WALK ING THE FINE LINE

To *W*hat Extent Is the Border Bet*w*een Propaganda and Branding Being Transgressed?

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A brief sum

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Propaganda is commonplace now, and always has been, however it is finding and has found its way into advertising but in an unknown amount. This may be due to its ability to affect those witnessing it without the knowledge of the consumer.

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"Propaganda is commonplace now"

analysing the events that influence the dynamic and shifting border of the two and exposing the techniques often used that allow propaganda to leak its way into the spheres of branding and perhaps even, without appropriate supervision, replace it entirely.

   Without being documented and researched the effects of propaganda in advertisements can run rampant and influence every decision any human ever makes. Within this dissertation both exposed and unexposed examples of propaganda in advertising will be analysed and researched for the purpose of attempting to begin the tracking of the border between propaganda and branding,

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The battle for people's minds has been ever prevalent throughout history, there has never been a people without it.

While it has always existed, has the creational pace of propaganda increased, in correlation with its secrecy? The modern propaganda machine has been perfected into a covert weapon used by not only many governments, but more recently, many manufacturers and retail companies. With the shift from explicit to implicit messaging methods, is it right that the general public should be influenced by these shadowy tactics, should companies be treating their customers as though they are unable to create their own impressions on the product that appears before them? Studying these advertisement methods will lead to a greater understanding and awareness of the unknown problems faced by multitudes of people.

Propaganda existing within advertisement is an important topic to research given its ability to so heavily influence the events of the world and manipulate those who are victim to it, even without their knowledge that this is happening. This is especially dangerous in this specific context given that advertising and branding is conducted by household brands the entire public has put their trust into to make quality products and therefore, should adhere to guidelines.

This research is hard found upon first reflection, and therefore makes this topic area an important one to highlight to prevent further unknown levels of transgression.
The study of propaganda is heavily researched and documented

This research is hard found upon first reflection, and therefore makes this topic area an important one to highlight to prevent further unknown levels of transgression. The study of propaganda is heavily researched and documented throughout history by many well-regarded authors and scholars. These research points must be considered and will assist in the formation of the outcomes achieved throughout. Given this is such a complex topic and issue, it is extremely important that all elements are accounted for and that not only the severity of propagandas transgression is brought up, but a selectamount of necessary supplementary topics are brought up previously in order to ensure complete clarity by readers. And so, this Thesis has the purpose of educating as well as bringing attention to an issue that exists both contemporary, and historically.

Previous attempts at analysing this issue should be considered and form part of the end conclusion. These research points will need to be from varying timeframes and perhaps even nationalities in order to ensure clarity and fairness across the entire board of research. Assessing key examples within case studies assist in achieving a varied and evidentially backed up picture of the issue at hand as well as allowing the severity of the issue to be better appreciated and seen with greater urgency. Given that this issue concerns propagandas use of secrecy there will be elements that would create a stronger picture that will not be found within research due to both propagandas natural effectiveness while being hidden from public view, and the abundance of similar content which will take prevalence upon initial research. The issue raised within this dissertation may need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and so the case studies and examples chosen to have been chosen to assist in the creation of a general picture of the issue at hand, attempting to cover every base but also understanding and having an appreciation for the limitation that will occur; while it is vital that this issue be explored at length, it is equally vital to do this concisely as to assist in the translation of its urgency. Finally, this dissertation appreciates the variance in the presence of propaganda-based advertising throughout varying industries, and so examples pulled out for further examination are to be taken as extreme examples that are used to highlight the most present and concerning within the word count frame available to it and within the topic area highlighted within the dissertation question itself.

Propaganda i

around a "n

"know" basis.

Chapter 1

What

In order to understanding complex and subtle changes in the behaviours of branding and advertising over time, one must first understand exactly what branding is and how to create it. By first listing the key characteristics of branding and advertising; Firstly, Name Brand Recognition is often used by larger companies whereby they will often throw their previous successful products into advertisements in order to convince audiences to trust newer products. A product branding ranges anywhere from the packaging of the product itself, to the logos and the advertisements, both physical and digital that potential customers may see around the world. While branding has existed for thousands of years, dating back to when farmers would brand their cattle (Fig. 1)

For others to recognise that they are owned as well as who the owner is, the most common form of modern advertisement seen by the largest portion of the general public, as well as easiest to hide hidden messages within are T.V Ads. These ads can reach any member of the public, anywhere in the world, providing they watch any form of television or leave their house at any given point. Genuine advertisements will attempt to translate their products message in a neutral manner, simply displaying what the product is and how it can benefit the individual encountering the advertisement.

"this type of advertising relies on facts and figures to trigger a desired action; the ad's message is usually framed in a compelling way.

"The average modern person is exposed to around 5,000 ads per day" (Clario, 2020)

Informative advertising uses techniques that, instead of focusing on a clever way to convince customers to buy a product or service, chooses to rely solely on the strength of product features to encourage consumers to make purchases." (Auburn Advertising, 2014)

Branding surrounds us in almost every object we encounter; "the average modern person is exposed to around 5,000 ads per day" (Clario, 2020). Whether it is something as obvious as a "Logo" displayed onto the project, or it is the unique shape in which the product is made that makes it recognisable as that company's product e.g. Adidas Yeezy Boost trainers' unique soles (Fig 2) or Grey Goose Vodka's slender body and neck (Fig 3).

is Branding?

Transgressions

Propagandas true and unaltered definition is simply the spread of information in support of a cause.

It's meaning has been twisted and malformed over centuries of use.

What is Propaganda

this is often surprising to the untrained eye that propaganda is not naturally sinister, it has instead been malformed and twisted due to its heavy involvement during wartime when propaganda is used to promote governments/individuals evil and unjust viewpoints unto the world (Fig 8). There is no word in the English language" "whose meaning has been so sadly distorted as the word for 'propaganda'" (Bernays, 1928).

Older propaganda is mostly responsible for the word's current reputation (Fig 9) due to older propagandas crystal clear visibility today, we can clearly see the fascist posters claiming a need for genocidal actions. Older propaganda often uses simpler forms of publication and psychological manipulation of viewers, simple colour theory clearly labels villains present within the posters and billboards that were often supported using an overwhelming amount of content assists to induce an altered psychological state within the 'victim'. Examples of this were seen often in World War Two, when forces would air drops crates of propaganda instilling false messages within the public (Fig 10), sometimes being the more famously seen poster formats or simply false reports of wartime losses to indicate the public need to fear and ever advancing enemy is upon them.

While older propaganda messages are now highly transparent, the fabrication of false news reports was indeed a much easier process during the early 20th century due to a lack of publicly available technology, viewers of the propaganda techniques could not simply access the internet and see other people perspectives and video evidence. "One of the most popular shows in Britain during the time, Tommy Handley's It's That Man Again was able to reach up to 40% of the British population (Clario 2020). This, however, could also be utilised the in the opposite direction, if a country is perhaps experiencing heavy losses the truth could perhaps be covered up by printing false reports of victories and hiding away from any negative news, falsely instilling belief in a certain object/regime.

This technique is perhaps more often seen than the former while a country is in peacetimes, sometimes used to settle internal debate within a high-tension nation. As peacetimes grow in duration the purpose of propaganda has ever shifted, assisted in the advancements in technology have perhaps created an invisible and dangerous weapon for companies to adopt within their very own advertising campaigns.

Newer, more modern forms of propaganda have taken advantage of the tools and circumstances available to them. The tools available now has allowed for blemish free photo manipulation and lightning-fast production as well as a worldwide far reach that does not require a large plane to literally "Drop" the leaflets to viewers. Modern propaganda falls into roughly seven separate categories that are used by companies in modern society. 'Bandwagon' Propaganda is like peer pressure, essentially using a product/company's success to boast and invite new customers into buying the advertised product, e.g., 400 sold every minute or England's Favourite Brand. (Fig 11) Piggybacking on previous success is an easy way to help guarantee sales, while avoiding displaying any actual debatable information about the product itself.

"Newer, more modern forms of propaganda have taken advantage of the tools and circumstances available to them."

The tools of new propaganda have morphed more into the digital realm, using photoshop and photography editing to manipulate the product that is being advertised, and in some cases, in modern society, the possibility for the advertisement of a product/service that does not even exist. This combined with new digital forms of monetary balance have allowed companies to be funded by the success of a product before it is created/released.

Propaganda is around a "need to-know" basis.

Chapter 2

Recently an alternative to the Queens speech has been released, containing a deep fake, a concerning tool for those exposed to the effects of propaganda, the ability to create entire, undetectable alternatives showcase the sophisticated ability to make a convincing translation of almost anything, including events, products and certainly celebrity appearances, bending brand images to the creators will in any way imaginable.

Propaganda

While the difference between propaganda and branding may, at first seem like the comparison of good and evil to the untrained eye, with the assistance of chapter one a more blurred line may begin to be discovered.

propagandas dictionary definition is a clear example that in its truest form, it is not inherently evil, in comparison branding is not therefore inherently good. The Nazi war machine used a combination of the two techniques. Nazi 'Marques' are still recognised to this day, despite their previous, more innocent meaning within human history (Fig 18). If Nazi advertisements were to be converted into a company, their Marques and ideals shattering remembrance almost 100 years onwards would almost be something to be admired by some products and brands that failed to reach their century anniversary, given the swastikas memorable 'modern' meaning it 'surely ranks as one of the most successful brand logos ever designed' (Sky History, 2018). Given that branding can be used to symbolise these incredibly negative events, branding as a concept cannot be a wholly positive technique, whether its use is innocent or evil almost entirely depends on what it is being used for.

As a contrast, propaganda can therefore be used positively (Fig 19) Such as within charity campaigns, using emotional and persuasive techniques in order to boost donations. Although the existence of its overtly negative image, its previously mentioned definition can be used to emotionally persuade groups to believe in a cause that means well.

In contrast with Branding creating a universal image for every platform within a 'message per stakeholder' (Cambridge Dictionary, NDG) format portrayed to each section of consumers, giving creators of propaganda information from others that would potentially expose a more sinister information there is more room for a product to have purely emotional emotions and cause durable changes' (Mattingly, Daniel and Yao, Elaine, 2 basis and branding on an informative basis, less of one generally transla a company that will hide information about a product from certain grou

In contrast, branding does not attempt to manipulate emotions without the presence of facts and will therefore push the same information to all its viewers, whereas propaganda may hide certain elements of the product/service. Branding uses a wholly informative base to create content. This allows the free exploration of the viewer to formulate their own opinion about the piece of branding presented before them. This in turn, creates a variation in outlooks by evicting heavy use of ¬¬emotional manipulation, largely regulates and controls the responses to viewing the advertisement.

"Propaganda may hide certain elements of the product/ service."

"The brand creates and generates a unique dialogue that did not previously exist, made through the empowering imagery and vivid colours combined together by the designers that make the brand."

This use of emotional, propaganda utilising advertising is present in all modern industries, and perhaps in larger companies that first thought it is not a tool used by the stricken off and hated brands but instead the use of emotional manipulation has bolstered their public image so much that they are considered luxury brands and have the higher bracket prices to reflect that, despite using similar or the same materials and production techniques as some of the markets cheapest. Fast Fashion is an industry heavily inundated with this phenomenon.

...very platform of consumers/viewers, Propaganda is often seen ..., NDG) format, where only information that is deemed essential is ... of propaganda utilising material the ability to purposefully withhold ...nore sinister and harmful message/product. By withholding ...ely emotional impact, 'propaganda can effectively manipulate ...d Yao, Elaine, 2020)) given that Propaganda works on an emotional ...nerally translates to a greater amount of the other, so therefore ...n certain groups of people will likely be doing so in order to input a

Branding

Propaganda is built around a "need-to-know" basis.

Chapter 3

Keep Calm & Carry on & on

"Few images of the last decade
are quite so riddled with ideology,
and few 'historical' artefacts are
so utterly false"
(Hartherly, O, 2016)

With the subject of earlier 20th century propaganda being used an exploited for 21st century gain. "It's on posters, mugs, tea towels and in headlines" (Hartherly, O, 2016). Keep calm and carry on, an originally 'minor English middle-class cult object', has been transformed due to modern usage and exploitation into an international brand. Why does this slogan, founded in small usage from the blitz period now hold the meaning of grit and determination across the globe? 'English phenomenon had gone completely and inescapably global" (Hartherly, O, 2016).

With a greatly concentrated emphasis within the United Kingdom. Evidence points the origin of this phrase within modern use within the 'mass-produced until 2008'. Directly responding from not the crisis of starvation and annihilation, but from the 'credit crunch and the banking crash'. It seems, from the evidence present that keep calm and carry on, and this feeling of 'blitz spirit' (Historic UK, NDG) is invoked to unite and engage emotions across the country, and even, the globe.

Further evidence of this established 'Blitz Spirit' (Historic UK, NDG) being invoked post world war two timelines back to 1979, utilised by governments and companies 'When Thatcherites and Blairites spoke of 'hard choices' and 'muddling through', they often evoked the memories of 1941. It served to legitimate regimes that constantly argued that, despite appearances to the contrary, resources were scarce and there wasn't enough money to go around' (Hatherley, O 2016).

Evidence suggests that the use of the Keep calm and carry-on phrase as well as the material that comes with it fits perfectly within the description of propaganda.

The most key element of propaganda needing to be brought up for this example is that propaganda will create emotional attachment, without the existence of products, materials or meaning. For clarity, even though Keep Calm and Carry on has served to unite nations in historical and contemporary hardships, the phrase itself "has never been accurately defined, then or now". Without any concrete meaning, containing only mere suggestions of resilience, the phrase has invoked such strong emotions across massive, global audiences.

During World War Two, the time of its original invention, it functioned to distract the public from the horrors of war, even where propaganda phrases did not function to help. 'The public face of the 'blitz spirit' concealed the awful reality of being bombed" (Overy, R, 2020). With the use of war propaganda in the mid-20th century now being a crystal-clear method of emotional manipulation. These materials, the phrase keep calm and carry on, has been found to be used commonly in times of adversity, even with the historical and contemporary purposes of such advertisements being outed and manipulative.

It has been purposely covering up disastrous events elsewhere 'they had this supposed fighting spirit because they had to, because they had no other choice, rather than because they wanted to carry on!'. (Fig 42) The phenomenon of blitz spirit, positivity in the face of constant bombing and a 'grim willingness to carry on because they had no other choice' (Historic UK, NDG) appears to In fact be a fabricated one, others have researched into 'blitz spirit' and the evidence suggests that it is false. (Historic UK, NDG).