

ADVERTISING IN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: 1956-74

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'Give your family a change today - and tomorrow, too. With seven full, rich flavours to choose from, you can give them a new treat everyday! And how they'll enjoy it -- because Batchelors Soups are all so wonderful.'

(Woman's Own 13/12/56, p.66)

'Sunshine, blossoms and I've gone blonde! Me gone golden and lots of things going. Whirling around and it's fun and he said he'll carry me off. What a life! It's a blonde life! thanks, Hiltone.'

(Honey July 1968, p.26)

'Ladylike - Guinness'

(Honey Nov. 1974, p.99)

Despite its glorifying display of commodities advertising represents a moment of suspension in their production and circulation: production - the sweat and exploitation of work - is over and hidden in its verbal and visual persuasion; the consumption of someone else's (or your own) objectified labour to which you the as-yet-passive-spectator are invited, has not begun. Yet in monopoly capitalism advertising has become integral to these circuits of production and circulation:⁽¹⁾ it sustains the movement of commodities from their social production to their individual but socially repeated consumption, which eventually ensures not only the reproduction of the individual, but of capital too.

The individual produces an object and, by consuming it, returns to himself, but returns as a productive and self reproducing individual. Consumption thus appears as a moment of production.

(Marx 1973, p.94)

By concealing the production process advertising similarly covers up class distinctions between people, through a form of fetishism.

...the definite social relation between men...assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things.

(Marx 1976, p.165)

It replaces them with the distinctions achieved through consumption of particular goods. As Judith Williamson points out⁽²⁾,

Instead of being identified by what they produce, people are made to identify themselves with what they consume.

(Williamson 1978, p 13)

However in order to cement identification with consumption ads move away from capital's terrain proper: people individually consume outside of the production process.

...in consumption, the product steps outside this social movement [production and distribution] and becomes a direct object and servant of individual need, and satisfies it in being consumed.

(Marx 1973, p.89)

...consumption...actually belongs outside economics except insofar as it reacts in turn upon the point of departure and initiates the whole process anew.

(ibid, p.89)

In confirmation of consumption outside economics ads rarely exhort us to buy merely to use the commodities, hence glossing over the capitalist moment of exchange - the purchase with money⁽³⁾. Further they never simply sell us the use values of commodities but sell them as 'exchange values'⁽⁴⁾ for qualities in our private relationships with people that are unattainable from the capitalist production process. For example a commodity cannot 'buy' you love (with a man) but ads give just such an illusion of capital's ubiquitous power. In the diamond ads it is the diamond which generates your love: "A diamond expresses the way you feel" and maintains it, "A diamond is for ever". As Williamson argues,

Ads must take into account not only the inherent qualities and attributes of the products they are trying to sell, but also the way in which they can make those properties mean something to us...

'Williamson 1978, p.12)

Or as Raymond Williams suggests,

If we were sensibly materialist, in that part of our living in which we use things, we should find most of advertising to be of insane irrelevance....A washing machine would be a useful machine to wash clothes rather than an indication that we are forward looking or an object of envy to our neighbours... But if these associations sell....washing machines.....it is clear that we have a cultural pattern in which the objects are not enough but must be validated, if only in fantasy by association with social and personal meanings.

(Williams 1960)

Addressing us in our private persona ads sell us, as women, not just commodities then but our personal relationships in which we are feminine: how we are/should be/can be a certain feminine woman whose attributes in relation to men and the family derive from the use of these commodities. But femininity is also used to sell commodities to men. As Griselda Pollock suggests the image of a female body clothed or nude has come to represent 'sale' and 'commodity': the purchase of a commodity delivers the simultaneous acquisition of a female body. (Pollock 1977) We can understand this equation in the terms Williamson poses of ads hiding production and associating commodities with social meaning 'outside' of that terrain. Ads offer through commodities which you can buy those desired non-material things, furthest removed from penetration by the capitalist production process, which you cannot buy. Thus for capitalism, through ads, to bring men a woman's body - a woman's sexuality - which

stands to an extreme in this 'outside' position, is its ultimate accolade of success. For women, of course, do paid work, but ideologically they do not. Their sexuality represents for men all that which is not capitalist work, but which they strive impossibly to achieve through work. Writes Sheila Rowbotham, "Sex represents the hope of an alternative". (Rowbotham 1973, p.111).

While however these ads addressing men use and 'exploit' femininity by virtue of its exclusion from capitalist production, femininity is simultaneously being recuperated by the capitalist form, by what Rowbotham refers to as the "imperial onslaught on sexuality". (ibid, p.109). The exchange between the commodity and 'woman' in the ad establishes her as a commodity too. In ads addressing women this process is even more insidious: it is the modes of femininity itself which are achieved through commodities and are replaced by commodities. A woman is nothing more than the commodities she wears: the lipstick, the tights, the clothes, etc. are 'woman'. Here the ads not only conceal the labour which produces the commodity. They also contradictingly omit the work of femininity which women carry out as they use commodities, and yet always sell commodities for that purpose. This is in striking contrast to ads directed at men where the terrain of activity which is appealed to is that of leisure - leisure defined in relation to completed work for capital. Women on the other hand, are sold commodities for their work: the patriarchal work of domesticity and child care; the work of beautification and 'catching a man'.⁽⁵⁾ This work like that of social production is collapsed in the ad into mere consumption of commodities by an individual woman (by, indeed, all of us as women). To consume the commodity (even just to consume the ad itself) is already to have accomplished the tasks of femininity until at its extreme it appears almost as if the commodity can replace femininity: take on femininity without female intervention.

We can conceptualise ads therefore as representing a particular articulation of capitalist production and consumption. But in that articulation they also operate through ideological representations particularly if not exclusively of femininity.⁽⁶⁾ This ideological work⁽⁷⁾ relies on but also constructs an ideology of femininity which is completed through our collusion as we read and consume the ads. We are never just spectators who gaze at 'images' of women as though they set apart, differentiated from the 'real' us. When we work to

understand the ads so they place us and we place ourselves in relation to those meanings as they are anchored around an ideology of femininity through which we have to live. Images as they are constructed in ads,

exist together with the images (positive or negative) women already have of themselves, their mothers, and women generally.

(Cowie 1977, p.23)

The production of meaning in the ad itself depends, as Elizabeth Cowie writes in relation to film, on the intervention of codes extrinsic to the image and located in the society producing the image.

The image is a point of production not as origin but in the setting into play of all other images and other significations from which it is distinguished as alike or not alike. The image will draw on elements from other images and will use notions, concepts, myths, etc. already available in the culture. The image will not just reflect these however, but in reproducing them will reform them producing new meanings as it sets in play its connotative system -- its rhetoric.

(ibid, p.22)

Williamson describes this "ad work"⁽⁸⁾ as a form of 'bricolage' which uses odds and ends from ideological thought that already exist (Williamson 1978, p.101). Cowie in another article, 'Woman as Sign', reaffirms with reference to film that we cannot see film as "simply the site of the struggle of the representations" of woman produced elsewhere. Rather,

film as a system of representation is a point of production of definitions. But it is neither unique and independent of, nor simply reducible to other practices defining the position of women in society.

(Cowie 1978, p.50)

Or as Ros Coward discussing 'sexual liberation' in Cosmopolitan points out,

a representation of sexuality does not usually mirror an idea of sexuality found elsewhere in society - in this case a pre-given idea of female sexuality. Rather, exactly what is represented is produced through the work of the discourse itself.

(Coward 1978, p.14)

The argument being made here by Cowie and Coward concerns the relative autonomy of a specific ideological production, and its determination by, and relation to, other levels of the social formation as well as to other ideological discourses.

However there is a tendency in their positions to argue for a complete relativity between 'images', to argue therefore for a non-correspondence between signifying practices, or between ideological, economic and political relations. Thus Cowie suggests,

In marking the differences between the images offered in all these ways is not to pose one as a truth against the other but to present a range of determinants of 'reality' in relation to 'images' of women available to us.

(Cowie 1977, p.23)

This is developed further when she argues that we cannot talk of "woman as signifier of woman" since this poses the system of representation over and against a true signified woman, or presumably, actual woman" (Cowie 1978, p.62). This is to concur with Griselda Pollock's critical discussion of 'images' of woman, in which she challenges the notion of "two separable elements" - the 'real' actual woman and an 'image of woman' - (the one 'good', the other 'bad') by,

the notion of woman as signifier in an ideological discourse in which one can identify the meanings that are attached to women in different images and how the meanings are constructed in relation to other signifiers in that discourse.

(Pollock 1977, p.24)

While I agree with the impossibility of we, the 'real' and 'reading' women, isolating ourselves from 'images', and, furthermore, accept and utilise the fruitfulness of the conceptualisation of 'woman as signifier' posed here, I have reservations about the relativity and non-correspondence of discourses. Such a conceptualisation not only implies an autonomy for any discourse production but also as a corollary, a relativity of determinations, an anarchy even: specifically, the 'economic level' takes its place beside ideological discourses and can in no way be 'determining in the last instance'; and in the above 'real' women' become the mere phantom of the "category 'woman'" (See m/f and Cowie in particular). The formulation does not suggest how we begin to identify and relate these meanings that are attached to 'women' in different images, nor how they relate to each of us as 'real women' who do indeed ideologically and 'economically' bear the feminine burden of our biology. I would argue that we can only do that from a political position that already understands in part the place of those 'images' within the total social formation, ie. in relation to women, a political position that has knowledge of women's patriarchal subordination under capitalism at economic and political as well as ideological levels. I would therefore hold to Althusser's formulation of ideology that it

represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production (and other relations that derive from them) but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live.

(Althusser 1971: 165)

But I would necessarily include patriarchal relations of the family within "the relations of production and the relations that derive from them".⁽⁹⁾ Thus 'images' of women relate to each other by their similar (yet different) position within patriarchal relations: they are organized through an ideology of femininity which they construct but which extends beyond them. In some senses then, the signifier 'woman' importantly always signifies woman: we recognize ourselves in any representation of woman. We do so, even when it is articulating a femininity we do not already know, because we are already defined within patriarchal relations by our gender. Thus the signifier 'woman' signifies woman in order that we are then specifically positioned as feminine subjects. However it is an identification we make which is achieved through a mis-recognition of ourselves - the signifier 'woman' can never in fact represent us the individual woman.

Ads as a means of representation and signification of 'woman' therefore construct an ideology of femininity anew but in a mode which is determined by and relates to the material position of women 'outside' the ad, ie. within the discursive and non-discursive practices of patriarchal relations of capitalist society. Insofar as the ads interpellate us as feminine subject(s) they are reciprocally 'effective' in establishing the particular modes through which we inhabit our economic and political place.

In this paper I discuss ads in women's magazines in the period 1956-74. During those years there were both significant economic and political changes for women, and ideological shifts concerning 'femininity'. If we focus on developments in relation to consumption of commodities (which is I realize to neglect the production processes which have increasingly demanded female wage labour) we see that women have been at the centre of what Rowbotham calls the "imperialist onslaught into everyday life" and Braverman conceptualises as the tendency towards a "universal market" under capitalism. These trends had already been pointed to by Marx

...the production of relative surplus value....requires the production of new consumption; requires that the consuming circle within circulation expands as did the productive circle previously. Firstly quantitative expansion of existing consumption; secondly; creation of new needs by propagation existing ones in a wide circle; thirdly: production of new needs and discovery and creation of new use values.

(Marx 1973, p.408)

This expansion and diversification of consumption involves as Braverman and Rowbotham describe an increasing penetration by capitalist production of non-capitalist forms of production into "areas of human life previously beyond the market" (Rowbotham 1973, p.107). The three stages Braverman outlines in the creation of a 'universal market' (Braverman 1974, Ch.13) are first the conquest of all goods production by the commodity form; second a similar conquest of services and third a "product cycle" which invents new products and services, some of which become indispensable as the conditions of modern life change to destroy alternatives" (ibid p.281). In this way Marx had claimed the labourer's dependence (and that of his family we must add)

instead of becoming more intensive with the growth of capital.... becomes more extensive.

(Marx 1976, p.769)

In the 'affluence' of the post Second World War boom from the mid-1950s the expansion was particularly in domestic durables, from cars to washing machines and furniture; and in non-durables, 'convenience' foods for example.⁽¹⁰⁾ As Mark Abrams, an important 'ideologue' of the time in relation to women and consumption, noted, this economic pattern, presupposed that someone in the family chose and bought the goods. That desire for home goods was premised on (or did it create?) an ideological shift for women as wives and mothers.

Since now home has become the centre of his activity and most of his earnings are spent on or in the home his wife becomes the chooser and spender and gains a new status and control - her taste forms his life.

(Abrams, 1959, p.914)

Certainly it is within this ideological framework that ads and women's magazines as a whole at that time can be placed. Cynthia White maintains that

The boom in women's periodicals has in fact paralleled the boom in domestic consumption and the vast expansion in advertising which has accompanied it.

(White 1970, p.201)

Advertising she writes

was calculated to focus attention on their domestic role, reinforce home values and perpetuate the belief that success as a woman, wife and mother, could be purchased for the price of a jar of cold cream, a bottle of cough syrup, of a packet of instant cake-mix.

(ibid, p.153)

The second area of tremendous expansion and infinite diversification of production/consumption also began in the 1950s - that of clothes and make up. It was again commented on by Abrams in 'The Teenage Consumer'. This expansion however escalated in the 1960s when for example the magazine Honey was launched on the strength of Abrams' observations of the future potential spending power of young women in this area. (See White 1970, p.172). These two separate but related markets have continued to diversify and expand, though the '70s have seen some serious set backs in both these markets.⁽¹¹⁾

Concomitant with these economic changes, and in part the complex outcome of them, has been the far reaching ideological shifts concerning women's position, in relation first to family and work, and second to sexuality. These we need to note here but not detail further, ie. the changes whose trajectory has made it, on the one hand more acceptable for married women to take on at least part-time work, and on the other, allowed women an expression of sexuality outside of marriage, and which politically has culminated in the Women's Liberation Movement at the end of the 1960s; brought limited reforms in relation to work (Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination legislation), and limited provision for women's own control of sexuality (the contraceptive pill and abortion provisions).

It is within this framework of economic and ideological shifts that we must locate ads, although here I only discuss how these shifts are represented internally in the ads. I argue that ads constitute a complex and changing articulation of the economic relations of a developing capitalist commodity form with particular ideologies of femininity (to which that capitalist form has also contributed). The changes which have occurred are at several different levels; moreover they are not absolute changes but represent tendencies which can be isolated.

First there is an increase in the extent to which ads produce 'femininity' in the ad discourse itself. That is, in the 1950s there is more correspondence between what and how femininity signifies in the ad, and its signification in, say, the rest of the magazine; further the ads representation of femininity bears a more direct relation to how femininity is lived within the everyday life of home and family. Ads then gradually begin to be differentiated from other discourses in their representation of femininity and in that sense gain greater/different effectivity in their construction of femininity for women.

Second, but as part of the first development, there is a shift and widening of 'images of women'. Images move from 'mother', 'housewife', associated with the family, to 'girl friend', 'narcissistic' and 'sexual woman', and what are virtually non-images of women - woman in fragments and distorted, images cut off from the family and primarily associated with 'sexuality' (not necessarily reproductive). 'Images of women' point, I would suggest, to the correspondence and similarity between the ad discourse and other discourses; non-images highlight the autonomy of ad ideological production. The ads produce increasingly contradictory and competing ideologies organized around these images/non-images.

Third, it becomes blatant visually and verbally that femininity addresses itself to masculinity on which it is dependent: that masculinity constructs femininity in its own image, for itself. But there is too an increasing 'masculinisation' of femininity which yet contributes to the emphatic demarcation of femininity from masculinity even in that relation of dependence.

Fourth, as femininity is 'penetrated' in this double sense by masculinity so increasingly it is penetrated by, and contained within, the capitalist commodity form: women use commodities to serve men; they use them on themselves to aid femininity; commodities replace them in their relation to men; and finally the relation between femininity and masculinity takes a fetishistic form of the relation between commodities. (Cf. Marx 1976, p.164). But as the inverse of that capital has increasing 'need' for those patriarchal relations at its moment of consumption. As Juliet Mitchell insists capital uses women in its most advanced sectors - to foster what she calls "consumer consciousness".

They (women) are the subject of the most advanced ideological utilization made by late capitalism; the chief ideological means of creating its market

(Mitchell 1971, p.148)

In these ways patriarchal and capitalist relations become inseparably entangled.

Fifth, and politically perhaps most significant, we as the interpellated subject(s) are increasingly and contradictorily embroiled in these competing discourses which place us as women, as we impossibly attempt to achieve an autonomous identity that differentiates itself

from that positioning. The ads demand that we understand their meaning, which is already prescribed, only by placing ourselves within their text. As Ros Coward and John Ellis describe:

Ideology consists of: a practice of representation, and a subject constructed for that representation.

Ads interpellate us through exchanges of meanings essential to their ideological production, exchanges which can only be achieved through our knowledge of those meanings. Williamson,

it is he or she who completes the circuit through which, once started (and it has 'always already' started, as Althusser says) a current of 'meaning' flows continuously and apparently autonomously.

(Williamson 1978, p.41)

Through these means the ideological production of ads therefore passes invisibly before us. The means of signification by which this is achieved in the 1970s (the object of Williamson's study) are more inveigling than in 1956, when the reader can approach ads more nearly as 'spectator'.

It is as we are interpellated as certain kinds of feminine subjects that the question of our consciousness becomes paramount. Our consciousness as women is not of course determined solely by the ideological representation in ads. Rather it arises through the contradictory definitions of femininity which we variously and vicariously live (economically, politically and ideologically). A study like this one which only pays attention to one particular discourse cannot argue for its relative 'ideological power'. But what it does point to is a relative autonomy of ads which over the period is accentuated in relation to a production of 'femininity' still firmly embedded within patriarchal relations. The ads discourse contradictorily places us both in relation to other discourses and more particularly in relation to our economic and political positions which have begun to challenge patriarchal relations. We should be forced, if we are not to lose those material gains, to realize, as Coward maintains,

that the struggle for power within discourses becomes an issue of political importance for the Women's Movement.

(Coward 1978, p.92)

In examining these changes I focus first on general changes in ads in women's magazines, for example the kinds of products advertised. Second I look at 'images of women' as they shift from 'mother' to 'distorted bit of woman'. Third I examine more closely the ideology of femininity

as it is organized through these images. Fourth I centre on the changing means of signification of this ideology by which the reader as subject is drawn into the ad to cooperate with its representations of femininity. And finally I attempt to draw out the changing relation of femininity/masculinity, and of patriarchal relations in their developing articulation with the capitalist commodity form.

This investigation into ads is part of wider study of women's magazines as a whole since the mid 1950s. The magazines I am focussing on as typifying the shifts which appear in that period are Woman and Woman's Own, which provide the 'base line', from which to discuss all other magazines, (and which achieved their highest publication figures in the mid 1950s), Honey (first published 1961), and to a lesser extent 19 (first published 1968) and Cosmopolitan (first published in 1972). A study of ads in the magazines is one way into approaching the wider changes in the magazines. Undoubtedly the readerships of these magazines diverge, so that we might attribute differences between them merely to that factor. However the changes we see most clearly in Honey and Cosmo also influence the appearance of other women's magazines, even though Woman and Woman's Own, say, retain more familiar characteristics. Thus Woman and Woman's Own in the last few years have carried ads which span in modified forms the whole range of ads I discuss from 1956-74.

Briefly, from a sample of about 300 ads taken from the years 1956, 1962, 1968 and 74, about 60 were selected which are referred to here. The sample was constituted from all full page ads from a copy each of Woman and Woman's Own for 1956, 2 copies of Honey for 1962, one copy each of Honey and 19 for 1968 and one copy each of Woman, Woman's Own, Honey and Cosmo for 1974. The months/weeks chosen were completely arbitrary. There are some problems in that later magazines are over-represented: in the 1950s the greater proportion of ads take up less than a full page unlike in the later period. It might therefore have seemed reasonable to have included half page ads for the 1950s sample. However, since I argue that 50s ads 'carry on' into the 1970s that seemed unnecessary.

In 1956 it is washing powder and new 'convenience foods' which claim most advertising space. It is these products which take up most full-page advertising, and which tend to be advertised in colour, with photographs. Household equipment (fridges, washing machines and furniture) is there but less conspicuously so, and similarly for beauty products other

than soap and shampoo. While the proportion of space devoted to ads is about the same as in Woman and Woman's Own in 1974, ie. about half the magazine, the number of ads is greater (because there are fewer full page ads); there is much less colour, fewer photos and more drawings. The main product areas advertised in Woman and Woman's Own by 1974 are make up, toiletries and food, and secondarily, but quite substantially, clothes, drink and cigarettes.

Honey, 19 and Cosmo do not carry foods as a rule except for slimming products. They do however carry a welter of ads for clothes, make up and toiletries, as well as ads for jobs - absent in Woman and Woman's Own. In terms of kinds of commodities advertised the shifts from 1962 do not seem to be considerable. However the 1974 sample shows ads for men's toiletries and contraception, as well as more ads for drink and cigarettes than in 1968.

In the 50s most ads were at the beginning and end of the magazine with a solid block of editorial feature in between. This heavy concentration persists but in the 1960s, as the power of advertisers proportionately increases in relation to editorial control

commercial interests were now being 'accommodated' to a greater extent than ever before, and there is evidence that the actual content of magazines is being affected.

(White 1977, p.203)

Thus we find both more ads interspersing editorial feature and their pertinence (sometimes contradictory) to those features.⁽¹²⁾

Generally the magazines have all become glossier: the quality of photographic reproduction and colour has improved; the sophistication of ad technique has increased. However this poses a problem in any retrospective view of older magazines. As 1978 observers we have come to expect such (re)production, so that although we may always consider ads (and magazines as a whole) as 'fantasy', 'unreal' it is nevertheless through this quality of photography/design etc. that the 'realism' of ads (the 'unnatural naturalness') is constructed: that is how we expect ads ordinarily (although themselves extraordinary) to be. In comparison the 1950s ads are comically naive and one feels harmless: as spectators from a different period we recognize their ideology more readily. However we have to assume that for readers then verisimilitude operated as much, or as little as it does now. (Cf. Barthes - the mode in which the "having-been-there" of photos has changed but the "having-been-there" nevertheless remains, Barthes 1977, p.44).

Changing 'images of women'

As Pollock explicitly argues and Coward and Cowie implicitly support, the concept 'image of woman' is inadequate to analyse the representations of 'woman': it suggests a realist framework in which it is possible to represent (or misrepresent) the real woman; a 'form' and 'content' to representation which exists complete in its meaning apart from us the viewers/readers; and hence representation as immaterial and without the power of determinancy - we can choose to pay no attention to it. Instead we must conceptualise the representation of 'woman' as a process of signification in which we are intimately and necessarily involved, interpellated as subjects who, in completing the signified, enter the 'space' between signifier and signified. It is we who 'produce' the images, bringing it 'into play' with other images we already know about (Cowie 1977, p.22), and are thereby 'trapped' by the process of signification.

Despite these criticisms, however, an image analysis, visual and verbal, can provide a useful preliminary approach to the representation of 'woman': it is through images that we are drawn into the signification. Thus: images are denotatively labelled so that their signification as production of meaning is 'naturalised', ie. we compare them to our understanding and perception of woman 'outside' the ad context without regard to their specificity in a particular discourse. Our recognition of any 'image' then immediately brings into play (even if we do not acknowledge it) the whole ideological discourse for which, to us, the image provides an organizing focus. Thus attention to images delivers us the pertinent domains of ideology in the contradictory construction of an ideology of femininity.⁽¹⁴⁾ Those domains are specifically and freshly constructed through the representations in ads but they only have meaning in relation to those ideological images women already hold.

Trevor Millum carries out an 'image' analysis (visual images), in his book Images of Women, Advertising in Women's Magazines. Although his is a detailed and careful study which pays particular attention to the techniques of advertising there are several criticisms to be made in the context of this much briefer and limited analysis. First he works within a form/content/spectator framework and is therefore 'guilty' of the kind of 'image' analysis discussed above: ads are less 'real' and 'more false' than the 'real' world. He conceptualises ads then as a 'refraction' of the 'real' world.

The ads provide an interpretation of reality which reinforces certain aspects of it - but because certain aspects are singled out and others are not, and those that are selected can be presented in a variety of ways, there must be some distortion occurring as well.

(Millum 1975, p.177)

Further on he describes ads as a "noulder of female outlook", serving to legitimate "those roles in which so many women find themselves" and it "acts as a social regulator to preserve the status quo" (ibid, p.179). This conceptualisation has the political implication of arguing for more 'accurate', 'truthful', 'whole' representations of women in ads. It is thus that Carolyn Faulder argues. (15)

Second his study is a 'static' and contemporary one. The images he 'discovers', whose characteristics he correlates according to expressions, poses, clothes, hair, setting, ad style and technique, cluster around two poles: the urban, familiar and everyday which feature children and family, in which the ads use functional props, a crowded style and few techniques; and the country, outdoor, fantasy, non-everyday, non-domestic, which are dissociate from things or people, in which the ads use metaphorical props, streamline style and many techniques. The corresponding 'images' at these poles are the mother and housewife on the one side, and mannequin and narcissist on the other. These images can also be maintained to be set within a circular set of attributes, slipping from wife and mother to hostess to mannequin to self-involved female (narcissist), in which the carefree girl is perched precariously in the centre.

The first problem here concerns the status of these attributes. The qualities which he associates with each of these images constitute a hotch-potch, relating to different levels: some are about doing things; some are about feelings towards people or things; some are about women's appearance. Likewise the attributes of the props which support these images span a wide range of unrelated domains only one of which Millum specifically calls 'femininity'. Others concern 'good taste', 'naturalness', 'childhood', 'fun' etc. As we shall see in a moment his 'images' make more sense if we see them as organizing a contradictory ideology of femininity which shifts from 'motherhood' and 'domesticity' to 'sexuality' and 'independence'.

Further he argues that there are two routes for women in ads which always finally end in the home: a route through sophistication, social competition and concern with fashion and style into the home, and a route

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through naturalness to maternity and establishment of the household. The second difficulty concerns this cycle. In the context of 'career' ads Millum mentions the "infrequently portrayed" 'independent' image of women, who presumably as a result of their rarity, do not appear in this cycle. I want to attribute more significance to this potentially disruptive 'independent' image, which emerges both in relation to jobs and in relation to sexuality in the ads.

The third problem which Millum, perhaps surprisingly, does not himself raise, is the extent to which those images and characteristics are applicable other than at the time the study was made. Returning to the mid '50s we find that it is primarily one half of the scheme - the familiar and everyday in which the central image is 'mother' and 'housewife', which appears. It is not until the '60s that the full complement of images is in evidence. His analysis cannot explain this development, which we can only understand by attention to changing ideologies of femininity related to economic and political changes for women.

I turn briefly now to focus on 'images' before turning to the ideology of femininity which they more pertinently direct us to. In 1956 the central image is that of 'mother' as it slides into her domestic persons - housewife, always wearing an apron, youngish, smiling brightly, hair usually darkish, short and "moulded" as Millum would describe it. She is servicing her family: cooking, washing, cleaning etc.

Then we see images of what Millum calls the 'mannequin' or 'model'. These are various - but always young, pretty, with short non-blonde moulded hair. They can gaze modestly, almost naively, with detachment, at us the reader; smile brightly at us; be posed as models looking into middle distance out of the page; be an 'exotic' film star; occasionally be with a man - the 'girl friend' rather than the 'mannequin'.

By 1968 Honey provides us with more 'authentic mannequins' - more brazen, more staged in their poses and settings, more often blonde, hair more styled. There is also the 'girl friend' - romantic or scheming; the 'carefree' girl without attachment to men, who has a gay and exciting time by herself. There is the beginning too of the 'narcissist' (usually a nude image of woman), the hazy visual of a woman's back view, long blonde hair, who coyly looks over her shoulder, partly involved in her own body, but considering its impact on men.

The 1968 sample not only displays the full range Millum cites but an accentuation and differentiation of their characteristics: the mannequin who poses in front of a mirror, the girl friend who 'kills' her man (ie. catches him); the narcissist who looks for admiration from a man or/and engages in self 'masturbation' with or without 'phallic' substitutes; the 'independent' woman who earns her own wage but contradictorily seems more concerned about getting married. There is a marked shift from the everyday and commonplace to settings which are exotic and bizarre. In addition, however, to these recognizable images 'women' appears in a mode not easily categorised as an 'image', one which Millum does not acknowledge, and which clearly illustrates the limitation of an image analysis. It is the 'distorted' or 'fragmented' image of woman, ie. as she appears in part or in bits and pieces, or through photographic techniques grossly distorted. For example we see only her eye/hair/legs/lips, or her legs/hands etc. are elongated. What these representations have in common is their construction through a kind of fetishism - a sexual attachment and representation of 'bits' of a woman's body. (See Freud 1977, pp.345-57).

It is important to note that in the 1974 sample from Woman and Woman's Own all these images are there, though in the case of the 'sexual images' with less exaggerated characteristics than in Honey or Cosmo. The domestic image of mother and housewife is quite often visually absent but verbally present. The 'housewife' tends towards 'hostess': not just serving her family but guests too, in the evening as well as during the day. When the housewife appears now she tends to be glamorous, elegantly dressed, with carefully styled hair.

The narcissistic image, most ostentatious in Cosmo and Honey, has three forms. First, as it slips into the 'mannequin', and the most usual understanding of narcissism, it is the woman who loves herself in order to be admired by a man.⁽¹⁶⁾ The image looks in anticipation of seeking male glances. Second it is a more directly sexual image of 'masturbation' - quite often with 'phallic substitutes'. Third it is an image of self-indulgence and self involvement in which the woman pampers herself with body lotion, alcohol or sweets.

The 'fragmented' and 'distorted' images of woman are, as we shall see, more excessive by 1974 (though less so in Woman and Woman's Own). The 'independent' image shows an 'equality' with men which is nevertheless often contradictory - showing inequality too. There is occasionally a

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composite and ambiguous image which surprises us because it illustrates what is generally taboo: the collapsing of two separate images into one which retains both characteristics. The images are then usually simple in the sense of depicting one image and certain images are mutually exclusive, eg. 'mother' and a 'sexual image', and do not represent how we as women complexly live out femininity, through all these images. (17) But that brings us conveniently to a consideration of the contradictory ideology of femininity which 'images' only begin to point to.

An ideology of femininity

The ideology of femininity is represented 'underneath' or cuts across the ideology more particular to us - bourgeois ideology of the 'free' individual. It is this ideology which we must first recognize and continually bear in mind as it over determines the ideology of femininity. This 'free' individual, the 'knowing', 'choosing' individual is first posed economically in the 'equal' exchange of commodities, specifically in the exchange of the special commodity labour power for a wage which the labourer can spend as s/he 'freely' chooses. (Marx 1976, p.280). But its repercussions and transformations, through concrete institutions and practices are widespread and relatively autonomous, with their own effectivity not mere reflections of this more basic relation: the juridico-legal individual 'equal' before the law; the political individual with a 'free' and 'knowing' vote; the individual who has 'freedom' of speech as much as any other (unless of course s/he's black or communist etc.); the woman or man who can 'freely' choose to marry and have responsibility for bringing up their (his) children - a man's family. This bourgeois individuality provides however an illusory 'freedom'. In a patriarchal capitalist society the individual is always placed within structures of domination which have already set up the 'unequal' places for this individuality. (Marx: the unequal exchange of capital for labour power which delivers surplus value to the capitalist and only the wage to the labourer. Furthermore at a very different level - the 'entry' into language and culture - the individual cannot be an originating source of individuality. S/he "does not pre-exist" the operations of the social structure but is precisely produced in the work of representations within particular social formations." (Coward 1978, p.13). It is the work of bourgeois ideology which contradictorily constructs each of us as a coherent unique and knowing subject;

'individuals' but yet identical to others. In ads that contradiction is expressed in the mode by which ads address and define you as the singular individual but must expansively similarly address and call upon all 'yous' - a plurality of similar subjects, created in the manner the ads set out. As Judith Williamson writes

Ads work by a process in which we are completely unmeshed, they invite us 'freely' to create ourselves in accordance with the way in which they have already created us.

(Williamson 1978, p.42)

Whatever the terrain of 'femininity' in ads the process of signification always finally constructs the 'the individual woman' - the mother who can choose, knowingly the right food commodity for her baby; the girl who freely chooses to wear X,Y,Z in order to freely choose the man she desires. She is the 'free' woman contradictorily always dependant on men and commodities. The 'progression' in the ads to an ideology of femininity which breaks away not from its dependence on commodities, but from dependency on men and responsibility for children, only brings it more closely into line with this bourgeois ideology. Bourgeois ideology therefore sets the limits in the ad context to any incursion by ideas from the Women's Movement, which find their way into the ads. (18)

The most significant ideological domains which constitute 'femininity' in the ads can be illustrated through 'images of women' alongside the captions which appear with them. Thus we have:

- MOTHER - Ideology of motherhood
'Are you as sure about his diet now as you were when he was a baby?' (Woman's Own 1974)
- HOUSEWIFE - Ideology of domesticity
'Tide's in dirt's out' (Woman's Own 1956)
'Blue Daz boils whitest of all' (Woman 1956)
'Formica for me!' (Woman 1956)
- MANNEQUIN - Ideology of beauty
'How to be prettier' (Woman 1956)
'Hairlapped in loveliness'
'Dress to kill' (Honey 1968)
'Your face is your fortune' (Honey 1968)
- MANNEQUIN - Ideology of sexuality
'Girls are coming back warm lipped' (19 1968)

- DISTORTED/FRAGMENTED WOMAN - Ideology of sexuality
'Lip rage' (Honey 1968)
'Your lips have never looked this wet before'
(Honey 1974)
- NARCISSISTIC - Ideology of sexuality
'A touch of Fenjal silky' (Cosmopolitan 1975)
- NARCISSISTIC - Ideology of independence
'Only drink it if you get up when you want to, not when
you have to' (Honey 1974)
- INDEPENDENT/CAREER WOMAN - Ideology of independence
'A worthwhile job means a secure future' (Honey 1974)

These are not exhaustive: we could include an ideology of courtship, romance or marriage in which the image is the 'girl friend/mannequin/narcissist', eg. 'Smart girl.... gave him a Gillette 'Rocket' set, Smart man' (Woman's Own 1956)

'When he is a camera be sure you have cover girl complexion even in the closest close up' (Honey 1962)

'the fragrant mist of love' (Woman's Own 1974)

But these captions tend to overlap with 'beauty' and 'sexuality'. It is focus on the ones I have selected above which, I suggest, allow us to recognize and understand the major ideological shifts and contradictions of 'femininity' in this period.

Ideology of motherhood/domesticity

The dominant, determining and organizing ideology of femininity in the '50s ads is 'motherhood' even when it is absent. Thus 'motherhood' slides into 'domesticity' as the commodity form invades family relations: mothering is providing appropriate commodities for children - hence servicing them, rather than fulfilling a more educational (middle class à la Bowlby) role of talking to, spending time with, playing with, telling stories to children, all tasks less reliant on commodities. (NB. It is father who is telling stories in the Wall's ice cream ad, mother who is 'servicing'). She washes their clothes: "When is your little girl's dress clean, clean the way you really like to see it?" (Tide 1956); or cleans up after them: "Painting water upset - chalks scattered - grubby finger marks everywhere. Who cares? You can clean a Formica topped table in two minutes with a damp cloth." (Formica 1956); and she carries out tasks for benefit of husband too. That work disguised to be non-work is moreover

represented as her joy and excitement in life: children's happiness is her happiness: "'What we like about story time is Wall's ice cream. To make a perfect day.' Take some home for the joy it gives." Visually we see only the servicing hands of the mother as she bears ice cream to three excited children and father playing on the floor. Here there are five portions of ice cream, ie. one for Mum herself who is included in the treat, but she is not always so lucky (or generous to herself): "Give your family a change today - and tomorrow too. With 7 full rich flavours to choose from, you can give them a new treat everyday! And how they'll enjoy it" (Heinz 1956).

It is as if life is everydayish, ordinary unless you as mother or wife do something about it, with the necessary assistance of the commodity: "Give a French accent to your next salad". (Heinz salad cream 1956). "A touch of magic." (Nestles cream). This ad directly refers to Christmas but implies a magic which can be induced at any time of the year by the product if she/you buys and uses it: "Once a year Christmas calls us out of this everyday world. To gaiety and feasting, parties and princely dishes with lots and lots of cream. Cream for the magic touch on the christmas pudding...That's something to remember." In black and white a housewife in her apron beats the cream, transforming the three dishes we see into glorious technicolour.

As this ad illustrates it is recognized that the housewife carries out housework - she cooks and cleans, but it is also refuted insofar as what may be arduous is either relieved by use of the commodity, or the commodity appears itself to do the work: "Tide's in - Dirt's out.... When Tide goes into that wash of your - out comes the dirt. Wash or boil, there's none left in. Tide's made to work this way." (My emphasis) of course women do the actual washing, but we hear nothing of it in the ad. "Painting water upset - chalks scattered - grubby finger marks everywhere. Who cares? You can clean a Formica topped table in 2 minutes with a damp cloth"; "You and Heinz together... make the perfect pair". The ads suggest that a housewife is no good alone: she is dependent on the commodities to perform the tasks which constitute her relationships with children and husbands.

The ideology of domesticity has not significantly altered by the '70s although the always bright and cheerful angel of mercy in the home does occasionally flag: "I'm whacked out..." to be restored to her chores by the commodity - "Complan will nourish you while you sleep and in the morning you'll feel much more able to cope with the day ahead;" and is rarely visually present. The housewife is 'sensible', 'practical', 'thrifty' - or should be: "'New carpet, Georgina?' '1001, Oliver!'", "Today's prices can even make a snack expensive. A sensible suggestion is cheese on toast"; "'Thanks to Cambells, I've just saved 3p on today's lunch. And so can you,' says Barbara Mullen". The commodities enable you to be ready for any chore in the kitchen: "Who's prepared for everything?....Swan. Swan. Swan really do have the answer to all your kitchen needs." Under obligation now to serve guests, as the hostess, entertaining similarly is no trouble, no work: "Now, it's no trouble to serve unexpected guests real coffee"; "Creda and you know your home. Carefree entertaining". The housewife no longer wears her apron but is transformed into glamorous hostess whom men other than her husband appreciatively admire for her domestic skills. In the Creda ad it is evening time at dinner. As she carries in some culinary delight, the young blonde woman is being toasted by two men seated at the dining table.

The ideology of domesticity concerns women doing things in the home; it has no interest in spelling out directly how women should look in that role. Yet visually we are most often bombarded by youngish slim, attractive, and happy mothers and housewives. An ideology of beauty accompanies motherhood/domesticity seemingly uncontroversially in the '50s ads. They are however potentially contradictory, 'inside' as well as 'outside' later ads.

Ideology of beauty

In the '50s 'beauty' is not 'natural' except in exceptional women, but, naturally as a woman you want to try and be 'pretty': "How to be prettier", a desire which parallels woman's 'natural' desire for a whiter/cleaner wash. As one commodity can appease the first desire so another can make you 'prettier'. However you need to be 'knowing' in relation to the commodity in order to then acquire the beauty it creates.

"No you've never known a cosmetic quite like Beauty Puff"; now you do and will be pretty. "From breakfast coffee to dancing after supper. these Horrockses cottons are scene stealers all. Their wide awake owners know about Lux care". (My emphases). Or you are 'smart' in order to get your man - knowing how to catch him: "Smart girl...gave him a Gillette 'Rocket' set. Smart man".

'Beauty' is compatible with motherhood/domesticity. They are united by the knowledge required both to perform successfully in the domestic scene and to appear beautiful as a woman. For example Lux soap flakes combines both aspects: "...These Horrockses cottons are scene stealers all....their wide awake owners know about Lux care." This ad verbally replaces the mannequins who display their 'beauty' within domesticity: we are told about their washing of clothes as well as that they wear them.

Feminine beauty in relation to its attraction to men is not mentioned, even though we may assume they are the imagined absent spectator. In making you pretty the ads 'stop' at the moment you have become pretty; then you merely sit back and wait for everything (men?) to happen in your life: "Lux purity and kindness can do for you what it does for so many dazzling filmstars": "Beauty puff with its unique cream base makes you prettier by far". But why should you want to be beautiful? For men, but we do not know that for sure from the ad; we can only guess from what we already know 'outside' the ad, ie. 'beauty' is devoid here of explicit sexual references which is affirmed by the cool, detached almost naive gaze of the woman's face in the 'Beauty Puff' ad. Supporting this asexuality, beauty in the '50s is also synonymous with 'health': 'Let Macleans give you teeth a new degree of whiteness...you can actually feel the healthy tingle of its lively action cleaning...cleaning... cleaning...".

However this clean out feature of the ideology of beauty is contradicted by its deceit, always as if it were natural, pretending - (to men?). "Beauty Puff gives you^rskin a fine-textured look that's beautifully natural". In the '60s this deceit becomes more obvious as symbols for 'nature' to connote the naturalness of woman are employed: "The newest idea in hair care soft as a kitten, supple as silk"; "Hair lapped in loveliness", with the visual of a women by the sea. (19)

Characteristic of 'beauty' by 1962 is first its achievement by all women - through the magic of the commodity: "You just shampoo it in and suddenly your hair is aglow."⁽²⁰⁾ Second 'beauty' is a game of fun. "It's a new beauty game"; or "What's your lucky number?" showing a numbered dial illustrated with woman's faces, which you imaginarily spin to find the most suitable make up. And "Sunshine, blossoms and I've gone blonde! Me gone golden and lots of things going. Whirling around and it's fun." But third, even though this is a game to be enjoyed, it has the serious purpose of 'catching your man' - 'beauty' in its deceit is now an explicitly sexual ploy: "It's a new beauty game - with a purpose...It's all done with clever Coty cosmetics...However you play it, you win". As the seriousness of 'beauty' is concealed behind the facade of 'fun', likewise the tension of competition between women in this 'work' is relieved by placing it within this 'fun' context: "And so I put my heads together - (the ad shows the same woman's head with different haircolours - all blonde)...Glo-ahead the 5 minute hair colouriser in 14 sophisticated shades by Steiner. Corn Gold - he would adore that! Auburn flame - Carol would be furiously jealous!" (My emphasis).

The passive appearance of beauty hides then, both an active pursuit of men - "Dress to kill", "Grab yourself some attention with Gala nail polish" - and the anticipation of men's interested glances and reaction - "The closer he gets the better you look", "To the naked eye its a naked face". The aggressivity of the 'work' of beauty: "A woman's ammunition", "Dress to kill", is precisely for sexual conquest within heterosexual relations. 'Woman' shapes herself in the mould that men desire: "To the naked eye (man's eye) it's a naked face", "Lirelle - more than just good looks". That this beauty is directed at men even when a man is not represented in the ad is obvious from the poses the models take up: looking up, wide eyed, to the absent dominating man (Quant Starkers); looking into a mirror before descending the stairs as if to meet a man (Lirelle). This achievement of 'beauty' has therefore become overladen with an ideology of sexuality.

An ideology of sexuality

To make yourself passively attractive is, by 1968, to make yourself specifically sexually attractive and available: as if, it is represented in the ads, the act of beautifying yourself is to already engage in sexual relations not just to be promised it. This is always implicit: "'Girls are coming back warm lipped', says Yardley. So come out of the cold and into the warm. Be lit up. Alive. All girl." Or: "Lips are too sensitive to withstand the sensation of harsh lipstick contact and much too important to expose to experimentation. Super Jewel fast 22 Special is a new experience itself....Soft and gentle and kindness itself..." (My emphasis). Or you are perhaps prepared for sex: "Your lips have never looked this wet before"; "You're getting warmer...." new bronzed lip-polishes wetter than wet. The warmest colours you ever saw. Each one spiced with excitement".

This ideology of sexuality in the ad context now admits then, both to a passive, virginal and innocent sexuality - waiting for men, typified by the image of a young woman in long white robes and flowing blonde hair and to an active experience of sexuality. But the 'sexuality' which is constructed is more diverse than ever this polarity suggests. It is unified however by its distance from reproductive sexuality - it is sexuality for its own sake, although contradictorily contained within patriarchal relations. The active experience of sexuality only takes place in a fetishistic mode (in the Freudian sense of fetish). Women are invited by the ads to respond to themselves through the imagined fetishes of men: the tights/legs, the lipstick/lips which fragment or distortion of them stands for all of their womanness.⁽²¹⁾ Yet since men are absent there is an ambiguity: is it a sexual experience with men that is inferred, or are women 'masturbating' with 'phallic substitutes' or through masculine fantasies? "Your lips have never looked this wet before" - we see just a woman's red lips, open, a lipstick resting against them, alongside an army of similarly big, shiny, erect and partially encased lipsticks; or we see a woman's legs, crossed, wearing stockings, she almost, suggestively, caressing herself.

This ambiguity extends to the more obviously narcissistic representations in which pleasure is self induced rather than reliant on men. "Imagine the clinging, soft caress of stockings" - a girl nude,

gently holds (caresses?) her ankles looking out at us (or at men?); or "A touch of Fenjal Silky" - the misty photo of a nude woman, holding a pink carnation at her breast. Eyes directed at herself, she is self-sufficient - except she is dependent on the commodity: "As you lie in a Fenjal bath you can feel the gently cleansing action beautifying your skin and when you step out one touch tells you how effective the Fenjal moisturiser has been. A touch of Fenjal Silky". But whose touch is invited? As John Berger discusses and Ros Coward takes up the naked woman is always a nude woman "framed-in-the beautiful photograph", a representation comparable to soft porn photos, potentially to be gazed at by men even if it is women who look at it. (Berger 1972, Butcher, Coward et al 1974). Thus women not only see themselves as men see them, but are encouraged in these ads to enjoy their sexuality through the eyes of men. It is a narcissism which at the moment of self-masturbation and scopophilia (looking in this instance at ones own body) is also exhibitionist, inviting voyeurism from men. (22)

There is a further narcissism which affirms women's self-indulgence and involvement but plays down the sexually exhibitionist elements. "Only drink it if you never bathe before noon" (And in a second version if you get up when you want to, not when you have to). Freezomint Creme de Menthe. Green, cool and slightly wicked". It is an independence of sensual pleasure which we can however translate into more heterosexual terms through the visuals of the two ads: virginal white of the woman's dress, the abundant fertile, as well as fresh, green of the plants.

This ideology of sexuality is therefore disparate and contradictory for women: active/passive; heterosexual/narcissistic, dependent on men/independent of men; fetishistic, masturbatory. While complementary to the ideology of 'active' beauty which has developed it is set firmly apart from 'motherhood' and 'domesticity': the latter admits to no sexuality even though it is premised on reproductive sexuality. It is in this context that the Coty 'Innocence' ad which shows a 'sexual' mother, 'shocks' us. Yet it is the same woman who is addressed by the ideology of the ads; she (we) must variously inhabit patriarchal relations responding appropriately according to the particular feminine task in hand.

An ideology of independence

'Independence' in 1956 does not exist in the ads except insofar as you are the 'individual' woman, 'free' to make your own choices within femininity: choosing a washing powder or make up. This aspect of 'independence' continues: "Freedom-of-choice is the name of the game and any girl with ideas of her own can play. Make her own rules. Break her own rules. Can invent one beautiful eye look after another." (Ritz eye make up 1972). Or "Cool it. The name of the game is Vincel. Feel cool. Feel free. In Vincel". The ideology develops along two routes, one the 'carefree' path which enters the realms of sexuality that I have discussed above; the other the financial path of a 'career'.

The 'carefree' life is the domain of leisure, where consumption of commodities reigns, and appears, as Millum points out, to be short lived - an experience for the young only. "Go way out for California. You're young. You're fun....just the girl to dear wear our zany Eye Jinks", or "Young colony, the spiciest shoes in zingy colours at sparkling new prices". It is therefore an irresponsibility bereft of any of the worries more appropriate to 'independence'. Other examples include: "You've got all weekend to make up your mind", "Only drink it if you get up when you want to", "Go carefree with Swedish Formula's 'Carefree Colours'", or "Feel free! ... total freedom to enjoy every minute of everyday, any day of the month". (Tampax) 'Choice', 'freedom' and 'independence' are however severely curtailed in their domain of relevance by the prescription of the ads - to use those products, yet the ads rely of course on a wider understanding of 'freedom' etc. 'outside' the ad for their convincing persuasion. This mode of signification relates to what Marcuse terms 'operationalism' "which cuts off development of meaning by creating fixed images which impose themselves with an overwhelming and petrified concreteness" (Marcuse 1968, p.82).

Second the security a woman more traditionally gains through dependence on a man is replaced by the greater excitement of a job: "What's a lively girl like you doing in the WRAF? - loving every minute of it.... It's a grand life, full of variety and interest, offering you a choice of jobs - and training for them!" But this ideology of independence

potentially contradicts 'femininity' in a mode which the ads deem unacceptable. As a consequence, therefore "A worthwhile job means a secure future" (WRAC), but it is a future and 'independence which is finally inscribed within patriarchal relations: most of the jobs described in this ad are 'women's work'. Furthermore great emphasis is made that unlike men "You can leave after two years ... or as soon as you marry". What appears to be 'equality' with men: "Tired of being bossed by men? Go into partnership", is illusory. In this ad women again perform 'women's work' supporting men in the high status jobs which are their prerogative, even though the ad attempts to argue for parity. More blatant is an earlier career ad for nursing, captioned "Nurses make the best wives", which has the visual of a couple getting married. Verbally the ad attempts to hold together, without contradiction training for a job and traditional femininity: "It's the training that turns a girl into an exceptional woman. You develop both as a nurse and as a person". i.e. you are engaged in a job in which "...you are a really important person in this modern world" and you are the feminine person who marries: "Most nurses marry - and because of their training make better wives and mothers than most."

The contradiction between the 'working' woman independent of men and the woman in a more feminine persona is manifest extensively, and is usually overcome by use of a commodity. Femfresh: "What's the first thing a girl should put on after her shower?...life is so hectic these days, the chances are that bathing isn't enough. Especially if you're a working girl...After a shower it's the most important thing in a working girl's life". Or: "Why can't a deodorant be like a girl? Active, efficient and feminine."⁽²³⁾ The difficulty in breaking out of 'femininity' is represented in a Guinness ad "Turn a few heads in the pub tonight. All you have to do is walk up to the bar and say, in the clearest voice you can muster, "A bottle of Guinness please",....ignore any stares, winks and nudges and just enjoy our dark, clean-tasting beer. If you don't feel brave enough to go it alone, take along an equally Guinness minded girl friend for moral support. Better still, take along your husband or boyfriend and buy him a Guinness too". The tensions of femininity/masculinity, women's 'independence/dependence' touched on here are forcefully exploited in 'Laydlike Guinness'- a later Guinness ad I discuss in some detail in the next section.

What I hope I have illustrated here in outline is the changing development of the ideology of femininity in ads, emphasising particularly its increasingly contradictory character. If ads are internally and in relation to each other contradictory, they must also engage us contradictorily within their representations of femininity. It is primarily to that terrain that I now turn.

Ads and their means of signification - or, looking at how they work on and through us.

Here I focus in detail on how particular ads are constructed and engage us in their production of meaning, specifically in their production of 'femininity'. I argue that the mode by which ads operate through us changes over the period so that we are more inescapably drawn into what Judith Williamson calls the 'hermeneutics' of ads (Williamson 1978, p.71) and hence into their construction of 'femininity'. As Williamson describes them ads openly demand that we decipher them - pick up clues to arrive at a solution they have already laid out, so what appears as our 'production' of meaning is actually a 'consumption' of meaning. As the ads shift from 'familiar' to 'surreal' representations so there are 'absences' which we have to fill: as in jokes there are too few words which we need to expand; the ads come to work primarily through visual material - condensed signifiers which we separate and elaborate; there are apparent contradictions between visuals or visual and verbal material, between connotative and denotative levels, that we bring within the bounds of a narrative.

By including us, as if the subject of the interpretations, the ads "Lead us to feel that we are interpreting reality that the ad really does refer to reality in a direct not a distorted relationship" (ibid, p.74). The signs do refer to a reality but, Williamson writes, they are "lifted from the materiality of our lives" (ibid, p.74). Thus ads depend on "referent systems" (p.26, 99-102), systems of mythology and knowledge anterior to the ad, to which the ad connotatively refers through the 'currency' (p.20) of specific signs. The referent system is employed as a "hollowed out system of meaning", (p.168) as the signified becomes signifier in an exchange of meaning from the referent system to the commodity. For example "Dress to kill" where the system of meaning to which 'kill, signified by a gun, refers, is transferred to the commodity 'gloves' and to 'dressing'.

The referent systems Williamson enlarges on are the major "ideological castles" of 'nature', 'magic' and 'time' which 'all involve relations of transformation' (ibid, p.102) and which misrepresent therefore our relation to and in the world and are central to an examination of ideology. At one level the conceptualisation of ideology here is one of distortion of 'real relations' in which the reciprocal determination of the 'ideological castle' back onto the referent is not suggested. However her analyses are more complex in their formulation: she considers the tendency of conflation between sign and referent which must, necessarily, challenge the status of the referent by the uncertainty in which it places us. This is particularly important if we consider 'femininity' as a referent system: already an ideological system (as in fact are 'nature' and 'time') it is both referred to by ads and constructed in the ad so that we come to live 'femininity' as it is in part determined by ads. In her observations on two perfume ads, Chanel No. 5 and Babe, "Williamson argues that the ads use Catherine Deneuve and Margaux Hemmings to refer to a femininity 'outside' the ad to which they stand in different positions: one 'passive' and 'feminine', the other, which 'kicks off' against the more sedate Deneuve image of flawless French beauty, 'active' and 'liberated'. But the second ad does not merely differentiate itself from 'flawless French beauty' and generate this new femininity in the ad context. Rather it also compromises or recuperates the meaning of 'liberation' 'outside', specifying a particular meaning - still within the terrain of 'femininity' - concerned with using a particular perfume. Thus we relate to the Babe ad both as it is different from the more conventional representations of women in perfume ads, and as it is a representation of women who as 'tough', 'active' and perhaps 'liberated' may generally be thought not to use perfume. The ad therefore carves out a space for itself to which we are encouraged to enter - the 'liberated' woman who nevertheless uses perfume. In a later discussion of make up ads Williamson explicates the process of construction of femininity in the ad which works through us to arrive at 'the created self'. She writes "In buying products with certain 'images' we create ourselves, our personalities, our qualities. We are both product and consumer; we consume, buy the product, yet we are the product." (ibid, p.70).

I want to show how the ads in the 1950s refer to a 'femininity' which they merely define particularistically through the commodity as those perfume ads in part do. In the 1960s there is a shift from the product as signified, ie. given meaning by a 'femininity' which already has

value to us ("Blue Daz boils whitest of all" - relies on a notion of a housewife wanting a clean wash for her family's clothes), to the product itself as signifier. The product takes over the reality on which it was first dependent for meaning and the product merges with its 'correlative' to construct a 'new' 'femininity', eg. "A woman's ammunition" ad for lipstick. The product then becomes not just a sign but the referent of the sign so that the product generates or creates the feeling it represents. It becomes the experience and produces it: "A touch of Fenjal Silky". Finally the product serves as a 'currency'ie, the lipstick which implicitly gets you your man and therefore replaces you. (Cf. Tide replacing the housewife). But also these 'stages' interlock; they are processes of signification in one ad, eg. "Lip Rage". First then 'femininity' is inescapably defined through commodities in a construction which must be further reproduced 'outside' the ad when the commodities are actually purchased and used. In Marx's terms this 'femininity', implicitly a relation between 'femininity' and 'masculinity', takes a form of a fetishisation: a social relation between people assumes "the fantastic form of a relation between things", (Marx 1976, p.165) - see here 'Ladylike - Guinness',⁽²⁴⁾ At the same time the mode in which we as women are drawn into the ads, depends not only on the signification of our 'femininity' through commodities, but second on the particular engagement with masculinity we are invited to participate in. The ads make increasingly clear that we create ourselves in the image men have set up for us, even though they are generally absent. There are two stages here; one, the woman in the ad looks out at us as if she were gazing at a man (who is/is not verbally indicated) - she is the perfect mirror image we always desire; two, the representations of female sexuality are for men - on the one hand the woman anticipates a man's attention, or on the other is watched by a man. As she is gazed at by the absent man she either then narcissistically exhibits herself or she is represented by the fetishes (in the Freudian sense) which men respond to - yet it is we as women who are invited to be titillated by these male fantasies.

In "Lady like - Guinness", as we shall see, we are trapped by both forms of fetishism. In the "fantastic relation between things" it is the sexual fetish of woman's painted lips torn away from her human form, which at one and the same time constitutes femininity subordinately within patriarchal relations, and subsumes it under the capitalist commodity form, so that as we begin to understand the ad we too are drawn into those relations.

Yet the ads are not hermetic, and they operate contradictorily in relation to us who are already different 'subjects' and who finally complete the signifieds. There is I would argue a repressed femininity which though it cannot break the bounds of patriarchal discourse resists within it. Here I am thinking particularly of the representations of a self-contained female sexuality, and what I refer to as 'masculinisation' of femininity which often takes the form of a mockery of a 'man's world'.

The features pertinent to these changes which I shall examine are the relation between visual and verbal material, the place of colour, the use of symbols, the paucity of language, absences both of words, people and objects on which ads rely and the use of pronouns as we visually and verbally read the ads.

WALL'S ICE CREAM (Woman's Own 13/12/56, p.43 - colour)

The visual signifier of a man and two children - a boy and a girl - sitting on the floor with toys, looking excitedly round as an arm carries in a plate of ice cream, is specified and repeated in the text. "Daddy reads us stories. It's too wet outside to play - and Mummy brings us Wall's ice cream. To make it a perfect day." Thus the signified is confined to 'familiness' in a particular form - the 'cosy-family-scene-at-story-time-with-ice-cream'.⁽²⁵⁾ The 'referent' drawn upon by the ad is the patriarchal relations of the nuclear family. Those relation with all the connotations we have of them are brought into the ad in toto, but are then defined in a particular way, not to replace the understanding we already have of 'familiness', but to include eating Wall's ice cream. The ice cream does not by itself create 'familiness', it only contributes to it. The product therefore is signified by the family; it does not itself signify 'familiness'.

The subject who speaks in the ad is a recognizable one - the children: "What we like about story time..." (My emphasis), but also the unnamed - "a voice we can never identify" (Williamson, p.14), speaking in the imperative tone common to ads. "Take some home...", which implicitly names 'you', ie. "(You) take some home...". 'You' then are addressed as mother the half absent mother whose arm you see in the ad, so that 'you' 'enter' the space of the ad - "walk into the room with the ice cream", as you understand the transfer of meaning from the use value of the ice cream as food, to its 'exchange value' - "the joy it gives", within the relations of the family in which 'you' too are involved.

'You' off stage and invisible have worked on and transformed the packaged ice cream into its five ready-to-be eaten portions. The ad presupposes that you perform such tasks within your role as housewife and mother. The sign 'woman' does not collapse in the signification of the commodity, rather the product is given meaning by its place within a set of relations - 'the family' - which already have meaning for us. Within those relations of 'femininity' your role as mother is aided by the commodity but not transformed.

NESTLE'S CREAM (Woman's Own 13/12/56, p.38 - black and white and colour)

Here we have two separated visual signifiers, a woman in an apron beating cream - this in black and white and three dishes of food plus a tin of Nestles, all bedecked with Christmas decorations - in full colour. Through the text which again repeats but specifies the visuals the signifieds are pinned down: on the one hand 'the everyday world of the housewife', on the other 'the excitement of Christmas': "Once a year Christmas calls us out of this everyday world". Black and white is transformed into glorious technicolour. The housewife, labelled by her apron, stands for, is, the 'currency' which refers to the whole realm of 'domesticity' in its 'everydayness'. Similarly the Christmas decorations as a part of Christmas signify the whole of Christmas. Into that Christmas and that 'everyday domesticity', which we already know about Nestles is visually and verbally inserted into the narrative: "Cream for the magic touch on the Christmas pudding...cream crowning mince pies". By its adjacency to 'Christmas' there is an exchange of meaning from Christmas to Nestles Cream and back again. Metaphorically Nestles 'replaces' Christmas - it is as good as Christmas - but only through your mediation, where 'you' are the housewife who remembers Christmas, prepares food and in this context will buy Nestles: "Do see you have plenty of Nestles Cream..." You can produce Christmas any time of the year 'magically' by buying and using Nestles which makes dishes 'perfect' - "A touch of magic", i.e. your labour is minimised, the cream does it by itself "Cream for the magic touch". By implication Nestles can improve you in your role as housewife at any time of the year, transforming you from the drabness when you work which black and white signifies, to the gaiety of dishes of "Christmas glory" in beautiful technicolour. It transforms your life first by doing your work for you and second by producing food of superior quality, which your family will appreciate. Hence will they be endeared to you - a kind of surrogate producer.

That you are a housewife cooking for your family is only signified through the use of the first person plural pronoun: "...the Christmas pudding we all helped to make..." You as housewife already know that it is not the producers of the ad or even Nestles cream who contribute, but traditionally, your family. Again then, we see the product as 'crowning' your role as housewife.

TIDE (Woman's Own 13/12/56, p.76 - colour)

In terms of its 'surrealism' - the soap packet and washing line riding on the waves of the sea - the ad is 'more up-to-date' in its means of signification than most '50s ads. Nevertheless its signification of 'motherhood/domesticity' does not rely on the bizarre exchange of meaning involved in the metonymic equation of tidal waves and Tide, the soap powder, which depends both on the identity of name and their juxtaposition in the formal structure of the ad. Although we are assisted by the text: "When Tide's in dirt's out", we have to complete the connection between the two. This is what Williamson describes as 'calligraphy' where the "sign and referent coexist in the brand name", so that there is a "robbery of materiality from structures and of structures from their material" (p.95), ie. from the sea's tides, in this case as that meaning is transferred to the washing powder which 'fills' the scenic view of the sea. As housewives and mothers we are included more straightforwardly in the ad. The housewife/mother is visually absent but we see a little girl and are asked "When is your little girl's dress clean, clean the way you really like to see it?" The ad therefore again refers to what already happens outside the ad: 'you' as mother concerned about the cleanliness of your child's clothes, although the ad attempts to set certain standards for that cleanliness. However your visual absence masks another absence that the text supports: the work which brings about your child's clean clothes is denied, and claimed to be performed by the commodity itself. Having acquired Tide (no suggestion that you buy it) you merely look on wonderously: "When Tide goes into that wash of your - out comes the dirt... See next wash day!" It works you are led to believe as inexorably as the sea's tide moves in and out each day.

GOYA BEAUTY PUFF (Woman 18/8/56, p.29 - black and white)

The visual signifier is a woman's face. The signified anchored by the text is 'prettiness' - "How to be prettier", "prettier by far", and 'radiance' "a radiant look". But there is an ambiguity in the woman's gaze: she looks out of the page, frankly, yet detached and cool, almost smiling - 'pretty', but we do not know on whom her gaze imaginarily falls. Unlike later ads there is no verbal hint of her interest in men, and the naivety of her pose does not immediately signify 'femininity-on-display-for-men', and therefore a male spectator. (There is a problem however in reconstructing the signified retrospectively twenty years later: should we know that coy femininity is directed at men?).

Nevertheless the ad is concerned with 'femininity' as you the female viewer already understand it: implicitly with the 'work of beauty' - in modesty here the work of prettiness - which necessitates the use of make up, and is ultimately aimed at attracting men. But the commodity - the make up Beauty Puff - is only secondarily differentiated from other such commodities by its contribution to 'prettiness' - the 'exchange value' for a man. It is first uniquely distinguished by its use values: "make up that won't cake, dry or change colour on your skin", "helps retain the skin's natural moisture...keeps the colour clear and true." These use values slide into 'prettiness' with its typical characteristic of 'as if natural': "Beauty Puff gives your skin a fine-textured look that's beautifully natural...and never before have you looked pretty so long". There is a movement from the referent 'pretty' signified by the woman's face to the product which signifies 'prettiness' and hence back again to the referent, but it is a circular movement similar to that of 'Housewife' ---> commodity ---> housewife in the previous ads. The commodity does not signify 'femininity' ('prettiness') other than as it is already referred to and more or less known about 'outside', because it achieves its meaning through no other referent but 'prettiness'. (Cf later 'Hair lapped in loveliness' which relies on 'sea qualities' to signify 'loveliness'). There is here no verbal level of connotation (except 'natural') and the visual of a woman's face is relatively neutral compared to that of Catherine Deneuve or Margaux Hemmingway. (26)

'You' must however still engage in this 'prettiness'. The ad first includes you by a conflation of time: the ad anticipates your use of Beauty Puff and according to the text you have already used it

(without the intervening act of buying). But also the 'image of prettiness', the woman, looks at you, her eyes at you eye level, as you look at her. She is your own 'perfect' mirror image that anticipates your use of make up. The verbal deceit of 'beautifully natural' - only achievable with make up - is reiterated in this mirror image: - it creates the (unavoidable) illusion and misrecognition that she is you or can be you or what you purposefully aim to be in your 'work of beauty'. The difference in this mirror image from later manifestations, for example, "To the naked eye it's a naked face", "Lirelle, more than just good looks" resides in its lack of explicitness in relation to the absent man. (27)

LUX SOAP (Woman 18/8/56, p.7 - colour)

The woman here, a film star Anita Ekberg, has the alluring and 'arresting' look that more obviously addresses itself to men, although again there is no such verbal explicitness. The background colour of midnight blue, her 'cool' serious gaze, her name 'Ekberg' (Iceberg), the opened tablet of white soap deliver the signified, organized around her, of ice cool beauty. The text confirms the establishment of this type of feminine beauty, that of 'stardom' and 'foreignness', as distanced from you. She is set apart from you in a relation which Lux soap mediates.

Like an iceberg the soap is white, and hence like an iceberg and like her it is exquisite. In addition the soap mediates the relation posed by the caption "Iceberg into actress". On the one hand the harshness of an iceberg - she, Anita Ekberg - is softened, 'feminised' by the 'fine', 'mild' soap; on the other hand she retains the connotations of 'iceberg' - 'whiteness' and 'pureness' - in her complexion by the use of the soap which gains its meaning from her but also contributes to her beauty: it's 'pureness' and 'whiteness' rub off on her skin. The product is therefore signified through its correlation with her name and her beauty, but in turn signifies that beauty - it becomes a metaphor, for such beauty. (28)

While 'you' are differentiated from her as other soaps are differentiated from Lux, that difference can be 'overcome' for you by use of Lux whose 'wholeness' and 'pureness' will similarly inflect your skin as it has hers: "You only have to unwrap a tablet of Lux and

look at that exquisite whiteness to realize that lux purity and mildness can do for you what it does for so many dazzling film stars. Nothing less white, less pure is good enough for your complexion. Try it for yourself today." However the ad never quite makes the leap which would transform 'you' into an actress; the product Lux is not quite your currency to stardom. Anita Ekberg is set up as a 'perfect' image of femininity but as an image you are not meant to identify with her. You know you can't look like her - a film star and Swedish, but if she with her special beauty uses Lux then it must be more than all right on your, very ordinary, woman's skin.

GILLETTE SHAVER (Woman's Own 13/12/56, p.7 - black and white)

This is the only one in the '50s sample which explicitly refers to female/male relations. Pertinently however it is not women's beauty' that is being signified. It is her 'knowledge', her 'smartness' in choosing the present he likes which (we assume) enables her to catch or maintain hold over her man - she smiles, her arms around his neck. Their relation is cemented in the ad by their common attribute of 'smart': "Smart girl ... gave him a Gillette 'Rocket' set. Smart man". The ad denies the differences in the two meanings of smart here, in order to transfer that meaning to the razor itself. Nevertheless it relies on our understanding those differences, and the relation between them, which effect the 'happy' scene signified in the ad.

LUX SOAP FLAKES (Woman 18/8/56, p.71 - black and white)

We see three young women in model poses (for men?) wearing summer dresses; one of them holds a rose gently to her face. The caption anchors the signified away from 'femininity' to 'New summer cottons?' It is the use value of Lux Soap Flakes in giving the dresses "the lustre and colour and life of the day they were bought", that is signified. Femininity is secondarily visually signified through these 'pretty' dresses which the young women wear for their feminine poses. The ad verbally returns to this femininity through them as 'knower', a 'knowing' incorporated within femininity. The ad asks the question "New Summer Cottons?" It asks it of you as you read the caption; it answers it by reference to the dresses: "No, they're Lux-washed 6 times!...And they'll stay that way throughout the season, because their wide-awake owners know about Lux care."

But these 'knowers' are also the 'wearers' of the dresses: "From breakfast coffee to dancing after supper, these Horrockses cottons are scene stealers all... These dresses have the lustre and colour and life..." This description of the dresses transfers its meaning from the dresses to the wearers, and thence to you who also now (after reading the ad) know about Lux: "That's something worth knowing". This binding of Lux to 'femininity' and you, not just to its use value in washing the clothes you wear, is reinforced by: "If it's safe in water, it's safe in Lux (and so are your hands)." (My emphasis).

In these '50s ads then, signifiers generally signify within a context recognizable in discourses outside the ad. The ads are 'familiar' and denotative. The major exception - Tide, where the waves of the sea come to signify the strength and cleanliness of the washing powder in its 'similar' in and out motion - does not change the signification of 'woman' in the ad. 'Mothers' and 'housewives' as signs are taken from their place in a wider signification 'outside', on which the ad depends, to be placed, not differently, but in more particularistic signification: their association with use of the product. The commodity does not become the signifier of 'housewifeness' or 'familiness' by itself but signifies 'better housewifeness'. The housewife or family is signified as a partial absence which is filled by the product. 'She' signifies 'you' by interpellating you as 'inadequate' until you use the product.

In the 'beauty' ads we as readers engage in a specular identification at the visual level: our eyes meet those of the 'image' who is our perfect, mirror image. But at the verbal level signification concerns 'knowledge' which the ad gives of the commodity and which we too can share when we have read the ad, and when we use the commodity. The commodity as a signifier does not rely on signification extending 'outside' the ad (connotation) except in the case of Lux soap and iceberg, but even in that example 'iceberg' is already there in her name. The transfer of meaning is circular or self-referential: Pretty ---> commodity ---> pretty. The commodity and 'woman' remain independent signifiers: the commodity does not replace her. And finally you are a spectator to the work of signification which is primarily performed in the ad itself - a rhetoric that denotes rather than connotes. (29)

By 1962 we find that 'symbols' or what Williamson calls 'currency' abound; the means of signification necessarily depend on connotations derived from diverse domains 'outside' the ad, knowledge of which we bring to the ad. In this way we are unavoidably involved in the ad. As the ads become 'unfamiliar' in their representations - more 'surreal' - the relations between caption, visual and text are more carefully constructed; there is less visually superfluous material; a more concise verbal content demanding fewer words; and colour and photographic 'effects' are themselves signifiers. Within these means of signification 'femininity' differently signifies and is signified.

STEINER HAIR CONDITIONER (Honey March 1962, p.2)

A blonde haired woman, a Siamese kitten by her side, rests her face on a cushion and looks over her shoulder at us. At one level the cat and the cushion are part of that signified, a slightly unfamiliar but not 'unreal' scene, but they are also signifiers within another chain of meaning which we are directed to by the caption: "Hair soft as a kitten, supple as silk." The kitten and silk cushion have those qualities, that signification 'outside' the ad, but 'outside' they signify much more. Here their meaning is emptied of everything except 'softness' and 'suppleness'; they represent 'hollowed out' systems of meaning, which the product then fills using the 'form' but contributing its own 'content'. The caption anchors a correlation of meaning which the mere juxtaposition of signifiers in the visual does not immediately deliver, so that the product is signified as initiating a transferral of qualities which 'empties' the kitten and cushion and 'fills' her hair; it "bestows...the natural lustre of true health and beauty". (My emphasis).

'You' - "Your hair from now on...Newly created for you by Steiner" - are addressed as the unique individual who has already used the product, experiencing the feel and sensuousness of your hair like the touch of silk or a kitten's coat. This 'experience' is brought about by the commodity which "nourishes, cherishes, bestows..." in a manner curiously reminiscent of marriage vows: it appears to replace the need for a man while simultaneously anticipates a man - it is the absent man whom the commodity heightens your chances of catching, who will really 'cherish' you.

STEINER SHAMPOO (Honey March 1962, p.52 - colour)

In this second Steiner ad the means of signification are similar except this time the scene is surreal: the visual of woman with long blonde hair is superimposed onto a background of sea, foam and rocks on which a mermaid is seated. The caption attempts to 'normalise' this surrealism: "Hair lapped in loveliness", which brings together three separate signifiers - 'hair', 'lapped' and 'loveliness'. They are related not only in this caption but in the mermaid who unites them: she mythically has long and lovely hair 'lapped' by the sea. Those qualities are inferred in the blonde woman's hair, first by her juxtaposition to the mermaid and sea which is almost 'lapping' her hair, but second are transferred by the shampoo. It is represented surrounded by an oyster shell and a string of pearls and is called "Pearl Foam". Thus the product first takes over a particular meaning of the sea - its 'lapping', but then rather than 'lapping' her hair with water (although of course, like the sea, shampooing - the work which is invisible - does involve water) it 'laps' it with 'pearl like' qualities through its foam: sea as foam breaking on the rocks, shampoo as foam 'breaking' on her hair. "Spun to an enchanting silky softness by the caressing fragrance of Pearl Foam the out-of-this-world shampoo (Of the mermaid) that sets every hair of your head ashine with health, lustrous as the sheen upon a pearl."

'You' are drawn into the ad to 'experience' the caresses and to make sense of the ad. In the modes of transferral of meanings that it demands 'you' are brought in as if you had already used the shampoo: "...sets every hair of your head ashine..." 'You' then are the siren mermaid captivately luring men with your hair and your gaze: the woman in the ad stares as if at a man.

STEINER HAIR DYE (Honey March 1962, p.27 - black and white and colour)

In a third Steiner ad there are no 'objective correlatives' like the kitten or sea used in its transferral of meanings. It relies instead on a verbal pun and an absence which it is dependent on us knowing anterior to the ad. "And so I put my heads together...." says the caption and the woman who sits on a cushion. It has a literal and 'humourous' meaning amplified by the display of portraits (of this same woman with different hair shades) which hangs behind her. But it is a

play on the saying "we put our heads together" - to sort out a problem or difficulty. 'Head' therefore has two meanings collapsed in the caption but utilised in the signification, she is thinking (with her head) - "Oh, pity a girl in a rainbow whirl who doesn't know which to choose" - but thinking about her head (her hair), which shade of blonde to choose. It is the product which allows this condensation of meaning and enables her to say "And so I put my heads together" - the product is called "Glo-ahead". It separates her hair (head) from the rest of her to return it to her transformed (from black and white to colour) in one of the many shades of blonde "Glo-ahead". Moreover it divisively sets the 'heads' one against the other in the personal relationships they are each represented as establishing for her "Corn Gold - he would adore that". "Auburn Flame - Carol would be furiously jealous". The woman in the ad is only what her hair is; she is the same person (the same hair) only by courtesy of the product - the different colours, which establish the myriad of relationships with men are united by the one brand. As before 'you' make these links between caption, visuals and text. Furthermore the woman looks out at you and 'talks' to you, while the text addresses you: "Glo-ahead foams colour into your hair", assuming again a purchase already completed and tested.

CDO-RO-NO (Honey August 1962, p.6 - black and white)

The nudity of this body, modest and impressionistic, revealing neither breasts nor pubic hair, is partially emptied of its sexual connotations as a signified is pinned down by the caption: "The first thing a girl puts on in the morning" when she is naked⁽³⁰⁾ and getting dressed, ie. this is not her 'sexually' posing but only her performing the practicalities of everyday life - getting dressed in the morning, which as we all know necessitates an initial state of nakedness. The low (sexual) profile is supported by the black and white visual. However what she puts on is not clothes which dress her but the deoderant "Odo-ro-no", which, maintaining her bareness, she wears for others: "You know how much it matters, how much other people expect it." The full force of what is signified by nudity is retained to specify the neutral 'others' as men: having put on her deoderant she waits expectantly, in the nude, 'fragrant' and desirable to men. Yet it is you who 'know' - "How much it matters"; you who look at the nude woman; and it is your imagined self that you look at, as you are looked at by a man.

ANGEL FACE (Honey August 1962, p.13 - colour)

This lipstick ad introduces the 'sexual play' which typifies most later make up ads. "New Angel Face lipstick makes your lips luscious... softer, smoother, than ever before" (My emphasis). The use of the word 'luscious', a word used more commonly in relation to vegetation or fruit - connoting 'the natural' in its 'richness' and 'juiciness' is employed within the context of a richly coloured ad. (Cf Black and white ad above; it is rare that make up ads employing this kind of sexual imagery are black and white). Those meanings are transferred to the vivid lips - ready to be eaten/kissed, by the man who this time is there in the visual. "New and so tempting" - for you to buy, but him to kiss, so that "lips go luscious" when you use the lipstick but when he kisses you." The most exciting lipstick of all" - because it gets you a man.

The woman here is signified through her lips - the 'bit' stands for the whole of her in a relation of displacement: we see only a part of her face defined by the striking red lips whose 'excitement' is reinforced by the red scarf draped around her shoulders, and the open similarly coloured lipstick below. Nothing verbally correlates those 'objects'; you do that as the ad expects, merely by recognizing their similar colour, and are thus drawn into the 'space' between the signifier and signified as the ad simultaneously encourages your participation in this 'experience': "Just see how luscious that Angel Face can be!"

YARDLEY LIPSTICK (Honey October 1962 back cover - colour)

"A woman's ammunition" - this 'aggressive' captions moves us 'outwards' to what we understand by 'ammunition' to the referent system for which the visual of belt and holster holding a gun and cartridges are 'currency'. But it is a condensed signifier because, while retaining all the meaning of a particular kind of masculinity concerned with fighting, the meaning is also 'emptied'; the cartridges are replaced by lipsticks and hence 'femininity' - "A woman's ammunition". The juxtaposition, or rather inclusion of the one, 'femininity', by the other, 'masculinity', empties both systems of their usual meaning in a mode which potentially transforms them. 'Femininity' takes on aggression, sexual excitement, daring and power: "Go great guns....Be forearmed for every possible occasion... You can set your sights as high as you like". This subversion of 'masculinity' is of course directed at getting men: "Sure fire lipsticks", and therefore 'masculinity' retains its dominance: the 'masculinisation' of

'femininity' is severely limited both in its mode and terrain of operation.⁽³¹⁾ It does however mark a very different 'femininity' from the passivity represented in the '50s. At the same time it poses a very limited challenge to 'masculinity'. 'Masculinity' as it is signified through the paraphernalia of guns and cartridges is 'feminised' - 'exploited' by woman, made fun of and diminished in power within the context of the ad. The final power here lies with the commodity: 'You' as a woman cannot carry out this 'attack' alone - "Go great guns with Yardley lipstick". (My emphasis).

These ads then are more 'surreal', are constructed in a mode similar to dreams in which there is a juxtaposition of elements not usually found together, where condensation and displacement (the woman's lips standing for her sexuality), symbolisation, and where a 'secondary revision' - the captions - has to be performed to make sense of them, are the modes through which signification is achieved (Cf Freud. 1900). 'You' are drawn into the ad to 'experience' feelings as you do in dreams, feelings which tend to concern the very personal arena of sexuality - your relation to men. However that relation tends to be displaced onto your relation with the commodity which is also what gets you that man. The sexual relation is one in which you make yourself (through the product) sexually desirable to men. Thus 'you' are constructed by the product which defines 'femininity', so that 'femininity' as you look into the 'mirror' of the ad is defined by men and for men. In the 1968 sample we see these trends more clearly articulated.

PITTARD'S GLOVES (19 March 1968, p.1 - colour)

The caption "Dress to kill" draws on two opposing ideological referent systems 'united' in a manner similar to Marcuse's description of "unification of opposites" which "joins formerly antagonistic spheres of life" (Marcuse 1968, p.81). "This language", he writes "speaks in constructions which impose upon the recipient the slanted and abridged meaning, the blocked development of content, the acceptance of that which is offered in the form in which it is offered" (Ibid, p.81). Here 'femininity' concerned with 'dress' and a form of 'masculinity' concerned as in "A woman's ammunition" with 'aggression' are brought together. Visually the condensed signifier also embraces this contradiction : a woman, partly shown, her one eye looking at us, has her arms around a man

whose back is towards us. She is 'killing' her man - but with her 'dress' (in fact her gloves) and not with the gun which the gloved hand holds; she is 'killing' him in order, we know 'outside' the ad, to catch him. The power of the gun has slipped over into the red gloved hand. That colour is a signifier in a discourse organized around 'blood', 'killing' and 'danger', but it is also associated with a chain of meaning organized around the 'danger of sexuality'. Simultaneously the gloves are both tough, 'killing', almost masculine weapons, and feminine - 'soft' and 'supple' and daringly sexy.

'She' is in control of the situation, has power over the man, who, vulnerably, has his back towards us (imagine us with that gun/those gloves). 'She' looks at us, almost winking, woman to woman, knowing about men and how to catch them. 'She' controls him as if he were just another rather dangerous object: "Don't be caught barehanded. Whether you're dealing with a man or a Mouser". However she does not have this power independently: she needs the gloves, not to be "barehanded". (My emphasis). Paradoxically 'dressing' herself she becomes more sexual: she has "the Pittards swing ticket". Ostensibly the "swing ticket is your guarantee of washability" but in the underlying 'sexual discourse' it guarantees you a man: Pittard's gloves 'buy' you a man.

The reciprocal emptying and exchange of meaning between the signs 'dress' and 'kill' creates a new sign which conflates into a new referent - an 'aggressive femininity'. Even though such 'femininity' exists 'outside' the ad the means of signification permissible in the ad allows a heightened signification (the gun as signifier) not possible in the 'real' relations between a woman and a man. Nevertheless the ad must be seen as participating in those relations by 'voicing', making explicit and setting the terms within which 'femininity' operates. This 'original' construction of 'femininity' is not present in the modes of representation of the '50s.

As in 'A woman's ammunition' the 'guerrilla warfare' on 'masculinity' and its 'feminisation' is secondary but present: 'masculinity' retains its dominance even while being subverted - woman is 'aggressive' precisely for the feminine aims of catching a man.

YARDLEY LIPSTICK (19 March 1968, p.16-17 - colour)

At one level the caption concerns the new fashion in make up, 'warm' colours instead of 'cold' colours: "'Girls are coming back...warmlipped', says Yardley". Visually however we see air balloons floating down from the sky; in the foreground a close up of two women, blonde haired with goggles, shiny lipped, who hold onto the ropes of a balloon and look out into mid-distance. Below is an open lipstick and a compass. Indeed they are coming back from the cold of the sky, but they are also returning from participation in a predominantly masculine sport. They are re-entering 'femininity'. This is elaborated in the text: "Lips glow again in Yardley's new colours: All girl Amber, All-girl Gold. So come out of the cold and into the warm. Be lit up. Alive; All Girl". We can understand the ad within a discourse concerning sexuality. Doing their masculine bit in the air balloons has made them 'cold', ie. sexually undesirable and undesirous, set apart from men - as sexual partners by the goggles and the ropes which 'trap' them in the balloon. Now, using Yardley, having used Yardley, they are coming down to their men, ready for sexual engagement: "Be lit up. Alive All girl", but who is it that is being brought alive to 'femininity' again? '(You) - "Be lit up..." It is however the 'phallic' lipstick which guides them to men (the lipstick is adjacent to the compass) and warm's' them up, not men themselves. Ambiguously the lipstick gets you your man, but also replaces him: he is the absent man in two senses.

HELENA RUBENSTEIN LIPSTICK (Honey July 1968, p.44 - colour)

In this lipstick ad we see a woman 'distorted' - her black hair almost covers her face except for her red lips. "Lip rage" says the caption. 'Lip Rage' is a signifier with many signifieds which play on the verb/noun 'rage': the rage or demand for these lips, for these lipstick colours; she is in a rage - raging - her hair all over; the lips, the lipstick, she, are outrageous; red is the colour of rage; her lips rage, are excited for - the absent man. The 'bit' of woman we see metonymically signifies her whole and all 'femininity' but it is a sign in the commodity's signification: Lip Rage - Coral Rage, Pink Rage, Flame Rage. The referent which she provides for the product is taken over by it: (her) lip rage = (lipstick) lip rage. We can compare here "Beanz Meanz Heinz" about which Williamson writes "all beans are completely enclosed

by the signifier Heinz. Heinz has appropriated all the meaning initially transferred to it from the exterior reality of beans as signifiers: but the product ends up as signifier of the reality". (Williamson p.36). So all 'women', all 'lips' are enclosed by "Lip Rage": 'you' are your outrageous lips - "(You) try one....it's outrageous".

MARY QUANT FACE MAKE UP (Honey July 1968, p.39 - colour)

A woman is squatting, hands around her knees, her face and shoulders surrounded by a mass of hair concealing her body which appears to be naked although hidden. The photo is taken from above so that as she looks at us she is looking up. She has the wide eyed innocent look of a child, but her ghostly face is obviously (but to whom?) made up. Thus the caption contradicts the visual: "To the naked eye it's a naked face". It is her body which is 'naked' not her face although that is, in the fashion of the time, 'natural' - it is the 'bare look' with bare colours: "Bare Light/Dark/Bronze". While it is her face and her make up which are the ostensible concerns we are constantly reminded of her body. The two merge in the name of the product "Starkers", which gives justification for her nudity - "The make up that looks like it isn't there", while reinforcing its connotative value, its daring, almost sexual character - there is no make up (nothing) on her body. The product via her face allows access to her 'real' nudity - her body for men: "To a naked eye..." can only refer to a man's eye that is, - generally, without make up. She looks up to that man appealingly (signified by the angle of the shot) pretending her face is 'naked' in order to deliver him that real nudity of her body: "And even if it's hiding anything it won't look as though you have anything to hide. To the naked eye". No, because tradition has it, men are notably oblivious to the niceties of make up camouflage: as long as women are 'pretty' and not obviously made up anything goes 'natural' or 'unnatural'. Second the make up won't for sure hide 'your'/her nude body, which in the ad photo technique hides with her hair and her own clasping of her knees the latter suggestively almost appearing to be her breasts: to a man's eye, the ad 'daringly' suggests your body is not one to be ashamed of. The woman looks up at you the viewer, but 'you' are also inscribed within the text; she is your 'mirror image', the image you desire but cannot get. She looks at you as if locking at a man. This double 'absence' of you and the man places you in a position of misrecognition in which you have to read/see yourself in the ad which is 'you' and not you, and which importantly is a 'you' addressing men. There is no way as the eyes look at you, and you read a text which talks to 'you', that you can passively consume that ad as mere spectator.

ARISTOC TOPS STOCKINGS (19 March 1968, p.58 - colour)

Here a man is not 'present' in his absence because the woman's gaze is narcissistically turned inwards. Nude, her legs crossed, thighs together, she wears suspenderless stockings. We see one of the elasticated tops which she holds, a finger under the band. It is a close up shot in which we almost feel the softness and sensuousness of her legs ourselves - our legs too. The text proclaims the 'use value' of the stockings without more contribution to themes of sexuality: "We're the tops.... Top for stay-up power". Yes, but the visual signifies 'tops' for pulling down too - in contrast to the trying hazards of suspender release. (These were the days before man's invention of tights).

The signified is more ambiguous than "Starkers", we can read it voyeuristically as 'soft porn' - masturbation for men to watch, or as a more self involved sensuality - less dependent on men, while still dependent on the commodity. However a patriarchal discourse retains its dominance: 'woman' is fetishistically represented - her stockings, her legs, which hide the site/sight of her genitals.

Taking the '60s ads as a whole we have seen that the reader/viewer/consumer recognizes herself in the mirror image through a process of mis-recognition; she is addressed - 'you', the eyes of the image engage with her eyes, but the image looks at her as if she were a man, as if she were posed for the photograph by a man.

Her sexuality is trapped within commodity relations: a part of woman - lips, legs, head or her nudity - signify her whole, but at the same time those parts become the signifier of the commodity; the lipstick, the stockings, the hair dye, so that she is the commodity and nothing more. She needs the lipstick or tights to make her desirable to men; those commodities define the erogenous zones; she 'masturbates' or fantasizes with them. But the self-involvement she appears to indulge in 'independent' of men merely confines her to a dependence on commodities as phallic replacements.

Finally the 'masculinization' of femininity - its gestures to 'aggression' and power takes place within traditional femininity: catching a man, so that the break, although it marks a shift from passivity to activity in relation to men does not challenge the patriarchal relations of masculine dominance to which it aspires in a sexual relationship.

The developments in the 1974 sample concern first the representations for men: the fetishisation of woman's sexuality on the one hand, and the narcissistic construction of femininity ('mirror phase') on the other; and second and integrally part of the first the fetishisation in the Marxist sense, of the relation between 'femininity' and 'masculinity'.

NATURAL WONDER LIPSTICK (Honey November 1974, p.14-15 - colour)

Back on the terrain of erotic lipsticks this ad focusses exclusively on lips and more pertinently on lipsticks. On the double page spread 'woman' appears only through her part opened lips, while most of the space is devoted to a mass of closely packed, big, shiny, phallicly erect lipsticks. One of these she rests against her lips. The text is as explicitly sexual as is possible without actually using a sexual vocabulary: "Your lips have never looked this wet before....The formula is rich and juicy..." (Cf the shift from 'luscious'). It is 'you' who are already engaging sexually in a mode the ad has set up for you - apparently without men. There is nothing in the ad to suggest that you are constructing your sexuality for men: your sexuality is satisfied by the lipstick alone, the phallic replacement which brings with it the repertoire (the memory) of sexuality 'outside' the ad - but only that. In its 'blown up' appearance not even attractiveness is any longer signified. (Compare in a moment the Guinness ad).

NO 7 (Cosmo May 1974, p.53-5 - colour)

This three page ad extends the range of 'erogenous zones' uniting them together as 'woman' through the commodity(ies) - No 7 make up. As Ros Coward describes "what can be detected" in these ads is not only the "multiplication of areas of the body accessible to marketability" but "the consistent 'sexualisation' of areas previously not defined as sexual. It is the socialisation of eyes, lips, ears, wrists, legs, feet, hair mouth, teeth smells, skins, etc." (Coward 1978, p.15). If the examples I have described here seem to have been predominantly ads for lipsticks and face make up it is only because they are the most 'extreme' of their kind. (32)

"The bright colours have dazzled themselves out. The pastels have melted away. No 7's sunset strips are here. You're getting warmer." This caption on the first page is accompanied by a woman's face looking

at us - our desired mirror image. Overleaf is the fragmentation of her, her whole body into her constituent parts: the sunset strips (like frames of a film), lips and eye in close up, an erect arm, each in conjunction with its appropriate commodity. The parts are signs for her, but are displaced signs for sexuality - "sunset strips" (strip bare/strip tease) emphasized by our proximity, as if, the photos represent for us, we are in close embrace (or have our face against the mirror). Those potentially misfitting parts are 'filled out' by the commodities, so that she and the commodities are inseparable: "3 new bronze eye slickers [her eyes] bright and shining. 3 new bronzed nail polishes [her nails] with brilliance. 3 new bronzed lip-polishes [her lips] wetter than wet". But 'her' body is 'your' body: "The warmest colours you- ever saw. Each one spiced with excitement (for you)". (My emphasis, bracket). Her/your body is taken away bit by bit and returned as a collage of commodities which only the brand name harmoniously unites together: "Matching lips nails and eyes". As we look at that double page so we unite those bits into our own one body - by courtesy of No 7.

LIRELLE DRESSES (Honey November 1974, p.43 - colour)

The mirror image relation is here made explicit by a double use of mirrors. One woman, blonde, watches another, also blonde, who is looking at herself in a hand mirror. But they are both placed in front of a wall mirror, so that in addition we see their back views, which they cannot see, at such an angle that we are then in the position of filling in our own image in the mirror. However the 'form' of our self image is specified by separate smaller frames in which the same two woman (now alone), apparently approach us. (One is coming down some stairs, the other coming out of a room as if to meet someone). They each individually are walking towards absent men to whom they display their groomed and manicured selves. We, therefore are invited to share with these women not only in beautifying ourselves in company with other women like them, but also to prepare (and love) ourselves for the solitary encounter with a man - to be looked at and loved by a man. We construct ourselves for a narcissistic relation to 'man'. As Coward writes "Through this work female sexuality is defined as primarily narcissistic..." (ibid. p.15).

FENJAL BATH OIL (Cosmo May 1974, p.146 - colour)

Narcissism here is very private - almost without men - but with a public edge directed at men. A misty photo shows us a nude woman - face, body, down to her pubic hair which is just visible blending into the depths of a darker background. She holds a pink carnation above her breasts which she cups with her hands, below which is the first part of the caption: "A Fenjal bath brings the softness of nature to your skin". Above her pubic hair are the products and another carnation bloom. Below that, just cutting across her hair is the second part of the caption "A touch of Fenjal Silky". On the one hand it is a representation of woman that is typical of soft porn; there is a 'movement' in the ad from the 'natural' of the pink carnation at her breast, to the caption, and down to the carnations further appearance with the product and finally to "A touch of Fenjal Silky" - a reference by this time to both the product and her sexuality as it is signified by her pubic area, her hair which again hides the site/sight of her female genitalia, the 'heart' of her sexuality within patriarchal relations.

Thus the text and visuals can be read as suggesting that you bathe in Fenjal to await a man's touch. But we also have to recognize that the ad is directed to women and we can therefore read a contrary meaning: she is touching herself in the photo, privately, behind the mistiness - "... when you step out one touch tells you how effective the Fenjal moisturiser has been. A touch of Fenjal Silky". Even though that kind of pose is a sign in a patriarchal discourse, and since we still live within patriarchal relations its meaning must over determine and carry over into any oppositional signification, we should not refuse to recognize it as also contradictorily establishing a difference from that patriarchal representation. We must however be wary of our assessment of it. As Griselda Pollock writing of feminist attempts to create "an alternative imagery outside ideological forms" relevantly argues "The attempt to decolonise the [nude] female body, a tendency which walks a tight rope between subversion and reappropriation, often serves rather to consolidate the potency of the signification rather than actually rupture it." (Pollock 1976, p.29). Certainly here it is as a 'reappropriation' of feminine sexual independence within patriarchal and capitalist relations that we must understand this ad.

GUINNESS (Honey November 1974, p.99)

This ad concisely and illustratively not only brings together many of the tendencies in the representation of 'femininity', but also, poses the limits to such a representation. It constructs and works through fetishistic relations in both Freudian and Marxist forms.

The ad is surreal, a surrealism constructed by the camera - a very close up shot which loses the shape and dimension of the face, merging it into the foam of the Guinness, so that the vivid, glossy, red lips stand out above a flattened, labelled glass of dark Guinness. Between the two the small printed word "Ladylike". It is a condensation involving absence and contradiction which "lad;like - Guinness" both denies but also demands that we necessarily decipher. When we set in play the connotative system of the ad moving from its denotative level to the 'outside' we 'fill' the absences and recognize the contradictions. The absences concern 'femininity' and 'masculinity' which we already know about; which the ad presuppose; and which are in contradiction with each other. The one bit of woman, the vivid red lips, signifies the whole of 'femininity' (woman), through a metonymic relation - in that sense the 'lips' are 'Ladylike'. But metaphorically their colour and texture and shape signifies daring, excitement, sexuality, in contradiction to the sober connotations of 'Ladylike'; 'masculinity' in its difference from these red lips is signified by the dark drink. We participate in a 'joke': the red lips are not 'Ladylike' although it says they are; Guinness is not ladylike either but the ad dares the impossible and declares that it is. While the Benson and Hedges ads, for example, rely on a similar joke, they also work through fantasy: there is no way in which the ad can bring about what it signifies, ie. a Benson and Hedges packet can never be a pyramid, a fountain pen nib, a cottage window. Guinness on the other hand can be 'Ladylike'; the ad may generate "Ladylike - Guinness" because women will drink it. Benson and Hedges remains at the level of a joke, at the level of signs; Guinness on the other hand potentially intervenes in the reality to which initially it only refers - 'femininity'.

Reading the ad as women we are constantly caught in its contradictions oscillating between 'Ladylike'/'not ladylike' (masculine), not drinking Guinness/drinking Guinness, but are finally ensnared within its imaginary unity: not either/or but both - the dare of 'Ladylike' and drinking Guinness which 'empties' Ladylike' of its referred meaning and 'fills' it

with the product Guinness. However that engagement with the meanings of the ad involves submitting ourselves to the means of signification to fetishistic relations. First the 'human' element of the face to which the lips belong has been obliterated, yet we understand those lips as representing women's lips even if they are only a 'thing' - painted lips, a sign for woman like a lipstick. It is another 'thing', the commodity Guinness which is the sign for masculinity. The relation between 'femininity' and 'masculinity' in its particularity of the gender organized social conventions of drinking, is set up for us to see as "the fantastic relation between things" (Marx 1976, p.165): a pair of lips and a glass of Guinness, which appear 'naturally' to have the characteristics of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'. Marx writes that "The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things". (ibid p.164-5). But here both capitalist commodity production and patriarchal ideological construction are hidden.

Furthermore we have to engage with the representations of a fetishistic sexual relation structured in masculine dominance. The (closed) lips represent a displacement from the genital area of the 'lips' of the vagina, a displacement which does not bring to light the absence of a penis and women's castration. According to Freud ('Fetishism' 1927) the fetish is substitute for the penis which the little boy believes his mother had and which absence he refuses to take cognizance of when he observes her lack. However he both retains the belief and gives it up: he affirms and disavows castration of women by appointing a substitute which takes over his sexual interest, while avoiding the site/sight of female genitalia for which he has an aversion. In the ad it is obviously not a literal fetish in the sense Freud meant it, but nevertheless the signification of the ad works in a mode very similar to the operation of fetishistic relations for men. The ad depends on us knowing that women do not usually drink Guinness - are 'Ladylike' (and 'castrated') it depends on the difference between women's 'lack' and men's plenitude - the full glass of Guinness. However that difference is disavowed in the condensation of "Ladylike - Guinness": women can and do drink Guinness but remain 'Ladylike'. But the future pouring of the commodity Guinness between the as-yet-closed lips, the as-yet-'Ladylike' lips is

also a metaphor for the sexual act: man's penetration of the lips - the vagina, which provides affirmation of women's 'castration'. We are dared to drink Guinness, but our daring shifting the grounds of 'femininity' only slightly, merely places us firmly within the conventional bounds of patriarchal relations.

What I have been exploring then, is first the ads representation of a changing relation between 'femininity' and 'masculinity' and the intervention in that relation by the commodity form; second, the means by which we as women are increasingly and contradictorily drawn into the ads as they construct those relations.

In the '50's' ads 'femininity' first concerns the family and women's duties as wife and mother. She is aided by the commodities not only in the domestic tasks she has to perform, but in her relationships with her husband and children. Second, and complementarily, 'femininity' involves a work of beauty, only partly recognized as work, and seemingly detached both from the family and an aim of 'catching a man', but like domesticity requiring knowledge of the commodities which will enhance 'prettiness'. We are included in the ads by our recognition that what we see/read is already familiar to us: the domestic scene, or the need as a women to be 'pretty'. We are appealed to as the individuals who know about the 'femininity' which we have to live and to which the commodities merely contribute.

There are thus limits to what is made 'public' in the ads: relations between members of the family as they are organized through domestic consumption; 'femininity' in its preparatory phase of 'making pretty' before meeting men, by 'knowing' about certain commodities. But there are also limits on that which is represented to the extent that the represented is always generally, if not in its specific form and content, already known about.

The shift to Honey and its younger, largely unmarried readership⁽³³⁾ throws up ads which burrow into the more personal relationships of 'femininity' - concerned with women's sexual relation to men, women's insecurities and fears about her own body, her own person, in her engagement with men. In one sense the ads bring to the surface - make public hitherto hidden aspects of 'femininity'. (Rowbotham, 1973, p.110).

Buts the ads define the bounds of 'the personal', first as they set up 'the image of woman' in the eyes of 'man'; second as that is constructed through commodities. These ads on the one hand articulate the further 'penetration' of capital into 'areas' hitherto outside the relations of capital; on the other hand reveal the patriarchal relations of feminine subordination on which they depend both for their signification, and their potential later sale.

In the 1962 sample then, the relation between 'femininity' and 'masculinity' is both more overtly sexual and one in which women are active. No longer passive, 'femininity' is 'masculinised', but still within the parameters of patriarchal relations - 'catching your man'. At the same time there is a more obvious operation of the 'mirror phase' in relation to women. We see our 'other' in the mirror of the ad which the ad constructs and we recognize as desired femininity, passive and awaiting men as if men were the spectators even though 'you' a women are reading/ consuming the ad. 'Woman' here is using commodities to assist 'femininity' but also begins to be transformed into commodities. The changes after 1962 illustrate the strengthening of this 'colonisation'. There is an invitation for us to respond to the fetishes which men engage with in relation to women's sexuality: lips, legs, hair, breasts etc. We provide the 'whole' woman who is absent. Yet it is the commodity which defines that relation, which fetishises certain parts of the female anatomy by providing its commodity equivalent. It takes away those parts from us and returns them as commodities: the lipstick, the tights etc.

Further the ads are also constructing a 'femininity' which we did not know about until we read the ad. This 'original' 'femininity' is represented first through fetishisation of parts of the body not previously considered erotic - the wrist or arm say, and especially as they are substituted for by a commodity; second through 'masculinisation' - the use of excessively masculine symbols to signify 'femininity', and third through the particular construction of a sexual relation via the commodity. Thus in the latter instance the idea of a sexual experience which the ads have earlier evoked with the aid of the commodity now takes place with the commodity itself - the commodity as metaphor for 'man' in his plenitude results in what I call 'masturbation with a phallic substitute' (eg. the lipstick). Since we do not yet know this 'femininity' the ad works to engage us in its process of signification so that we understand and 'place' ourselves within the 'space' offered us. Hence we too, after all, already live within that 'femininity' - we are that 'woman' - for ads have no truck with the conventions of 'normal' successive time.

These features which are 'weakly' there in the 1968 sample are 'hardened' in the examples taken from 1974. The partial severance from masculinity which 'phallic substitutes' procure is repeated by the retreat into narcissism. Narcissism, like the 'phallic substitute' which at its extreme replaces 'man', but more usually anticipates, and excites the memory of a 'man', is ambiguous in its representation. Completely absent in the '50s its appearance in the 1962 sample is clearly within a patriarchal discourse - loving yourself for men. The 1968 example, Aristoc Tops Stockings, introduces a greater element of self-sufficiency, but is still evidently circumscribed by patriarchal relations. However the 1974 Fenjal ad is less clear cut. It only visually signifies the nude who is to be voyeuristically surveyed by men, otherwise the 'woman' is immersed in herself, though of course still dependent on the commodity. The alternative significations while seemingly contradictory - one within, one without patriarchal relations - have nevertheless to be considered within the overall dominance of patriarchal relations that their visuals direct us to. A similar contradiction is evident in 'career' ads where the commodity form is absent: the gesture to 'equality' is undermined by the characterisation of jobs as either 'women's work' or 'feminine' in terms of providing access to men or improving women's feminine attributes and therefore their chances of 'netting' a good husband'.

We can see then, that the ads by 1974 are contradictory at several levels. First they use contradictory signifiers which they bring together in their signification of 'femininity', eg. 'Dress to kill'. Second, if not contradictorily, the ads do signify an ambiguous 'femininity', eg. Fenjal, in relation to which we place ourselves and are placed uncertainly. Third, 'femininity' across ads is contradictory: we are differently interpellated within the magazine Woman, say, as 'mother', 'working woman', 'sexually active woman'⁽³⁴⁾. Fourth, the ads contradict the signification of 'woman' in other discursive practices and 'femininity' as structured and lived non-discursively by women. As Rosemary Scott remarks

.....within this situation we find the seeds of an interesting irony. On the one hand, the markets for women's personal expenditure, that is, those which appeal to the woman as woman, can only grow stronger with economic liberation and the curtailment of traditional roles. On the other hand, marketers for decades have adopted as their raison d'etre the depiction and maintenance of women in economically powerless and fully traditional roles, that is woman as dependent, as housewife, mother, wife and domestic.

(Scott, 1976, p.204)

The biggest shift from the '50s is decisively the move away from an ideology of motherhood and domesticity behind which we can only assume lies 'reproductive sexuality' at the least, to the construction of a female sexuality outside of that, but nevertheless essentially confined within patriarchal relations. Ros Coward maintains in her discussion of Cosmo that "what is happening is that a new definition of woman's sexuality altogether is being produced". While I agree with her to the extent that commodities are newly transforming and defining feminine sexuality, nevertheless it is still a production within recognizable patriarchal relations. What is difficult to detect is the extent to which ads merely 'reflect' in their own form the changing sexual relations of a more 'permissive society' or initiate them. Whatever that relation might be it seems clear not only that ads in their ideological production are relatively autonomous, but that ads in women's magazines as elsewhere have distinctively made visible the patriarchal relations which they have then built on and transformed through the commodity form. Thus the ads which represent 'motherhood' and 'domesticity' only partially indicate the construction of 'femininity' by and for men: they signify and involve us in 'women' serving 'man' and her 'family'. The '50s 'beauty' ads are particularly non-committal about 'femininity' for men. However it is the later construction of feminine beauty and sexuality through a mirror identification of recognition and misrecognition where the 'other' perfect image is obviously addressed to men that the characteristics of a 'femininity' within patriarchal relations of masculine dominance become most apparent. These are further elaborated in the narcissistic and fetishistic representations of woman's sexuality. It is perhaps not too strong to suggest that we can see this process as a revelation of what has hitherto been hidden in the unconscious, primarily in men's unconscious. As Sheila Rowbotham writes "the marketing of new commodities of new commodities brings with it the fact that many aspects of life which were considered private and personal before become part of what is normally seen" (Rowbotham, p.110). It is as if men have been given license to reveal their hidden descriptions of women's relation to them, and it does not seem inappropriate to extend that revelation to the unconscious formulations of patriarchal relations. The importance* of these developments is difficult to gauge. It is inadequate to merely remain within the terrain of ads. We need to examine their relation first to other parts of women's magazines and the discourses articulated there, to other ideological practices and representations and importantly

the changing economic and political position of women during this period. Nevertheless this work seems to corroborate Juliet Mitchell's comments in Woman's Estate that

In a consumer society the role of ideology is so important that it is within the sphere of ideology that the oppressions of the whole system sometimes manifest themselves most apparently.

(Mitchell 1971, p.34-5)

We might add - if we are looking for them. Ads as a relatively autonomous ideological production in which patriarchal relations are 'invaded' by and transformed by capitalist relations in their commodity form poses the inseparability of those two sets of relations in any analysis of women's subordination in the period we have been considering. However it suggests a theoretical understanding which moves beyond the relations of capital conceptualised as simply the class relations of a labour/capital confrontation at the site of production, and patriarchal relations between women and men as primarily constituted in the family; and suggests a political struggle which moves out of the duality of 'class struggle' and 'women's struggle'. We are directed to the wider formulation of capitalist relations as the production and circulation of commodities on an ever expanding scale in which consumption is historically organized through patriarchal relations. At the moment of individual consumption of commodities it is primarily women who bear the combined brunt of the patriarchal and capitalist power which subordinates them.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ernest Mandel argues that the development of advertising (and consumer credit facilities) are related to the problems of realization of surplus value. While there has been considerable extension of consumption for the working class the Capitalist mode of production has not increased consumption at the same rate as productivity of labour. This slower development of consumption makes it increasingly difficult to realize the surplus value contained in consumer goods or to utilise the full social production capacity for consumer goods. Mandel argues that the enormous development of two specific services - advertising and market research on the one hand, and consumer credit on the other - serves to sound out and break these limits on consumption and hence on the realization of surplus value, (Mandel 1975, p.398-9).
2. It would seem appropriate here to acknowledge my debt to Judith Williamson from whose book I have drawn so much for this analysis.
3. Rosemary Scott quotes a survey done on women's reasons for buying certain washing powders which revealed that the price of the different products was irrelevant - 59% chose their brand on the basis of its 'quality'. (Scott 1976, p.44). This book, written within a market research perspective, criticises the curious absence in that literature of women as a specific kind of consumer who is 'indomitable' in that field (p.ix). It contains a wealth of information on the details of women's consumption particularly for the '60s and '70s, and contains some astute and funny observations about various ad campaigns.
4. Judith Williamson takes the concept 'exchange value' from Marx's use of it as an economic definition: the value of commodities in terms of the embodiment of an identical social substance, viz, human labour, which allows them to be exchanged with each other irrespective of their use value, their individual bodily forms, (Marx 1976, ch 1). But Williamson shifts its use to an ideological level (cf Mauss and Levi-Strauss 'symbolic exchange'). Thus it is used analogously rather than identically but always retains its relation to the commodity form: "The ad translates these 'things' statements /use values/ to us as humanly symbolic 'exchange value'" (Williamson 1978, p.12).
5. For more on this work of identification in women's and girls' magazines see McRobbie 1977 and Winship 1978. For more on the work of domesticity see Oakley 1974a and 1974b.
6. Henri Lefebvre rhetorically asks of advertising: "Is it not on the way to becoming the main ideology of our time...and is it not in fact the sole and vital mediator between producer and consumer?... But what does this Ideology disguise and shape, if not that specific level of social reality we call everyday life with all its 'objects' - clothing, food, furnishing?" (1971 p.55). Since elsewhere he describes everyday life as woman's "stronghold" (p.92), it would seem that he is well aware of the representations of femininity in ads. See also p.172 where he discusses women as consumers and "advertising subjects".
7. The term ideological work derives from Althusser's formulation of ideology as the "Transformation of a determinate given raw material into a determinate product...." (Althusser 1969, 'On the materialist dialectic').

8. Williamson makes the comparison of "ad work" with "dream work" as Freud describes it: "The work which transforms the latent dream into the manifest one is called the dream work... The dream work... consists in transforming thoughts into visual images" (Freud 1973, p.204-5).
9. I would accept Coward and Ellis's criticisms of Althusser's formulation that the individual is called on "as a homogenous, non-contradictory-whole or subject - which is then the coherent support for ideological representations" and that he "fails to present the subject as traversed and worked by social contradiction" and "does not show the construction of the subject in relation to social relations" (1977, p.75). However Coward and Ellis do seem to accept some kind of relation which is not adequately described as a relation of "non-correspondence", between the economic and ideological levels. They maintain "Ideology then governs people's activities within economic practices" (p.72) and "The materiality of ideology should rather be seen as a force in the dynamic of the mode of production" (p.73). See also their discussion of the ideology of the 'free individual' as a representation which it is necessary to live in order to function within a capitalist economic system (p.65 and 77).
10. Hobsbawm (1968) discusses consumption in the '50s in terms of the working class as a whole - "It was their demand which dominated commercially, even their taste and style which pressed upward into the culture of the non-working classes" (p.242) and "All workers except the most destitute or isolated were rapidly adopting a style of life based on mass production, ie. on production geared to their own desires; but that production reflected only certain aspects - and those which least distinguished workers as a class - of their aspirations: notably the desire for a higher material standard of life and more material possessions for individuals and families" (p.246). Women have no active role in these changes: they merely hide within their "families".
11. For clothes and cosmetics market expansion see Scott (1976 p.190 and 174).
12. An example of an ad contradicting editorial feature is the ad for Limmits and Bisks dieting biscuits inserted in a feature on "The High-Energy Anti-Depressant Diet" which specifically focuses on 'natural' foods and a 'natural' pattern of eating and which does not include man-made additive based slimming products to 'fill you up'. (Cosmo May 1974).
14. Coward and Ellis maintain that "Ideological representations fix the category of subject as a closure, a structural limit" and further "Ideology produces the individual in a relation to representation within the social process in which he or she is situated, as an identity (a point of self-reference) rather than a process" (p.77 my emphasis). In a more precise way they would seem to be posing a similar relation between ideology and the individual only without recourse to the notion of 'image'.
15. "The public do have a right to expect that advertising should present them with neither distorted images nor outworn attitudes and if cliches are an indispensable tool of the trade, as they appear to be, at least ensure that they are truthful. Women in particular are victims of this tendency to select on aspect of their multivarious activities and then play it up to such an extent that it appears to represent the whole of their lives". (1977, p.44).

16. Freud's discussion of narcissism which is germane here is complex and I don't pretend to be able to disentangle the problems of it in relation to women. First he considers two 'levels' of narcissism - primary and secondary. It is secondary narcissism to which reference here is being made, but it is impossible to completely separate the two. Mitchell's analysis of Freud's work, through Lacan's re-reading, importantly highlights that we cannot see the 'stages' Freud outlines as entirely developmental but as structural so that 'castration' - the moment of difference and subordination for girls over-determines all 'earlier' psychological development. Primary narcissism (closely allied to the mirror phase which I'll look at later), as the identification in which the individual identifies with her own image provides the basis for all other identifications. Lacanian theory suggests this is true for boys as well as girls, but the point is that for girls primary narcissism is already overshadowed by 'castration', already structured by women's 'lack'. This sets the ground for women's later secondary narcissism. As Mitchell writes - "Caught out....at the height of the narcissistic phase in the enforced recognition of her inferior clitoris, a woman compensates for the greater hurt by making her whole body into a proud substitute. She has to develop her threatened narcissism in order to make herself loved and adored. Vanity they name is wisdom" (1975 p.116).

What's further unclear in Freud's discussion is whether narcissism is about the construction of the ego or the mode in which libido is cathected. I think we probably have to consider it as both these aspects. The mode in which the individual comes to identify herself also sets up certain possibilities in relation to 'love objects'. According to Freud the narcissistic type person (secondary narcissism) can love in 4 ways:

- a) What he is himself (actually himself)
- b) " " once was ('a sexual' or recapturing lost youth)
- c) " " would like to be
- d) Someone who was once part of himself (The baby)

While he sees this 'narcisctic choice' as primarily feminine (despite the reference to 'he!'), he appears, nevertheless to still have men in mind. Precisely because women define themselves in relation to not being men, and are subordinated, it is impossible, I would argue for them to love themselves as they are (ie. option a) above), although the other 3 options are possible. It is not the place to examine it here but in the shift in the WLM from femininity to feminism narcissism in terms of 'love of oneself' as one really is, not in its construction for men, has been an important area of 'recovery' for women. We might compare here Freud's discussion of 'illness' and the necessary retreat into narcissism to aid health. The '3 forms' I mention here (in the text) partially engage with the reconstruction of narcissism, though still within patriarchal relations as they are now displaced onto the commodity form.

For further discussion of narcissism in relation to women see Mitchell (1975, Ch.3), Coward et al (1976) and Coward and Elli (1977).

17. For further discussion of 'Images of women' see Millum (1975), and Butcher et al (1974).

18. I have not considered how ads take hold of ideas from the WIM and recuperate them. This is a serious absence. In a sense it is a further stage after 'Ladylike Guinness'. As Williamson suggests - "...the more hostile, the better use advertising can make of it, for its recuperation from criticism then seems all the more miraculous and inevitable.... The movement of 'Women's Lib' has provided ads, one of the most sexist fields of communication there is, with a vast amount of material which enhances their sexist stance.... Many ads are based on the sort of line 'she's liberated but....' (1978 p.170-1). An example where 'liberation' is trapped by bourgeois ideology is a series of Berlei girdle ads around in 1968-9. In October 1968 Honey the caption read - "Join the move to freedom". Three women wearing controlling foundation garments stand by the sea shore carrying a banner which proclaims "Freedom". In the supporting text you are invited to "Move fast and free" like "the freedom fighters". But your 'freedom' is of course only that of 'choosing' and wearing supposedly 'freer' foundation garments which still enslave you to the conformity of a feminine shape (See Millum 1975, p.184). See also Williamson's discussion of the "Virginia Slim" ads directed at women which use the caption - "We've come a long, long way" (1978, p.166).

19. For a more detailed discussion of the social construction of nature - 'the natural' - in relation to ads and women see Williamson (ibid Chs. 'Cooking Nature' and 'Back to Nature', and Brunsdon (1978) who discusses the political importance of this construction within the WIM.

20. For 'magic' more generally in ads see again Williamson, Ch. 'Magic'.

21. Scott suggests about these 'phallic' ads and packaging that - "The use of phallic packaging in recent years has been a naive attempt by advertisers to de-contextualise Freud and throw part of a complex, sophisticated psych-analytic theory into popular marketing. It is as much an indication of fantasy, community flashing, wishful thinking and exhibitionism on the part of the male marketer as anything to do with female psychology. For the affect it has on women the satisfaction it gives him he might as well manufacture packs shaped like buttocks and claim he is appealing to the anal stage" (1976 p.249). The flippancy of this comment belies the fact that women still have to 'cope' with this kind of advertising and packaging and place themselves in relation to it - they cannot simply ignore it. See also Gornick and Moran (1971 p.658) - "In a sense the fashion, cosmetics and 'feminine hygiene' ads are aimed more at men than women. They encourage men to expect women to support all the latest trappings of sexual slavery - expectations women must fill if they are to survive."

22. Freud discusses scopophilia in 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes'. The two vicissitudes or the instincts he considers here are a "reversal into its opposite" and a "turning round upon the subject". Within a "reversal" there can be two processes: active to passive or a reversal of content. Scopophilia is an instance of the first (an example of the second is "love transformed into hate"). There is a change of object while the aim remains the same. Thus in scopophilia love of gazing directed at an extraneous object can turn inwards to the self, ie. a shift from a passive to an active aim, as the new aim - to be looked at - is achieved by displaying oneself. Activity is never completely replaced by passivity since all the 'stages' exist simultaneously. Hence there is an ambivalence in the aim "to be looked at": it can involve both passivity

and activity. When the "subjects' own-body is the object of scopophilia" Freud terms it "narcissism", which in a pre-genital phase takes the "preliminary" stage of "autoeroticism". See also Mulvey (1975) for her discussion of Freud's use of the term; its application to cinema and relation to 'narcissism'. She takes scopophilia to concern the sexual instincts and narcissism as a function of the constitution of the ego, concerned with identification.

23. -- Scott has some perceptive observations to make about ads for sanitary products. "The style of promotion recently has become more open, 'let's all be honest about it', with graphic illustrations of tampons in test tubes with roses sticking out of the top - which can pass as symbolic if not exactly aesthetic. Lillies are pushing their width ways expansion as opposed to the lengthways expansion of Tampax.. It is also the only promotion style of advertising which shows them in athletic, active and energetic roles, instead of indulging the typical media woman's bovine leer....It is strange that the only time of the month when women have the ultimate reinforcement of their femininity, the marketers are falling over themselves to show women how to indulge freely and fearlessly in the most 'masculine' of pursuits" (1976 p.170)

24. Ads generally operate through fetishism by 'hiding' their process construction; making connections between things appear 'natural'; replacing production and its relations by those of consumption; appearing to deal with a 'reality' while only referring to it. Here however I am pointing to a specific form of fetishism which 'hides' in its commodity form, not only class relations but also patriarchal relations which 'produce' femininity and masculinity.

25. See here Barthes' discussion of the need for 'neologisms' in deciphering myths - "...ephemeral concepts, in connection with limited contingencies". (1972 p.121). The example he gives is Sininess: "China is one thing; the idea which a French petit bourgeois could have of it not so long ago is another: for this peculiar mixture of bells, rickshaws and opium dens, no other work possible but Sininess". We are reminded here that 'familiness' has a particular ideological resonance which is historically specific.

26. We might compare here Barthes' discussion of 'The Face of Garbo' (1973 p.56). In its difference from the face of Audrey Hepburn. "Viewed as a transition the face of Garbo reconciles two iconographic ages, it assures the passage from awe to charm. As is well known, we are today at the other pole of this evolution: the face of Audrey Hepburn, for instance is individualized, not only because of its peculiar thematics (woman as child, woman as kitten) but also because of her person, of an almost unique specification of the face, which has nothing of the essence left in it, but is constituted by an infinite complexity of morphological functions. As a language, Garbo's singularity was of the order of the concept, that of Audrey Hepburn is of the order of the substance. The face of Garbo is an Idea, that of Hepburn, an event" (p.57).

27. This desired mirror image relates to primary narcissism (Cf f.n.16) the moment at which the child recognizes herself as a unified whole in a mirror. Williamson discusses ads generally in terms of a 'mirror phase' which she sees "as a metaphor, as shorthand for all social and external reflection of the self, ads offer us an image of ourselves that we may aspire to but never achieve" (1978, p.63-4). However most of her illustrations of this process concern desired images of woman - femininity - in ads. This is particularly significant for women. While Lacan and others

after him describe the 'mirror phase' as a 'stage' girls and boys pass through which is "retained as the prototype for all identifications as the child enters cultural and specific social formations as a language using subject" (Coward and Ellis 1977, p.76), the 'mirror phase' is retrospectively and in its repetitions gender specific. The misrecognition women make is in relation to a desired object set up by men - the beauty they cannot be, but vainly emulate.

For a very clear explication of the mirror phase see Williamson (1978, pp.60-70), also Coward et al (1976) and Coward and Ellis (1977 p.109-12), as well as Lacan 'The Mirror Phase' (1968).

28. Coward and Ellis describe 'metonymy' and 'metaphor' thus: "Metonymy with its word-to-word-movement '30 sails can be understood as thirty boats), is seen to be the same process as that of displacement. Metaphor retains a hidden signifier when one signifier takes the place of another. It does so through the fact that the hidden signifier has a metonymic relation to the rest of the signifying chain. This process is equivalent to that of condensation, with the same superimposition of signifiers" (1977, p.99).

29. For 'denotation' and 'connotation' see Barthes (1967, p.89).

30. Coward following Berger makes a useful distinction between 'naked' and 'nude' - "...nudity opposed to nakedness which is Western media connoted misery and poverty; brutal nakedness as opposed to glamorous and perfect nudity"... 'Nudity' is something represented for the viewer". assumed to be male (Butcher et al 1974, p.11). See Berger "To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen naked by others and yet not recognised for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude....Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display" (1977, p.54). See also Brook's (1977) for a similar discussion of the nude woman in ads - "The woman as object for man" (p.209).

31. One aspect of the 'masculinisation' of 'femininity' is the extension of the range of commodities now advertised to attract women, eg. alcoholic drinks, cars, cigarettes, but there is also a movement in the other direction - the 'feminisation' of masculinity. Scott observes this double movement - "The cigarette represents a movement from masculinity to femininity but the movement from femininity to masculinity is not quite so easily achieved." (p. 158-9). She considers the example of hair spray "The promotion appealed shamelessly to aggression, defiance and over-stated masculinity. Yet rarely is this extreme change in promotional style needed in the progression of 'masculine' products to the feminine area". She does not consider why this should be the case. However I would suggest that it relates to the relation of domination and subordination between masculinity and femininity, which allows women an access to masculinity - a 'bisexuality' not acceptable in the other direction for men, who would thereby lose their position of dominance.

32. Scott finally observes of the cosmetic, sanitary and slimming markets - "Together they probably typify everything bad, yet something prevalent about female consumption: compulsion, guilt, obligation. Yet the strange thing is, these are the very markets where one consistently finds the marketers falling over themselves to note that it is they who are doing the women a favour rather than vice versa. It is as if they, in some way need to feel responsible for, and in control of the two essentially female processes which objectively they have no right to: the mystery of female beauty and attraction and the spectacular phenomenon of female menstruation and procreation as centralised in the vagina".

(Scott 1976, p.187)

33. See Cynthia White 1970 for characteristics of Honey and its readers in the '60s (p.172).

34. As Scott says marketers used to be able to demarcate two separate markets - "Woman bought as woman until she married and 'settled down' when she sublimated the personalised aspect in favour of buying for the family, hearth and home. There were really two main markets, two types of woman, no problem. But all this has changed - Woman can now buy as woman and as any other role at the same time. The separateness is blurring, the markets crossing, the female consumer no longer obligingly classifies herself into two identifiable segments. The housewife will be a car buyer and cigar smoker, the career woman will be a detergent and nappy purchaser, the mother will want to buy investment, sparking plugs and cosmetics" (Scott, p.204). She does not consider what these 'contradictory' buys mean for women who are thus constantly switching ideologies.

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