewer to the importance and relevance of the location and this highly recognisable persuasive message is cascaded via social media sharing platforms. I have discussed the pedestrian interpretation of the stunt and how their shock and awe at the sight is marked by a visible change in body language as they point at the spectacle and take photographs. The height and perspective of the stunt is designed to grab the attention of the pedestrian and create a memorable spectacle that is then observed by the pedestrian putting them at the centre of the advertisement and making them part of the staging.

In the second section of Chapter Two, I have used the three parameters; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation** to investigate and interpret the *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign. I have discussed how this case study differs from the *De Beers and Pepsi Max* case studies in that the ambient advertisement is a solid object that does not change. However, it does require immediate response as in the *Pepsi Max* campaign and also allows the pedestrian to process the metaphor that is created by the visual tropes, in particular hyperbole, as in the *De Beers Campaign*.

I have discussed its visual impact on the pedestrian and how the visual trope, hyperbole has been used to grab the attention of the pedestrian. How its size, colour and representation of the real *Osprey* handbag is used to intrigue and evoke curiosity in the mind of the pedestrian and to allow them to consider their own physical sense of size in relation to the object. I have discussed the importance of the environmental impact and the relevance of the placement of the object within a city centre location and amongst buildings and shops. I have also discussed how the use of hyperbole creates an emotional response to the object by the pedestrian as they are dwarfed by its size and I have discussed how the theories of social proof plays an important part in the pedestrian interpretation of the ambient advertisement.

## CONCLUSION

At the start of my research I discussed how I was originally inspired to write this thesis by reading Nevett's book, *Advertising in Britain A History* and how in that book he described the prostitutes in ancient Greece using a form of ambient advertising in order to create an advertising message. They did this by putting nails in the soles of their shoes to spell out the message 'follow me'. It was this that inspired me to start my investigation into ambient advertising. I wanted to discover how ambient advertising is created and how it is used by brands as part of a marketing strategy to create powerful advertising messages. My geographical journey took me to Chicago to speak to *Leo Burnett* advertising agency, to Grand Central Terminal, New York, to London and to Cardiff.

My research has led me to conclude that advertising has had to become entertaining and it differentiates itself by standing outside of traditional media. It has to be powerful enough to be positively memorable so that the consumer wants to disseminate its message. Ambient advertising is successful in this way because it is entertaining, visually powerful and therefore memorable. When placed in the right setting it encourages the brand's chosen demographic to interact with it. It has also led me to conclude that the viewer's behavior becomes part of the ambient advertising message as they talk about what they are viewing, point and show facial expression. They also help to promote the advertising message by taking photographs and video often uploading them to social networking sites.

During my research I have used the theories of semiotics, social science, anthropology and visual communication to support my argument.

To enter the discourse I have used the three parameters; **Visual Impact**, **Environmental Impact** and **Pedestrian Interpretation**. Although these are separate parameters, they overlap showing how each relies on the other to create an effective ambient advertising message. I have shown this in my conclusion diagram in (Figure 43).

My investigation has allowed me to apply the theories of semiotics to read the ambient advertisement, as signs, that signify meanings through metaphors in our cognition, in terms of positive memories. I have discussed how Zaltman and Zaltman's theories of deep metaphors, create emotions that can link to our past memories and create new ones. I have used the theories of Abraham Maslow to interpret the hierarchy of human needs in terms of perception of an ambient advertisement and how brands tap into the human needs of belonging, safety and status in order to reach people with an advertising message. Through the theories of Charles Forceville, I have been able to discuss and demonstrate how ambient advertising uses metaphor in all three of my case studies, demonstrating that as humans we think in terms of metaphors but also understanding that our experience, cultural and knowledge are significant in understanding the advertising message.

This investigation has led me to the conclusion, that for an ambient advertisement to be effective it has to be; visually impactful and create metaphors in the mind of the pedestrian on a cross-cultural basis. It has to be likeable and induce a strong positive emotional response in the pedestrian. The physical surroundings of the ambient advertisement installation/stunt plays an important role in the creation of the visual message and this impacts on the advertising message. The buildings, architecture, fabric, colour and people in the public space create connections and

connotations and conveys certain reinforced messages to the pedestrian which they in turn interpret. These elements all work together as one to create the effective advertising message.

The theoretical framework is that of an interpretive investigation based on intertextuality, the idea of connectivity between the object/spectacle, the environment and the pedestrian interpretation. It is a constructivist approach as it is my interpretation of how an advertising message is communicated and disseminated through the visual impact, and the importance of the physical space that surrounds the ambient advertisement and the pedestrian interpretation of what they see, hear, touch and feel. All these elements contribute to the effective advertising message. They form a discourse by using examples of three ambient advertising campaigns and an applying semiotic, social science, anthropology and visual communication theory to construct an argument. I have used three case studies *De Beers*, *Pepsi Max* and *John Lewis* to demonstrate how these theories can be used to understand how the advertising message in the ambient advertisement can be decoded and interpreted.

### **Visual Impact**

Referencing the theories of semiotics, social science and visual communication has given support to my hypothesis on the effect of visual impact of the ambient advertisement. I have been able to show that the visual signs, as seen by the pedestrian, can create metaphors and emotional connections. This leads to a conclusion that the careful selection and combination of the elements of visual language, line, tone, colour, shape and texture can have a strong impact on cultural interpretation of the sign by the pedestrian.

By looking at visual signs such as line, tone, colour, shape, texture, form and space, it is possible to interpret how signs can be used to construct the desired effect on the pedestrian. A semiotic approach allowed me to interpret these visual signs. It allows me to look at the intertextual nature of the ambient advertisement.

### **Environmental Impact.**

By discussing the geographical location of the ambient advertisement, surroundings, I have been able to conclude that the choice of location for the ambient advertisement is crucial in creating the metaphors in the mind of the pedestrian and helping the pedestrian in making those connections through association using visual language in terms of substance, quality, style ambience and setting. The environment is a sign that signifies part of the advertising message. It plays a part, as a major contributing factor to the overall intended meaning of the ambient advertisement. Ambient advertising relies on contradiction in the environment. One thing argues against another. For example, in the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertising campaign, a man levitates alongside a double-decker bus as it travels through the centre of London. This is a scene that is unusual as it forms a conflict in the mind of the pedestrian, making it remarkable and impressive. The choice of environment of the centre of London with its iconic landmarks is not only significant but could be argued as imperative in its creation of an effective advertising message.

In the *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign a giant handbag is placed in the centre of the city of Cardiff. Its extensive scale and proportion set in the cityscape makes it catch the eye as it protrudes into the space used by pedestrians to walk and window-shop. It is striking and attracts the attention of the pedestrian

because it is out of the ordinary. It is a bizarre sight, a giant handbag placed on a pavement in a shopping precinct surrounded by city architecture. Sitting in this environment makes the object look strange and uncommon, in fact, out of this world. The environment in which the object is placed, is contributing to the intended advertising message. It is instrumental in the way the object is observed and perceived by the pedestrian. The environment and the object together are factors in how the pedestrian interprets the message.

In the *De Beers* ambient campaign, the words are spelled out in roses and displayed in Grand Central Terminal, New York City. The environment is a pedestrian space in a busy location that sees thousands of commuters and visitors travel through its doors on a daily basis. These pedestrians are enveloped by a marble walls and historical reference. It is a hub, a centre point for people travelling all over the United States and has a distinct and extraordinary character. The *De Beers* installation of roses, a static construction placed amongst such a bustling environment is a contradiction. It stands out as immovable and fixed. It is the roses that slowly die and move as they fall to the floor over a period of weeks. The environment is relevant to the advertising message as people moving through train stations are usually connecting to other people. Railway stations are a means of linking and bringing people together.

These three campaigns create an invasive presence in their surroundings. They are not naturally occurring phenomena; in the *De Beers* campaign had a giant display containing a written message created in flowers, in the *Pepsi Max* campaign, a man was levitating at the side of a London bus and in the *John Lewis* campaign, a giant handbag was sitting in a shopping precinct. As a result they create wonder and curiosity. Ambient advertising needs to attract attention

and often causes confusion and bewilderment. This is part of the process that can be created through the placement of an object in a contradictory environment.

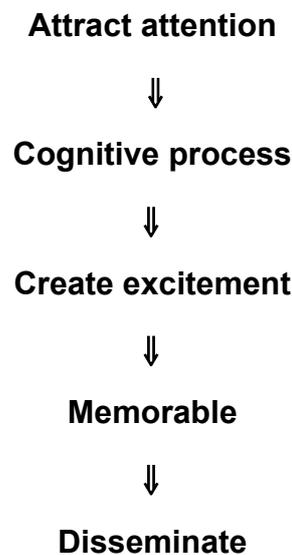
### **Pedestrian Interpretation**

The pedestrian is passive by nature. The ambient advertisement is designed to attract their attention and to create images and memories to be interpreted into an advertising message. How the pedestrian reacts to the ambient advertisement can also be instrumental in the overall advertising message. As I have shown in all three case studies the pedestrian is drawn to the object or performance and their reaction, whether it is verbal or through body language, is conveyed to other pedestrians drawing further attention to the ambient advertisement. Interpretation will depend on how the object and its environment is perceived by the pedestrian. We know that this will depend on cultural experience. We live in a global economy where brands are global and creating advertising messages have to be conveyed in a way that reaches the intended target audience. Interpretation therefore can only be based on theory; it is not an exact science but research into the culture of the geographical area of the site of the ambient advertisement will be crucial to its success. I have shown the way in which the 'Brand' ensures that the advertising message is communicated by the use of semiotic coding through the use of visual and audio communication. How metaphor and metonymy also play a vital role in reaching the pedestrian on an emotional level making the messages more memorable. Through the case studies, I have shown how brands use semiotics to create the deepest impact of the brand message on cognition to make messages memorable. I have discussed how current hand-held technology such as smart phones and tablets allow the advertising message to be uploaded and disseminated globally via social networking platforms such as *Facebook*,

*YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram and Twitter*. I conclude that it is the intention of the brand to create an ambient advertisement that has the power to engage with the pedestrian, by creating relevant meaning to its audience. By using the elements of surprise and curiosity the pedestrian is attracted to the ambient advertisement and they are drawn in. As in the case study on *Pepsi Max*, the pedestrian does not expect to see a man levitating, as they know this to be impossible. It is disturbing and disrupts the existing scene in the environment. The Surrealist artists were aware of this technique, which they used to draw in an audience. They were adept at creating curiosity in a painting or sculpture. Rene Magritte worked from a studio in his home and created his imagery from objects in everyday life but by planning them in contradictory arrangements on a canvas he created an unreal and disturbing quality to the painting. The ambient advertisement also uses this technique to create curiosity to draw in the pedestrian making them inquisitive. As human beings we are naturally questioning and problem-solving by nature. These are skills that are encouraged in all aspects of our daily lives and are an asset to our cognitive development. The ambient advertisement draws on the pedestrian's need to problem-solve in order to engage and be effected by the advertising message. The pedestrian is eager to ask rhetorical questions, to try to resolve the puzzle before them. Ambient advertising provokes reaction. If an ambient advertisement does not provoke a reaction then it would be indifferent and the pedestrian would be disinterested, as a result it would be unsuccessful. In the case study of *Pepsi Max* the pedestrian is provoked into investigation as to why is a man levitating? How is he doing it? Why is he doing it? Who is he? What is his purpose? At the same time metaphors are being created in the mind of the pedestrian as to the shape

he is creating with his body, his gaze and expression, his style of clothing, where he is in relation to the object and other pedestrians. All three of these ambient advertisements aim to provoke reaction by creating memorable imagery in the mind of the pedestrian in order to create an effective advertising message.

Below is a route map that I have designed to demonstrate the process that has to take place in order for the ambient advertisement to be effective.



In summary, the advent of internet advertising and social media has moved into an area of 'pull' (Mooney 2008) marketing. The concept being that consumers 'pull' information about products and services they are interested in toward them via their computers tablets and smart phones.

In his book *Ambient Finability* Peter Moreville sums up our accessibility to information as follows:

By integrating a mobile phone and Palm Powered organizer with wireless email, text messaging, and web browsing, the Treo connects me with global communication and information networks. I can make a call, send email, check the weather, buy a book, learn about Newport, and find a restaurant for

lunch. The whole world is accessible and addressable through this 21<sup>st</sup> Century looking glass in the palm of my hands...We are creating all sorts of new interfaces and devices to access information, and we are simultaneously importing tremendous volumes of information about people, places, products and possessions into our ubiquitous digital networks. (2005:1)

What Moreville is saying is relevant in that an ambient advertisement has the potential to be uploaded by the pedestrian to a globally interconnecting platform that can be downloaded by the consumer. When this occurs it is not the action of the advertiser or at the cost of the advertiser, but carried out by the pedestrian of his or her own free will.

In today's digital economy the 'brand' has to be 'open' (Mooney 2008: 26) in other words, transparent. Most areas of its business feature on the web or social media sites and sharing platforms and can be accessed by anyone at any time. Brands encourage employees to blog about their products. Customer reviews are put on website for prospective customers to review. We are as consumers relying more and more on the 'pedestrian' whether it's one on the street or sitting on a beach reviewing an advertisement to make our decisions about what we buy. The pedestrian is forming part of a consumer community who decide what they want to buy through engaging with other opinions not necessarily coming from the advertiser themselves.

The Internet is the fastest growing communication vehicle. With the sustained growth of *Twitter*, *Facebook* and other social media sharing sites, a brand's reputation can be raised to epic heights through a posting or dashed in 140 characters. The pedestrian can view an ambient advertisement take a photograph and post it on social media with a comment that is immediate. Ambient

advertising engages, entertains and is very communicable it can travel brand messages globally by the use of mutli-media platforms, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to the 'always on' consumer.

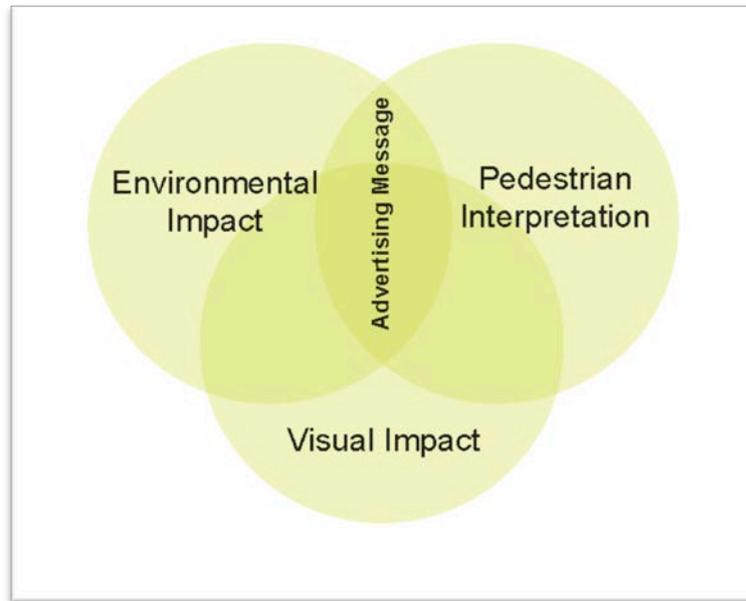


Figure 43 Conclusion Diagram

## **Measuring Ambient Advertising Effectiveness**

Being able to evaluate the effectiveness of all advertising campaigns is crucial in terms of marketing strategy. An ambient advertisement would be considered in the promotional part of the 'marketing mix'. This could take the form of a stand-alone advertisement or is most likely to be part of an integrated advertising campaign that could include various media platforms for example; ambient, guerilla, above the line media including billboard, TV, cinema, radio and digital media including social media. Integrated campaigns can be difficult to evaluate as they rely on a multi-channelled approach and therefore the process of evaluation has become more complex and technical relying on highly specialised marketing companies with the expertise and technology to produce analytics on the effectiveness of advertising and marketing campaigns. Below are a number of ways in which advertising effectiveness is analysed and interpreted by the advertising and marketing industry.

### **IPA**

According to the IPA (Institute of Practitioners in Advertising), marketing effectiveness is dependent on measuring the effects of marketing and demonstrating that it adds value.

The IPA states that this can be assessed through a wide variety of metrics including:

- Media exposure measures like ratings or clicks
- Attitudinal data like awareness or image
- Behavioral measures like response rates and actual sales

(ipa,2016)

### **Measuring the effectiveness of ambient advertising Case Studies by using IPA metrics.**

In order to prove the effectiveness of an ambient advertisement the brand

responsible for the ambient advertisement would need to indicate that the brand's performance had changed as planned following the ambient advertisement activity. Proving a positive change for the brand would require evidence of a compelling chain of evidence linking the activity (ambient advertisement) to the change in the performance. Isolating the effectiveness of an ambient advertising campaign can be challenging because of the plethora of multi-channelled approaches there are to communication. Below I have applied three of the IPA metrics; Media Exposure, Attitudinal and Behavioral, to my three case studies to demonstrate how the effectiveness of ambient advertising could be assessed.

### **Media Exposure**

Social media activity, for example, could indicate the changes of activity through the number of views on social media such as; *YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat* or *Facebook*. This would have to be done by measuring the views and activity before and after the ambient advertisement took place. Alongside vanity metrics of engagement (likes, shares, comments) brands will also use sentiment analysis to understand the value of the conversation around their brand on social media (Prospect, 2016).

Impact and reach are key metrics for marketers – with organic social posts reaching less than 3% of a brand's audience. Brands need to focus on how to drive reach and impact using key opinion leaders with larger reach and targeted promotion across social channels. (adweek, 2016) According to the Jay Chiat Strategic Excellence Awards of 2009, during the installation, traffic to the section of the *De Beers A Diamond is Forever* website devoted to the installation surpassed that of any other of the brand's microsites to date, logging 48,000 visits in the launch week. (scribd, 2016).

According to WARC, an online service offering best practice evidence and insights from the world's leading brands, the *Pepsi Max, Dynamo* ambient campaign put the *YouTube* channel at the heart of the communication strategy in order to regain relevance among a millennial audience. The 'unbelievable' *YouTube* channel which released the viral video of *Dynamo* levitating was placed at the top of the Facebook users' News Feeds using a News Feed Reach Block (desktop and mobile), reaching 18.7 million individuals. The result was 2.4 million paid media video plays more than 600,000 organic views and more than 1,152,641 shares/likes. (Campaignlive,2013).

The *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign, that took place in Cardiff in September 2009, was promoted through *WalesOnline*, media. This included; a website, social media and newspapers. Although exact reach for the campaign could not be sourced, the media itself boasts the following statistics; *WalesOnline* has 3.5 monthly unique visitors, 247,00 daily newspapers, 460,00 followers on social media through Facebook and twitter and 30,000 unique monthly browsers on the Wales Online APP. (WalesOnline, 2016).

### **Attitudinal**

The attitudinal metric could be used to measure the effectiveness of the ambient advertisements in the case studies. It assesses parameters such as; brand recall, brand liking, brand knowledge and brand awareness before and after the ambient advertisement activity. This form of measurement would be considered to indicate awareness for the brand or brand image. Once again measuring attitude toward the brand before and after the ambient advertisement took place, would need to be executed in order to measure difference in attitude. *Net Promotor*, is an index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers to

recommend a company's products or services to others is used as a proxy for gauging the customer's overall satisfaction with a company's product or service and the customer's loyalty to the brand score is a key metric that brands will use to track attitudinal shifts.

We can see how people's attitudes and opinion towards the brand were formed during *De Beers A Diamond is Forever* ambient advertising campaign

from the quotes below published by *Scribd.com*:

Thousands followed its progress online and sent each other dying roses messages. People blogged about it. And they started to understand just how enduring diamonds are as a gift compared to other gifts. The installation even started to appear on tourists' Flickr pages. The Roses Installation breathed new life into a timeless insight – that there is no more lasting, indestructible gift of love – and it did so in a way in which people who experienced it told us they would never forget.

“I love the fact that you have the roses all set up and as they wilt and die, they don't last forever but a diamond does.”

“I'd rather have something that lasts forever, like a diamond.”

“You don't walk past it everyday and see the same thing, you want to see what the change is and it becomes more interesting.”

“I will always remember this spot, the display and the event that was here. I will always remember this.” (Scribd, 2016)

Here we gain an insight into how the ambient advertising campaign travelled beyond its physical location. We read that people engaged with the concept and sent messages and wrote blogs and posted images on Flickr. The last quote tells us that the installation was a memorable one for the pedestrian.

From the article below published by *Campaignlive.com* we can see how people's attitude toward the brand, through their engagement with the ambient advertisement, was demonstrated:

In the *Pepsi Max* ambient campaign

The result was 2.4 million paid media video plays, more than 600,000 organic views and more than 100,000 shares/likes. The campaign was also successful on Instagram, with the theme of "living for now" going hand in hand with the idea of sharing life moments. (campaignlive, 2013)

This quote from *Campaignlive* demonstrates the engagement of the public through social media. It gives us an insight into how the concept travelled through organic engagement, where people were looking for the images themselves, as opposed to online advertising being pushed toward them. It also indicates the success of the ambient advertisement through the number of shares a/likes specified.

The *John Lewis* ambient advertising campaign that was created for the opening of the first store in Wales, caused an attitudinal change which is evidenced by a comment made by 'naturekid' about a *YouTube* video recording made of the giant handbag who said, "I HAVE NEVER EVER SEEN THIS IN CARDIFF" the video was shot by TaffTV.co.uk and received 1,360 views. (youtube, 2009).

In an article written by Abby Bolter for *WalesOnline* we discover that:

More than 100 people queued from early in the morning to be first into the new £35m John Lewis on The Hayes last Thursday. More than 12,000 transactions were made that day, with managing director Liz Mihell revealing sales exceeded target by more than 20%." (WalesOnline,2009)

This quote demonstrates the influence of the ambient campaign that led up to the opening of the *John Lewis* store. The ambient campaign had received free publicity, mostly via word-of-mouth through the engagement of the pedestrian with the object, and the press publicity that the giant handbag attracted.

### **Behavioral**

To measure change in behavior the brand would need to indicate changes such

as response rates or actual sales as a direct result of the ambient advertisement.

In the *De Beers A Diamond is Forever* Ambient Campaign we can see below from the analysis by *Scribd* for the *Jay Chiat Awards*, that the campaign changed behavior in the following way:

The Roses Installation created immediate cultural impact and great value to our clients. Though we invested only \$200k in the creation of the installation, we received a media value of over \$2.5M, far exceeding our expectations. 70,000 consumers pass through Grand Central every day. Station representatives estimated that during the installation, consumer traffic increased around the installation area by 40% – a total of almost 100,000 people per day. (Scribd, 2016)

We can see here that the campaign had a positive effect on media value and it also created additional footfall for Grand Central Terminal, possibly increasing revenue for the businesses within the terminal.

In the *Pepsi Max* ambient advertisement the magician *Dynamo* was employed as part of an integrated content-led digital strategy. The integrated campaign started with the *Dynamo* ambient advertisement in London, as part of an advertising campaign that was designed to re-engage a millennial audience and to position *Pepsi Max* as a brand that made 'anything possible'. The approach generated an additional £54m in revenue and ROMI (Return of marketing investment) £2.25 for every £1 spent (ipa,2016).

WARC also recorded that;

The 'Unbelievable' YouTube channel drove increased value share, market share in 2014 and 2015, and £9m of additional sales; Max saw improvements that outperformed the category across nearly all of its equity measures YOY (Year on year) with increases even more pronounced amongst Millennials. (Warc, 2016)

Here we can see how the behavior of the consumer affected the sales figures. The ambient advertisement was an important part of this integrated campaign.

The ambient advertisement for the opening of the *John Lewis* in Cardiff store proved to be highly successful, as it became a driver of consumer behavior as stated below:

Despite opening in the midst of a recession, John Lewis Cardiff smashed its forecasts in the opening days. Partners in the Place To Eat and the Espresso Bar helped customers get through almost 300 hundred scones, 100 welsh cakes and 3000 hot drinks in just one day. Sales on the first day included 21 large-screen TVs, and a £3,000 fridge. Despite the fact that it had been a long opening day, Partners celebrated long after closing, in the true Partnership style! (johnlewismemorystore,2009).

This quote shows us that the campaign succeeded its objective in terms of customer engagement. In the article below, written by Abby Bolter for *WalesOnline* we can see the effect the opening had on the City of Cardiff itself:

An extra 200,000 people flooded into Cardiff's retail heart last week, according to official figures. And with half of them swamping The Hayes on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the sharp rise is being attributed to the opening of the largest John Lewis outside of London. Figures compiled by Cardiff city centre management revealed footfall rose by 15% last week compared to the same week in 2008. Car parks were also 29% busier. City centre manager Paul Williams told the Echo: "The excellent footfall and car parking results for last week clearly underline the importance to the city of the John Lewis opening on Thursday. (WalesOnline,2009)

The IPA holds annual advertising effectiveness awards and for a brand to be considered for the awards four categories should be considered by the brand.

1. Show there was an improvement in the brand's performance

before and after the activity. This improvement should roughly match in timing

the audience's exposure to the communications and not just its awareness which can grow because sales are growing, as well as vice versa. From the examples above we can see that this has occurred in all three case studies. De Beers achieved \$2.5M media value. Pepsi Max as part of an integrated campaign achieved over 23% overall engagement and £0,04 cost-per-view, delivering three million views (campaignlive, 2016) and John Lewis achieved a successful store opening which 'smashed' its forecasts.

2. Demonstrate convincingly other factors, such as underlying market growth, promotions or seasonality, did not drive this improvement. The De Beers ambient campaign was a departure from past campaigns and increased the footfall of Grand Central Terminal from 70,000 consumers passing through on a daily basis to 1000,000 increasing the traffic in the installation area by 40% (scribd,2009). The Pepsi Max Campaign put a YouTube channel at the heart of their strategy that was a new innovation for the brand. The John Lewis campaign took place in the midst of a recession and opened a new store in a new city for the brand, setting a new precedent.
3. Isolate the incremental effects produced by your activity – from what may have happened had you done nothing – measure these effects, and put a convincing financial value on them. As shown in the other categories, all three of the ambient advertising campaigns have created an effect in terms on monetary value, footfall within the area and attitudinal engagement through social media sites that can be isolated.

4. The final link in the chain is to the financial value created for the organisation. All three ambient campaigns have shown financial value in terms of investment for example; De Beers invested \$200k and received \$2.5M in media value.(scribd, 2009) Pepsi Max stated that their 'Unbelievable' *YouTube* channel drove increase value share in 2014 and 2015 and £9M of additional sales (warc, 2016).

John Lewis *managing director Liz Mihell*, stated that *More than 12,000 transactions were made that day, with revealing sales exceeded target by more than 20%. (WalesOnline, 2009)*

(ipa,2016)

Dame Dianne Thompson chairman of judges 2016 IPA Awards states that:

I think it's really important that clients should benchmark their agencies effectiveness not just on the other metrics like cost because it's the effectiveness of what agencies are doing that build the long-term health of the brand (youtube, 2016)

Here Dame Dianne Thompson is stressing the importance of measuring the effectiveness of advertising campaigns in order to sustain the development of a brand. Using KPI's (key performance indicators) on how well a brand is doing through varying metrics can be used to ascertain all aspects of brand communication and its value.

### **Future measures of ambient advertising effectiveness in the attention economy**

Kantar Millward Brown is a company that works with brands to help define 'brand purpose'. They do this through brand equity research and consultation with audiences. They are constantly analysing, understanding and interpreting the world around us. Kantar Millward Brown is part of WPPs data investment division

with access to a large network of advertising, research and media agency experts around the world. Their areas of expertise are in qualitative, digital effectiveness and analytics, which uses marketing science and analytic consultants who use connected data intelligence to deliver strategic insights into marketing strategies.

According to Kantar Millward Brown:

Images are the new storytelling medium that people relate to. This development has significant implications for brand building. “Speaking visual” is a key trend recognized in a JWT global report based on proprietary research across developed markets and the BRICs. The report found that photos, videos, and other imagery are supplanting text: (millwardbrown, 2016)

This is a fascinating idea, in terms of ambient advertising effectiveness as ambient advertising uses visual tropes such as hyperbole, surrealism and iconicity to carry compelling visual messages that create impact on the memory.

Kantar Millward Brown also state how these powerful visual images are shared throughout the global community:

Mobile photography and over 350 million photos uploaded daily on Facebook quantify the extent to which our communication is shifting from words to images. This shift holds enormous implications for how brands reach consumers. In fact, over two-thirds of millennials believe visuals are more powerful than text. These young people are comfortable and confident in interpreting images; they consume the visual language of brands with ease. In other words, they get the picture!  
A brand’s ability to communicate in images has other benefits. Particularly in developing economies, pictorial communication opens access to new audiences of consumers that have rising incomes, greater access to brands, but low levels of literacy. (millwardbrown, 2016)

This is a valuable and important comment as the emerging economies of the world in places such as India are areas of lower literacy. Therefore, it could be argued that creating powerful images through ambient advertising will be a determining factor in attracting attention and creating effective campaigns that will change attitude and drive consumer behavior toward the brand. It might be

possible to conclude, that we are likely to see more ambient advertising in the future emerging economies.

As we can see from this section on measuring the effectiveness of ambient advertising it can be a multi-faceted process, as an ambient advertising campaign can often appear as part of a complex and multi-channelled integrated campaign as in the case study on *Pepsi Max*. The methods that I have reviewed above, are ones that are currently being used by the marketing and advertising industry in existing and emerging markets.

### **Future Research Into Ambient Advertising**

A way forward for future research into ambient advertising would be to consider the way people are using technology to create online posting about ambient advertising. People are uploading and sharing information, helping to create the 'open' brand. No longer can brands keep information private, as they may have done in the past. Now, in a global society that demands transparency, sustainability and corporate responsibility, brands involve their customers in discourse about their brand through social media forums. *Twitter* has become a customer service platform communicating with its customers with immediacy. In the attention economy brands have to keep consumers talking and by using hash tags to signpost people, they can involve them in the brand conversation in real time. Brands like *Starbucks* have created online communities allowing consumers to openly discuss their brand and to contribute to its future development and communication strategy. Future research into ambient advertising could include a comparison of traditional 'push' advertising with social media 'pull' communication for example; comparing the volume of impressions or likes for an ambient

campaign verses a billboard campaign could lead to the analysis of social impact and ramification of ambient advertising. By engaging online and social media networking users in this discourse it could help to monitor and measure the ongoing effect of ambient advertising.

Another area for future research would be to investigate how ambient advertising could be used to support marketing strategies and the attention economy in new emerging global markets for example, India. Shuvan Chatterjee discusses Ambient Advertising in his paper *A Study on Ambient Advertising:Marketing Novelty Going Bust:*

Ambient Advertising needs to function like Google Ad Words to survive. It needs to be around the corner, available but unobtrusive. It needs to be more context specific; the days of the local sweet shop or pawn broker advertising on a village event are gone. The purchase and the context of it determine the content and even presence of the advertising. Ambient advertising has scope with the increasing commercialization and growth of Indian consumer demand, the areas to use such below the line advertising tactics increases... (Chaterjee, 2011)

India is fast becoming a marketing world leader and is catching up with the West in terms of developing sophisticated advertising strategies. The developing world is a fascinating area for exploration and future research. I believe that the Ambient Advertisement will always need to be surprising, compelling and memorable. By the use of visual tropes, rhetoric and visual persuasion it will be possible to achieve this in the mind of the spectator and with the advent of technology such as augmented reality, virtual reality and wearable technology we can all look forward to striking ambient advertising in the future.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Out of Home - a variety of advertising forms including outdoor, transit, skywriting and other media used outside the home. (Belch & Belch, 2004:GL10)

<sup>2</sup> Marketing mix - the controllable elements of a marketing program including product, price, promotion and place (Belch & Belch, 2004:GL9)

<sup>3</sup> Street furniture - objects placed on the street for various purposes.

<sup>4</sup> Gestalt - a perceptual pattern or structure possessing qualities as a whole that cannot be described merely as a sum of its parts. (Collins,1989:637)

<sup>5</sup> AIDA - Attention Interest Desire Action (1898 St. Elmo Lewis) (Doyle,2003:63)

<sup>6</sup> Advertising Space - a term used for an area of paid advertising e.g. magazine or billboard

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