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APPRECIATION OR JUST REPRESENTATION: A LOOK AT MULTICULTURAL  
PORTRYALS IN ADVERTISING

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## **ABSTRACT**

As minorities in the United States increasingly represent a larger portion of the population, it is critical that they feel included in advertising. If they are not, marketers run the risk of alienating them. Marketers can attempt to reach consumers by incorporating strategies of in-group bias and accommodation. In order to do so, brands can choose to emphasize varying levels of mainstream and subcultural values. These values can be portrayed through numerous elements of the advertisements. This study breaks down those elements and categorizes commercials according to a perceptual framework. Risks and benefits of these framework strategies are then outlined.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

Diversity, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is “the condition of having or being composed of differing elements, especially the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Diversity has become an integral part of American society, developing into a “buzzword” found across America, from media to politics to corporations. As the Merriam-Webster definition implies, however, diversity as a concept can be embraced in a variety of manners (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It can be surface-level, where groups and ideas are included for the purposes of checking boxes and keeping with legal or cultural standards. Diversity can also dive deeper, though, with companies and organizations making commitments to various groups. Different subcultures can be represented, and support systems can be built to foster appreciation for these groups.

The concept of diversity is increasingly important as the United States experiences ever-shifting demographics. Based on trends found in 2016 from United States Census data, minorities made up almost half of the population aged 14 and under. This is vastly different than the population breakdown seen among citizens aged 65 and above, in which minorities do not even represent a quarter of the population. The percentage of minorities in a given age range increases as younger populations are observed (Macke, 2017). This trend is augmented by recent birth trends, in which white women are giving birth to fewer children on average. The birth rates among immigrant women, by contrast, are increasing (Cilluffo & Cohn, 2017).

From a marketing perspective, this population shift presents brands with an opportunity to be more innovative in their advertising. According to the theory of in-group bias, consumers are more inclined to favorably perceive an advertisement if they identify with the people portrayed (Green, 1999). To follow this theory in the most literal sense, brands could create advertisements that reflected their target market in a proportional manner. Actors would represent the company's target segments based on the percentage of consumers that make up the segments. Companies may choose, however, to skew these numbers based on their ideal target market or based on risk assessment.

The importance of diversity in advertising extends beyond the purely mathematical representation of consumer groups; it is reflective of changing consumer values. In a study conducted by the Harris Poll in 2016 showed, millennials were 15 percent more likely to “pay more for a brand that really understands multicultural needs” (McCarthy, 2017). It perhaps comes as no surprise, then, that younger consumers are more open to seeing advertisements depicting minority groups. Generation Z is 13 percent more likely than Baby Boomers to prefer this type of advertising. The fact that almost half of millennials are willing to pay more for an inclusive brand is telling of how these brands can target their advertising. More expensive brands trying to appeal to this age group – as opposed to other segments – can be more willing to take the risk and use multicultural advertising. Additionally, an eMarketer study showed that generations progressively prefer realism and diversity in advertising (Barkley & Futurecast, 2017). To target Millennials and Generation Z, then, it is essential to keep these factors in mind.

While these consumers may prefer diverse advertising, they do not necessarily see it. In a 2016 Mintel study, researchers found that a quarter of TV viewers felt that commercials failed to show people that represented them on the basis of race (Hulkower, 2017). An eMarketer study

showed that similar concerns were shared amongst the London LGBTQ community. More than half of this group felt that they were underrepresented (Annicelli, 2017).

This disconnect in representation prompts the question: how can marketers bridge that gap and provide these groups with inclusive advertising? Are there ways in which firms can maximize the effectiveness of this inclusivity without neglecting their other target markets?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

In 1999, Corliss L. Green conducted a study of African American opinions on advertisements with actors representing multiple cultures. Green's research focused primarily on two theories. The first theory, in-group bias, proposes that consumers respond better to people with whom they identify. The second theory Green was analyzing was the accommodation theory, which "suggests that as A becomes more similar to B, the likelihood that B will more favorably evaluate A is increased" (Green, 1999, p. 52). This theory focuses not so much on the physical appearance of the people in advertisements, as much as it looks at the implementation of subcultural elements. Green uses examples like language and explains that more accommodation on the part of the advertiser shows a greater level of commitment (Green, 1999).

In his study, Green asked participants to evaluate advertisements for different products. Participants received different versions of the advertisements, some of which featured minorities more prominently than others. Green found that the type of product influenced the extent to which the in-group bias theory impacted consumer decisions. The products shown were perfume and foundation. Of the two, foundation proved to be more affected by in-group bias. Since the cosmetic industry relies on ethnicity-driven purchases, it was inferred that there was greater need for in-group bias. Green also found that ethnic identification was a motivating factor for some consumers more than others. Consumers who felt deeply connected to their heritage were more prone to favor targeted advertisements. Those who were weak in ethnic identification typically preferred mainstream messaging. Although there were differences in perception across the

advertisements, consumers' purchase intent was only impacted for foundation. This research shows that the importance of in-group bias can be enhanced based on variables such as the consumer and the product category (Green, 1999).

In a study on multicultural marketing conducted by Kiran Karande, two theories again were tested. One was the accommodation theory which, as aforementioned, looks at the motivation of the brand. If the company's efforts are perceived as genuine, this can be very effective. The second theory Karande assessed was the polarized appraisal theory. According to this theory, consumers more critically analyze characters who appear similar to them. Since they identify better with these people, they know what is an accurate depiction of their lifestyles and what is not. With characters of other backgrounds, they cannot be as critical since they do not know as much. To test these theories, participants were shown advertisements showing different models and then filled out questionnaires (Karande, 2005).

In this study, strength of ethnic identification did not play a significant role. Karande argued that this might have been the result of different subcultural perceptions, as previous studies have shown that blacks and Hispanics respond more strongly. Karande did, however, believe that depicting someone of Asian descent was more impactful for that consumer segment than depicting someone who was not. Subculture was a key factor of consideration, and many components were thought to possibly play a role. Such components included language, symbols, and spokespeople (Karande, 2005).

Despite the importance of portraying subcultures, brands are not always quick to feature them in commercials. As described by Natalie Zmuda in *Ad Age*, advertising has a tendency to lag behind social trends. Companies that are typically at the forefront of these trends are usually small. Larger companies that may wish to implement them are often hesitant because they do not

want to be negatively perceived by any consumers. Their goal is to win over business, not to lose it (Zmuda, 2014).

There has been, however, a shift towards multicultural marketing, especially in the realm of social media. According to Zmuda, there are more casting requests for multicultural advertisements (2014). While this shows the interest level of companies, it does not necessarily correlate with the genuine commitment from the brand. Consumers know when multicultural elements are just used to check boxes (Minsker & Beniflah, 2017). If this is done well, however, it can make consumers even more appreciative of the brand because they understand the required commitment. One way to achieve that is for brands to work with these minority groups to really understand their perspectives (McCarthy, 2017). To further prove their commitment, Chevrolet's Chief Marketing Officer, Tim Mahoney, recommended that a continuous campaign with a series of advertisements be implemented. This requires greater dedication on the part of the company (Zmuda, 2014).

Hispanic consumers, in particular, are a major focal point of multicultural strategies moving forward. With a potential purchasing power of \$1.5 trillion, this group is only growing more powerful (Steimer, 2017). One Hispanic strategy alone will not work, however. Consumers in this category are broken down into a range of acculturation levels, based on the strength of their ties to America and their ancestral heritage. For example, the language of television content they watch is typically dependent on their generation. What marketers find with this particular group is that there is a strong sense of biculturalism for many of its members. They do not feel exclusively connected to one culture or another (Minsker & Beniflah, 2017).

In order to connect with these Hispanic consumers and consumers from other subcultures, marketers will need to strategically plan utilizing the theories of in-group bias,

accommodation, and polarized appraisal. There are varying levels and degrees to which these theories can be implemented, which will be the focus of discussion in the next section.

## **Chapter 3**

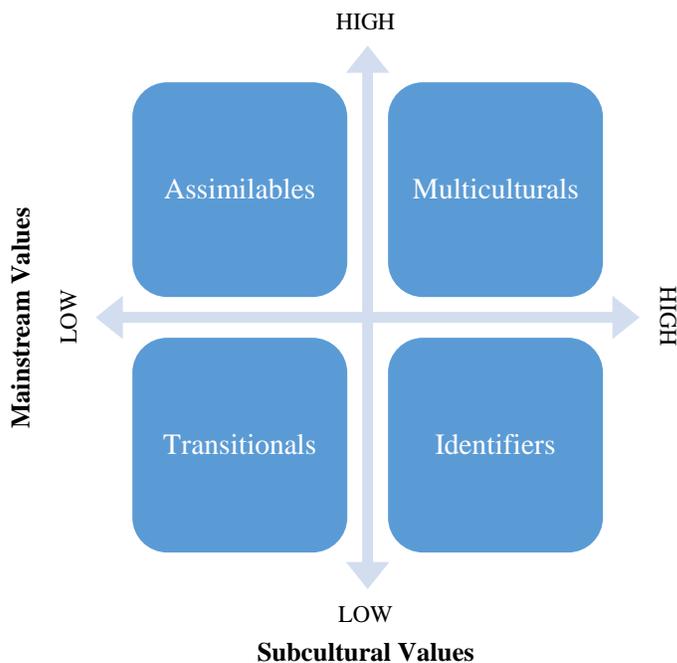
### **Framework**

#### **Background**

In his article “African and European Roots of Multiculturalism in the Consumer Behavior of American Blacks,” Jerome Williams describes four levels of multiculturalism and acculturation. These concepts are organized into a perceptual map, with traditional African values on the x-axis and modern European values on the y-axis . The resulting quadrant categories are: Multiculturals, Assimilables, Transitionals, and Identifiers (Williams, 1985).

The four categories are assessed from an American perspective. Multiculturals represent people who manage to balance mainstream culture with African culture. Assimilables are those who have embraced American culture at the expense of their heritage. Transitionals are people who “score” low on both mainstream values and cultural values. These are the people who might be figuring out who they are. Lastly, Identifiers are the people who are holding onto their culture, actively avoiding the influences of mainstream culture (Williams, 1985).

Although this framework was created with African Americans in mind, it can be applied more broadly to all minority groups. With American values still on the y-axis, a person’s y-value represents his or her acculturation level. The x-axis represents the values of his or her subculture.



**Figure 1. Framework Model**

This study utilizes this framework to analyze American advertisements. The presence of mainstream American ideas and values is represented by the y-axis, with strong value association at the top and weaker association at the bottom. The x-axis then represents general subcultural values, which can apply to any minority group. Stronger association is categorized on the right side of the axis, while weaker association is placed on the left side.

Multicultural advertisements, found in the upper right quadrant, strike a balance between mainstream values and subcultural values. Because this form of advertising does have mainstream elements, the target audience is fairly broad. The commercials could appeal to anyone. Subcultural values are highlighted in these advertisements, however, so brands can show their appreciation for different consumer segments.

Assimilable advertisements make up the upper left quadrant, as they rank high in mainstream values and low in subcultural values. These commercials require the smallest

amount of risk, as they deviate only slightly from traditional advertising. Minority characters, though featured, play very mainstream roles. There is no sense of cultural heritage that can be detected in the commercial. In most cases, the minority characters could be replaced by anyone else without changing the storyline.

Transitional advertisements, found in the lower left quadrant, score low on mainstream and subcultural values. In what is perhaps the most specific in terms of targeting, transitional advertising tries to appeal to groups who do not know with what group they identify. They do not feel fully connected to either mainstream culture or a subculture.

Identifier advertisements, found in the lower right quadrant, have weak mainstream values and strong subcultural values. They emphasize elements that are important to subcultures and have messaging catered to these groups. Because these advertisements are traditionally more targeted to specific segments, they might not always be found in mainstream channels.

There are many ways in which advertisements can be categorized into these focus areas. As Karande found through his study on accommodation and polarized appraisal, subcultural elements were influential in the consumers' perceptions of the advertisements. These elements could be components such as theme, setting, and language (Karande, 2005). All of these have the potential to impact the categorization of advertisements using the perceptual map. Some advertisers may attempt to fit into one category but, due to poor accommodation, may be categorized elsewhere. This categorization can be used to assess the image of a brand. For brands looking to target people with strong subcultural values, a foundational understanding of how their advertisements will be perceived may counter the aforementioned hesitations referenced by Natalie Zmuda (2014).

## **Chapter 4**

### **Advertisement Component Breakdown**

For the purposes of this study, video advertisements will be analyzed. These commercials can be assessed in numerous ways when considering mainstream and cultural elements. Elements considered here include: Setting, Language, Music, Ethnic Background, Product Focus, and Product Category.

#### **Setting**

There are five potential settings that advertisers use in commercials: studio, urban, suburban, rural, and nature. These settings are either used alone or in conjunction with others.

#### **Studio**

The studio setting is the most versatile of the settings. Blank backgrounds shift the focus away from implied storytelling to explicit description. While it is flexible, it is a missed opportunity to showcase settings of cultural importance. In order to increase subcultural significance (a rightward shift on the x-axis), the brand must place a greater emphasis on elements such as the script, music, and attire.

The studio setting can be seen in advertisements from cosmetics and beauty brands. One of these brands, CoverGirl, is able to highlight the many subcultures portrayed in the commercial by using the studio setting. Each is shown against a white background, which prompts the viewer to solely focus on the person featured (COVERGIRL, 2016). The juxtaposition of cultures embraces the differences of each featured star, while also maintaining a sense of consistency and unity between frames. It also increases the potential for in-group bias, since so many groups are portrayed.

Pantene, on the other hand, focuses solely on the African American segment in one of its targeted commercials. This limits the possibility of in-group bias for a broad audience, since only one group is represented. Within the targeted group, however, there is a diversity of style represented among the cast. This allows for greater accommodation within the advertisement, since there is not simply one “cookie cutter” group representative. Other subcultural values are portrayed through the script (Pantene, 2017).

Some brands may utilize the studio setting to place minimal emphasis on subcultural elements. In a Neutrogena commercial, “There’s Only One Hydro Boost Water Gel Facial Moisturizer,” actress and spokesperson Kerry Washington describes the benefits of the product. The commercial goes back and forth between her and depictions of the product. Whenever she is shown, the background is plain white. Her hair is straight and her clothes are white, so there are no strong subcultural elements featured (Neutrogena, 2018). Any subcultural association by consumers would be strictly based on her appearance. This leads to a very low sense of accommodation and may prevent brands from connecting to their consumers on a deeper level.

Given this range of examples, the studio setting enables brands to maximize or minimize in-group bias, as well as enjoy a sense of flexibility in terms of accommodation. They are able to

feature as many or as few groups as they wish. Since there is no real setting, accommodation is entirely dependent on other factors, such as music, language, and attire. There is less risk involved with accommodation since characters are removed from real-life scenarios. In terms of the polarized appraisal theory, then, subcultural representations are more fluid. There are no lifestyles associated with the characters, so viewers identify with them based almost entirely on appearance.

## **Urban**

The urban setting gives brands ample opportunity to highlight either mainstream or subcultural values. Urban locations typically showcase greater diversity than any other setting. In these settings, there is a greater range of income level, ethnic background, religion, language, and more.

By choosing a city as the location for a commercial, brands can zero in on one particular group or depict multiple, as Coke does in its commercial “America the Beautiful” (Vassar Music Drive, 2014). Just as Coke did, Ram Trucks also features clips of urban settings in one of its advertisements. “Thank God I’m a Country Boy” shows characters in urban settings to emphasize that those areas are important components of America (Ram Trucks, 2018b). Although a studio setting offers a brand maximum flexibility, urban settings are both adaptable and realistic. They provide a better canvas for storytelling.

This means that brands can maximize in-group bias, but they must be careful to accurately portray subcultures. Since urban settings are home to many subcultures, many can be featured without seeming artificial. Unlike the studio setting, however, urban settings force the

brand to depict the lifestyle of these groups. This means that the brand can do more to accommodate the groups by incorporating various elements that are important to the subculture. In line with the polarized appraisal theory, however, the brand must correctly show these. If depictions are inaccurate, they could lose consumer respect; however, if done well, this can be very effective and meaningful to consumers. In sum, this setting presents the greatest potential for both risk and reward.

### **Suburban**

The suburban setting has a strong emphasis on mainstream American culture (high on the y-axis). It typically provides brands with the opportunity to showcase a very mainstream American family. The middle-class lifestyle and cul-de-sac communities epitomize standardization. This setting is traditionally found on the left half of the x-axis.

In Honey Maid's "This is Wholesome" commercial, for example, there are no distinctly subcultural elements featured. There is definitely the potential to capitalize on in-group bias, as the cast is comprised of people who represent different groups. Even with its diversity of subcultures, this commercial has low levels of accommodation. The houses are all decorated similarly, and people are shown walking along neighborhood sidewalks that could be found in almost any state (Honey Maid, 2014b). The Honey Maid products are not being used in ethnic recipes. It is very mainstream, and the individual subcultures that the cast represents are not critical to the plot of the commercial except for the fact that they collectively symbolize diversity.

Similarly, Johnson & Johnson's Tylenol brand uses suburban settings for its "#HowWeFamily" commercial. Although various minority groups are shown, many are depicted in homes that show no signs of subcultural elements. Decorations are very modern and mainstream, as is the attire for everyone shown. Everyone featured at home is gathered around as a family, smiling at the camera. Clips of characters not at home show them at prom and weddings, where again everything is very mainstream (Tylenol Official, 2015). No subcultural elements are emphasized, so the characters could easily be swapped in and out with other groups.

In a Super Bowl commercial for Cheerios, a biracial family of three is featured at home. The house is suburban, and the style of decorations is very mainstream (KSTP, 2013). There is nothing about the advertisement that celebrates any subculture, other than the fact that the cast features more than one group. As a result, this commercial shows minimal accommodation and, based on the polarized appraisal theory, may be perceived as a superficial attempt to incorporate another culture.

In McDonald's "A House Divided" commercial, a Hispanic family is featured in their suburban home (AlmaAgency, 2014). There is nothing about the decorations of the house that strongly portrays subcultural elements, which makes it somewhat mainstream. Since this lifestyle is similar to that of Americans in other groups, other viewers could perceive a socioeconomic in-group bias. Subcultural elements are found elsewhere in the advertisement, however, which shifts the categorization of this advertisement to the Transitional category. Through language and attire, the brand is able to portray accommodation through cultural differences.

## Rural

The rural setting is most often used to depict small-town America and traditional farms. Because of this, there is significant emphasis on American values with minimal focus on subcultures. There is less diversity shown in these advertisements. For brands who want to reflect the values of the “heartland,” this might be a logical choice in setting. Should a brand wish to incorporate subcultures, however, this might prove difficult.

Ram Trucks, for example, released a commercial called “Farmer.” This advertisement talks about how God needed hardworking people to take care of the land. The commercial flashes back and forth between footage of farms and the farmers themselves. There are close-up shots of many farmers, but over the duration of this two-minute advertisement, only three people represent minority groups (Ram Trucks, 2013). Everyone seems to have the same lifestyle, so no elements of subcultural values are depicted.

Due to this limited subcultural variation, there is less opportunity for multiple in-groups or accommodation. Since there is little variation, consumers might be more likely to be critical of the portrayal. This year, Ram released a new advertisement that incorporates many more subcultures. Although the title is “Thank God I’m a Country Boy,” the commercial shows people all across the United States, on farms and in cities (Ram Trucks, 2018b). This variation of setting better enabled the brand to showcase its versatility.

Ram did, however, release an advertisement specific to the Hispanic market. In this commercial, a Hispanic farmer talks about how he learned the job from his father (FCA North America, 2017). This form of advertising is meant to capitalize on in-group bias, since the one group pictured is the group that is being targeted. Featuring only one group does, however, limit the potential for diversity of in-group bias.

## Nature

The nature setting strips away many traditional depictions of cultures and subcultures and shifts the focus to the characters' lifestyles. Nature provides versatility for subculture appreciation. Brands can move anywhere along the x-axis by creating strong characters who symbolize different cultures.

In "America the Beautiful," Coke depicts a few scenes of the American landscape. With scenes of the ocean and mountains, there are few subcultural or mainstream elements (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). In some respects, natural settings showcase America in its rawest state, moving it up along the y-axis of American values. Depictions of America emit a sense of pride, making this perhaps the most "American" option of all five settings. As with the studio setting, other elements such as attire and music thus play a more significant role in accommodation. This also means that, for the purposes of in-group bias, the depiction of a specific subculture is almost entirely based on appearance.

Emphasis on appearance plays an even greater role in Coke's "I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke." The entire cast is on the top of a hill, simply gathered together and singing. This takes place in Italy, although there are no cultural clues. This ambiguity shifts the focus away from the setting and moves it towards the people themselves. Subcultural elements only come in the form of attire and the bottling of Cokes (Project ReBrief, 2012). This particular example is one of minimal accommodation and maximum diversity of in-group bias.

84 Lumber's "The Journey Begins" commercial has multiple scenes that take place in nature. These scenes, as opposed to those that show towns, provide very little information about elements of cultural significance. These elements must instead be communicated through other elements such as the characters themselves, language, and music. One thing to note about this

particular commercial is that it takes place in Mexico (84 Lumber, 2017b). Just as with nature settings in the United States, this highlights the country in its purest form. Because this commercial is for an American audience, this would show strong subcultural values.

**Table 1. Setting Applications**

	<i>Studio</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Suburban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Nature</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue
<i>Assimilable</i>	Light Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue
<i>Transitional</i>	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	White
<i>Identifier</i>	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	White	White

### **Language**

Although English is the predominant language in modern advertising, companies trying to reach minority groups might choose to incorporate other languages. Lizette Williams, North American Multicultural Marketing Leader for Kimberly-Clark, explained in an interview with eMarketer that language can be challenging to use properly. While it can show commitment to subcultures, it must be done very carefully. This is one area in which the polarized appraisal theory is critical (McCarthy & Williams, 2016).

## English

English is commonly found in advertisements that rank high in American values (high on the y-axis). English is used for all mainstream and traditional commercials, reflecting the primary language used in schools and businesses. Different dialects may correlate with different regions of the country, but that is the limit to variation. English can, however, be used in any of the four categories.

Procter & Gamble, for instance, made an Identifier commercial called “Let’s Talk about Bias” (Canned Bommercials, 2017). This advertisement targets African Americans, so there was no need to utilize a language other than English. The audience preferences were already accommodated.

CoverGirl’s advertisement for “Lash Equality,” meanwhile, used English to target a broad American audience. The brand wanted to appeal to all groups by showing that the mascara advertised could be used by anyone, regardless of how they identified themselves. One of the spokespeople featured, Sofia Vergara, has a noticeable Hispanic accent (COVERGIRL, 2016). This adds a subcultural component through language even though she is speaking in English.

In Coke’s commercial, “I’d Like to Buy the World a Coke,” people from various countries come together to sing about Coke. The song is in English, which allows the content of the song to be understood by a broad American audience (Project ReBrief, 2012). That being said, the use of English keeps the advertisement from being truly global and emphasizes the importance of mainstream values.

Apple’s commercial, “Accessibility – Sady,” uses English in a unique manner. The entire purpose of the advertisement is to showcase how technology can help people with disabilities live their lives to the fullest. The commercial is narrated by Sady, who is using a high-tech chair

to type the script with her head. The script she creates is then voiced by the technology. This twist on the standard use of English highlights the subculture in a memorable and impactful manner. While it does show commonalities between people with disabilities and people without disabilities, the whole purpose of the commercial is to celebrate the lifestyles of people with disabilities (Apple, 2016). Accommodation is thus a driving factor in this advertisement.

### **Multiple with English**

The use of multiple languages with English serves as a balancing act for brands trying to reach minority groups. While it gives a nod to mainstream America by utilizing the country's official language, it also respects the heritage and tradition of subcultures. The reach of this method, therefore, is unique. It is strongest on the right end of the x-axis in Multicultural and Identifier advertisements (strong subculture), but it can also be found in the Transitional quadrant, since it can appeal to groups who have weaker affiliations with mainstream American culture.

In "House Divided" by McDonald's, both English and Spanish are utilized. Luis, the main character, is growing up in a house where Spanish is spoken. His friends, however, speak English (AlmaAgency, 2014). Language is used to differentiate the two groups and symbolize the tension between the two affiliations. This is one way to accommodate Hispanics of the various acculturation levels referenced by Beniflah in his interview with eMarketer (Minsker & Beniflah, 2017). These levels of acculturation are not limited to the Hispanic subculture, however, making this critical for the representation of all minority groups.

In Coke's "America the Beautiful" advertisement, the song is sung in various languages. The language changes with each new person or group featured. By using one song, Coke is able to seamlessly celebrate the subcultures and show their patriotism as a unifying factor (Vassar Music Drive, 2014). Since the song is familiar to most viewers, they would be able to "understand" the other languages even if they did not actually know them. This makes in-group bias more fluid, as groups can more easily associate with the others featured. It also increases accommodation, as so many groups are represented.

Budweiser's "Born The Hard Way" depicts the journey of one of its founders from Germany to the United States. Most of the dialogue is in English, in which Busch's German accent is noticeable. There is a brief conversation during which German is used. A man is asking Busch why he is leaving Germany. Busch responds in English that he is going to pursue his dream of making beer (BudweiserCanada, 2017). This use of English instead of German exemplifies Busch's commitment to the mainstream value of speaking English. This serves then as a sort of reverse-accommodation. Busch is attempting to become more American and detach himself from his native culture.

One interesting use of another language was Wells Fargo's commercial entitled "Learning Sign Language." As the title implies, the storyline of the advertisement focused on women who were trying to learn Sign Language because they were adopting a deaf child. For the vast majority of the commercial, Sign Language is used with English subtitles. English audio is used only at the end (Wells Fargo, 2015). This usage is different from others that fall into this grouping in the sense that the target audience is broad. Even though it utilizes another language, it can effectively be viewed by any English-speaking consumer. There may be a greater sense of

forgiveness with accommodation in this case, as the women are learning Sign Language. If their execution of the motions is not entirely correct, the viewer would understand why.

As noted by Lizette Williams, accommodation – especially through language – needs to seem genuine. Since phrases do not always directly translate from one language to another, it is critical that companies rely on agencies who have fluent speakers (McCarthy & Williams, 2017). This particular McDonald's advertisement was created by Alma Agency, which is McDonald's multicultural agency (Wentz, 2017). Using a multicultural agency is one way of countering the risk involved with emphasizing subcultural values. As noted by Natalie Zmuda in her *Ad Age* article, however, advertising could possibly move away from multicultural agencies towards more general market campaigns (2014).

### **Alternative Language**

The use of alternative language dialogue is typically restricted to the Transitional and Identifier quadrants, or the lower half of the y-axis. Although American culture includes various languages, mainstream ideals do not necessarily embrace said languages. As a result, alternative language advertisements target smaller audiences.

In Covered California's "Doors" commercial, a variety of Spanish greetings are used to welcome the consumer. Hispanic people of various ages are shown in different settings, from homes to places of work (KQED News, 2013). This variety is a way of increasing potential in-group biases and improving accommodation. Despite their differences, however, the use of Spanish language ties all of the characters together.

In Toyota’s “Moving Out” commercial, a Spanish-speaking family is featured. The son is backing out of a suburban driveway, as his parents watch him leave. The mother is sad to see her son leave, but the father is preoccupied with the cool features of the car. Although there is not much dialogue, it is the primary method through which the advertisers demonstrate subcultural values. The neighborhood is very generic and could be translatable for any subculture, giving the commercial little substance in terms of accommodation (Garcia, 2014).

In State Farm’s “Prime Location” advertisement, by contrast, language is used in conjunction with a focus on soccer. A Spanish-speaking couple is shown moving into a new house that is located near a soccer stadium. Their lawn gets trampled by a crowd of enthusiastic fans, so they need assistance from State Farm (State Farm Insurance, 2016). Since soccer has avid fans among the Hispanic population, this is one way to target the subculture in addition to the language. Whereas a sport like football or baseball might be utilized in Multicultural or Assimilable advertisements to focus on American values, this sheds light on a more niche market and enhances accommodation.

**Table 2. Language Applications**

	<i>English</i>	<i>Multiple with English</i>	<i>Alternative Language</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>			
<i>Assimilable</i>			
<i>Transitional</i>			
<i>Identifier</i>			

## Music

Music, like language, can be an impactful medium through which brands can relay their messages. Just as with the previous category, one or more languages can be used, based on the company's target segment. In addition to the words used, music also adds additional cultural elements such as instruments and certain rhythms. In fact, music can be used without words to emphasize these elements or to better portray specific emotions.

### Instrumental

Instrumental song choices can fall into any of the four categories, depending on the composition. Classical music could bridge the gap between different groups, while other types of music might emphasize cultural influences. Instruments and rhythms used in music vary from group to group and are often indicative of specific heritages. Should a brand wish to portray an understanding of a specific group, this could be an effective way to reach them. Regardless of the subcultural elements of the music, instrumental songs allow the emphasis to be redirected to the commercial's dialogue or to the action itself.

Pantene, for example, utilizes instrumental music in its advertisement entitled "Celebrating Strong, Beautiful African American Hair." The music includes a strong, dramatic beat that reflects the strength emphasized by the narrator. There is also a vocal arrangement that is sung by an African American woman, but there are no lyrics (Pantene, 2017). Although it is not the primary focus of the advertisement, the music is another way to show accommodation.

McDonald incorporates music with rhythm and style typical of Hispanic culture in the commercial "House Divided" (AlmaAgency, 2014). Since it is not music that would usually be

used in American culture or featured in a standard McDonald's advertisement, this is another way that the brand can show accommodation.

In Ram's "Built to Serve" commercial, instrumental music plays in the background as audio runs from a Martin Luther King, Jr. speech. Throughout the advertisement, the music will pause and the sound cuts to the sounds of the scenes shown, such as the military marching and an axe splitting wood (Ram Trucks, 2018a). The music enhances the mood of the advertisement and cues the viewer in when an important point is being made. Because the music is generic, however, it provides few benefits in the way of accommodation.

While Ram's use of instrumental music forces the reader to focus on the words being said, Wells Fargo's use of instrumental music forces the reader to focus on the words that are not being said. In "Learning Sign Language," music accompanies the story of two women who are learning sign language. The first words spoken aloud come at the 50-second mark, making up just the last 10 seconds of the advertisement (Wells Fargo, 2015). Music is necessary for audio stimuli; however, using a song with words would distract from what is being said visually. Because the subculture referenced here is deaf culture, music is not critical to accommodation.

## **Lyrical**

Including words in the music adds another layer of storytelling to the commercial. Just as with scripts, songs provide another opportunity to showcase languages, dialects, and accents. The allocation of these components to different quadrants mirrors that of the previous section, "Language." The actual words themselves can also add emotion to the advertisement. Like

Instrumental, this component can be categorized as any of the four quadrants, albeit it a more obvious and emphatic way of highlighting a specific subculture.

As aforementioned, Ram recently released a commercial entitled “Thank God I’m a Country Boy.” Instead of having dialogue or narration, the commercial is centered around the song. Originally sung by John Denver, the song – “Thank God I’m a Country Boy” – can be categorized as country or folk (JohnDenverVEVO, 2013). This advertisement uses the original lyrics and basic rhythm but uses different instruments and tones, which gives the song more of a mainstream sound. This then allows Ram to more easily translate between country and city settings, reinforcing the idea that everyone can be “country” (Ram Trucks, 2018b). This gives the commercial potential for diverse in-group bias.

In a similar way, Coke took a familiar song and altered it for enhanced impact. Whereas Ram kept the lyrics and changed the rhythm, Coke used the original tune of “America the Beautiful” and translated some of the lyrics into other languages (Vassar Music Drive, 2014). In doing so, Coke was able to keep the message and mainstream American values intact, all while increasing accommodation for multiple minority groups.

Pepsi’s commercial with Michael Jackson exemplifies the use of lyrics in an Assimilable context. By completely changing the lyrics of a Michael Jackson song to lyrics about Pepsi and its consumer, Pepsi aligns itself with mainstream American values (GiraldiMedia, 2009). The consumer is forced to focus on the lyrics of the song, as the change in words serves as a form of moderate incongruity. It taps into their knowledge of pop culture, however, so if someone was not familiar with the song, the commercial would lose its sense of meaning. Because the song is representative of mainstream music culture, there is little subcultural accommodation.

In Coke's "I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke" commercial, the consumer's primary focus is also on the lyrics of the song. There is no plot or even shift in scenery, so the emphasis is on the song's message of the unity and happiness that comes with sharing a Coke. The lyrics of the song are reflected in the diverse cast, as each person holds a Coke bottle from their native country (Project ReBrief, 2012). This increases the potential for in-group bias, since so many groups are represented.

**Table 3. Music Applications**

	<i>Instrumental</i>	<i>Lyrical (English)</i>	<i>Lyrical (Alternative)</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
<i>Assimilable</i>	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue
<i>Transitional</i>	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
<i>Identifier</i>	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue

## **Ethnic Background**

As indicated by the in-group bias theory, the people featured in advertisements are critical to the consumers' perceptions (Green, 1999). For the purposes of a surface-level in-group bias assessment, a person's ethnic background can provide an automatic connection.

### **Caucasian**

If all of the actors in a commercial are Caucasian, the commercial does not necessarily fit in this framework. If they are depicted alongside minority groups, however, they likely fit in the Assimilable or Multicultural quadrants. They also might be featured if they are representing a minority group like the LGBTQ community. If that is the case, there is more fluidity moving around the quadrants.

In Johnson & Johnson's commercial "#HowWeFamily," a gay couple and a lesbian couple are featured. They were both shown in very mainstream settings, with one couple in a traditional home and one couple at prom (Tylenol Official, 2015). While this is a simple way to increase in-group bias, there is minimal accommodation. Since these are scenarios that could be shared across subcultures, the characters could easily be replaced by anyone else.

Apple features Caucasian characters with disabilities in "Accessibility – Sady." Under the umbrella of disabilities, a variety of conditions are personified by different characters, adding to the potential in-group biases. While there is a range of abilities shown, the characters are all completing tasks that would be typical for anyone on a normal day (Apple, 2016). This increases a sense of community and in-group bias from those who might not fit into this subculture.

Wells Fargo incorporates a few different minority groups in the advertisement “Learning Sign Language.” A Caucasian lesbian couple is depicted as they attempt to learn Sign Language. They are adopting a deaf child of Hispanic descent, and their adoption agent is black (Wells Fargo, 2015). As a result, each of these characters represents a subculture. By focusing on sexual orientation, disabilities, and ethnicity, the brand can connect to a range of minority groups. In doing so, Wells Fargo increases the diversity of potential in-group bias.

In Budweiser’s “Born The Hard Way,” all of the characters are Caucasian. The storyline is all about immigration, although it is portrayed from a historical perspective. People of German or, more broadly, European descent may categorize themselves as part of the same in-group. Immigrants also could find themselves in the character, providing a separate but valid alternative in-group. Because the story takes place decades ago, the need for perfect accommodation is diminished (BudweiserCanada, 2017). The viewers accept right away that the journey or lifestyle portrayed will not perfectly match their own. This decreases the scrutiny otherwise expected from polarized appraisal.

### **Native Minority**

Minorities who are born in the United States and grow up here could represent any of the four quadrants. Much like people of mixed race, this minority could have varying degrees of affiliation with both American culture and their subculture. In general, this group is found higher along the y-axis than the Immigrant Minority group. Their understanding of American culture is more strongly rooted; however, they may value their subcultural heritage more.

As previously referenced, “Let’s Talk about Bias” by Procter & Gamble shows the perspective of African Americans. It shows various clips of characters from different time periods, which gives the viewer a better understanding of this particular group’s history. It is entirely rooted in the subculture’s struggle in America (Canned Bommercials, 2017). This commitment to understanding the subculture portrayed shows an enhanced level of accommodation.

Ram’s “Thank God I’m a Country Boy” showcases minority groups who identify more strongly with mainstream American values than with subcultural values, placing them higher on the y-axis. The entire commercial centers on the idea of being “country,” wherever the characters may be. The nugget of insight that closes out the commercial reads, “This is Ram Nation. Population: America.” The focus is on how each group represents the United States, and in doing so, capitalizes on diversity of in-group bias (Ram Trucks, 2018b).

Native Minority advertisements also feature biracial groups, who may choose to identify with any of the quadrants, depending on their personal outlook. On the one hand, they might connect with Assimilables because they might desire to be mainstream. They also, however, might be appreciative of Multicultural advertisements since they showcase elements of various cultures. Additionally, they might identify with Transitionals, especially if they do not quite know where they “fit” in terms of culture. If they feel strongly connected to one or more of their subcultural heritages, they could be accessed via Identifier advertisements.

In the 2013 Cheerios advertisement that aired during the Super Bowl, a biracial family is depicted. The main character, Gracie, is shown eating Cheerios at home in a standard suburban home (KSTP, 2013). Since the entire family was included, there could be a variety of perspectives included in the commercial. No specific subcultural elements were emphasized,

however, making it seem as though any other family could easily be substituted for the one shown. As a result, this contains minimal accommodation and could be categorized as an Assimilable advertisement.

### **Immigrant Minority**

This group typically falls to the right of the y-axis, or the Multicultural and Identifier quadrants. They are more in tune with their subculture, and therefore they are more prone to identify with advertisements that reflect that. Using Identifier advertisements, in particular, is a strategic way to target them. To some extent, they are probably excited to be considered American and thus might move up the y-axis. At the end of the day, however, they are less familiar with American culture. References made in the Multicultural quadrant, then, might not be as impactful for this audience.

84 Lumber's two-part advertisement, "The Journey Begins" and "Complete the Journey," follows the immigration story of a mother and daughter (84 Lumber, 2018a & 2018b). The first part shows the beginning of their travels to the United States from Mexico, so the entirety of the commercial takes place in Mexico. There is no reference at all to 84 Lumber. The emphasis is entirely on the family's struggle, so accuracy is critical for positive perception according to the polarized appraisal theory. The commercial aired during the Super Bowl, so the majority of the audience did not necessarily relate to the characters according to the in-group bias (84 Lumber, 2018b).

It is only in the second portion of the advertisement that there are American elements. The daughter makes an American flag out of scraps of fabric she finds along the journey, which

symbolizes her excitement for the American lifestyle. The commercial closes with a line that reads, “The will to succeed is always welcome here” (84 Lumber, 2018a). This encapsulates the mainstream American values, thus shifting it upwards along the y-axis.

In Budweiser’s commercial, “Born The Hard Way,” consumers follow the journey of one of Anheuser-Busch’s founders. The advertisement shows his treacherous trip from Germany to the United States. The consumer knows that Busch is going to America for the purposes of making a brewery, but the focus is on his travels rather than the product itself. The commercial shows the resistance and negativity he faced, but the overarching theme is one of perseverance. The closing tagline is, “When nothing stops your dream, this is the beer we’ll raise” (BudweiserCanada, 2017). Since the story took place decades ago, there is less of a concern about accommodation. Immigration and life in general have evolved, so the process is no longer comparable. The feelings and emotions, however, could be the same. No matter the country from which they came, immigrants could potentially consider themselves an in-group and connect to the struggle and journey portrayed.

**Table 4. Ethnic Background Applications**

	<i>Caucasian</i>	<i>Mixed Race</i>	<i>Native Minority</i>	<i>Immigrant Minority</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>				
<i>Assimilable</i>				
<i>Transitional</i>				
<i>Identifier</i>				

## **Product Focus**

This element looks at the storytelling tactics of the brand. Although every commercial may aim to portray a story in some way, shape or form, there are different levels of focus that brands can use. As Green found in his study on in-group bias and accommodation, the type of product did in fact influence the consumer's perception of the advertisement and eventual decision (Green, 1999).

### **Primary**

Advertisements that utilize primary focus keep the commercial centered around the product. The product is present throughout the advertisement and plays a critical role in the storyline. There is no question as to what the commercial is for at any point during the commercial. Products in this category best fit into the Assimilable or Multicultural quadrants, as cultural values are more easily implied in these groups. That being said, if a certain product is targeted at a specific minority group, this could certainly be advertised across the other quadrants, as well.

Amazon's commercial featuring an imam and a priest illustrates this concept. The commercial shows the friendship between these two characters, following them over the course of a few days. Each buys the other knee braces from Amazon, which are promptly shipped and delivered to their respective doorsteps (CNN Money, 2016). Amazon was able to feature the two cultures through setting and attire, which enabled the brand to avoid sacrificing product focus. As exemplified by this commercial, more than one culture can be featured, allowing for various

levels of in-group bias. This particular advertisement was able to capitalize on accommodation and polarized appraisal by showing each character in his respective place of worship.

Like Amazon, Apple used a commercial to explain product features while highlighting a specific subculture. In this case, the focus is on people with disabilities. The people shown have a variety of disabilities, and they are each able to use the technology to help them in some way. While the focus is on the functionality of the products, an underlying theme is one of equality. The people depicted are completing everyday activities that anyone, regardless of subculture, would do (Apple, 2016). This duality of purpose shows accommodation both on a product and emotional level.

In the Cheerios advertisement featuring the biracial family, the commercial centers around a conversation about how Cheerios are “heart healthy.” The daughter asks her mother if Cheerios are, in fact, good for the heart. The mom says they are, so the daughter proceeds to pour Cheerios on her father’s heart while he sleeps. Whereas Amazon chose to tell a subcultural story with its product-focused commercial, Cheerios takes a more straightforward approach. There is little room for subcultural commentary or accommodation. It is important to note, however, that Cheerios ran a 30-second spot (KSTP, 2013). Amazon, on the other hand, had over a minute of content (CNN Money, 2016). Had Cheerios created a longer commercial, a more detailed story could have been told.

CoverGirl also placed a greater emphasis on describing product attributes than on telling a story. The entire commercial revolved around the idea that CoverGirl’s BlastPRO Mascara can be used by anyone. This idea of inclusivity inherent in the product allows CoverGirl to incorporate different groups into the commercial (COVERGIRL, 2016). By using and highlighting a variety of spokespeople, CoverGirl can imply the brand’s social stance on

equality. The actual content of the advertisement does not include many subcultural elements, however, which results in a low level of accommodation.

### **Interspersed**

Advertisements that utilize interspersed product focus feature the product, but do not necessarily use it as the main point of focus. There is still a clear connection between the product and the story. Much like Primary Product Focus, this fits in the Assimilable or Multicultural quadrants, or Identifier in the case of a targeted product. It could, however, more easily shift to the right along the x-axis (enhancing its subcultural significance). With added storytelling, there is ample opportunity to focus on both the product and the consumer.

Coke's "America the Beautiful" commercial is representative of this method of product focus. Coke is featured in various scenes, with visible logos on Coke bottles and bottle caps. While there was a connection between the message and Coke's core values, Coke did not play a critical role in the commercial's storyline. Instead, the product was a secondary focus. Another brand could have created the same commercial without having to drastically change the meaning. Because the product was not the primary focus, Coke was able to place greater emphasis on the purpose of the commercial – celebrating the various cultures making up America (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). This allowed for diversity of in-group bias, as well as more enhanced accommodation.

In Toyota's 2018 Super Bowl commercial, "One Team," showed a group of friends going to a football game. The group was comprised of religious leaders representing Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. They were each leaving for the game from their respective

places of worship. Their mode of transport was a Toyota truck, which was featured as each person was picked up and as they reached the stadium. Although the advertisement was not focused on the attributes of the truck, the truck was consistently present and allowed the story to advance (Alpha SQUAD Official, 2018). Again, because the focus was not solely on the truck, a story incorporating the subcultural values could be told. This gave Toyota the chance to accommodate multiple subcultures.

The use of a truck is even less critical to the storyline in “Thank God I’m a Country Boy” by Ram Trucks. The commercial features a variety of people, who represent a range of age groups, ethnicities, and socioeconomic classes. Ram trucks are shown moving or simply stationary behind someone. There is no description of product attributes, and the brand could feasibly be switched with another without detracting from the meaning of the advertisement. The focus is on the fact that Ram trucks are a unifying factor among the groups, just as being American is (Ram Trucks, 2018b). Just like Toyota’s commercial, this advertisement provides ample opportunity for Ram to incorporate enhanced levels of accommodation.

Honey Maid’s “This is Wholesome” advertisement features its products throughout the course of the commercial. The attributes of the product are not the primary focus; instead, the focus is on the characters. There is no checklist of benefits or comparison of brands; rather, Honey Maid shows how it can be used by everyone, regardless of background (Honey Maid, 2014b). This focuses less on accommodation and more on diversity of in-group bias.

This form of advertising gives a brand flexibility. While primary product focus still enables a brand to convey subcultural appreciation, interspersed product focus provides even greater flexibility. Time typically used to show the product can be reallocated to subcultural elements or themes.

## Unrelated

Some advertisements do not use the product at all. These are often used by brands really trying to tell a story or take a stand on an issue. In some cases, these are not even meant to be used for one specific product; rather, they are meant to be used to promote an entire brand. For brands that want to connect with subcultures on a deeper level and show their commitment to understanding them, this type of advertising could be effective. This method provides a brand the opportunity to maximize storytelling potential, which is significant when considering the typical length of an advertisement. As a result, this method is effectively used for brands looking to reach the Multicultural and Identifier quadrants. They have to be more knowledgeable of different subcultures and can use the “additional” time in the advertisement to showcase that. In a similar way, it could be used for groups that fall in the Transitionals quadrant. If the brand wants to provide their consumers with a sense of belonging, additional storytelling gives them the platform to share and form an emotional connection.

In Procter & Gamble’s “Talk about Bias” commercial, the brand was not evident until the last 18 seconds of the advertisement. There was no use of the product at any point throughout the commercial, nor was there any discussion of the industry in general. The primary point of the advertisement was to bring attention to discrimination and race relations, which allowed for high levels of accommodation. Although it was technically part of the “My Black is Beautiful” campaign, any company theoretically could have released the commercial (Canned Bommercials, 2017). The purpose of the commercial, then, was primarily to make a statement. This exemplifies the trend of message-focused marketing discussed by Natalie Zmuda in *Ad Age* (2014).

In a similar fashion, the Guinness brand was not evident in the beginning portion of its wheelchair basketball advertisement. The focus was on the game and camaraderie. It was not until the group goes out after the game and a bartender pours a Guinness that the product is shown. The commercial then ties in the brand slogan, “Made of More,” to highlight the character of the men in the group (CaSjUs212, 2013). The focus, then, is more on the storytelling and accommodation than anything else.

Johnson & Johnson’s “#HowWeFamily” is an advertisement for Tylenol, although that is not apparent until the final seconds of the commercial. The entire premise focuses on acceptance of families. There is no point during the commercial in which anyone uses Tylenol, nor is there mention of Johnson & Johnson as a brand (Tylenol Official, 2015). This emphasis on storytelling allows for more time spent on accommodation.

MetLife’s “My Father is a Liar” is an even more extended version of an unrelated product focus advertisement. The commercial tells the story of a young Asian girl and her father, who is working hard to provide her with a better life. He works menial jobs for long hours to support her and make sure she has everything she needs. After over three minutes of content, MetLife is finally mentioned (Vektanova, 2015). By mentioning it after the story itself is told, the brand can maximize consumer emotion. Focusing solely on the story can make it seem more genuine, since there are no distractions from products. For this brand in particular, the unrelated product focus works well. A brand like MetLife is harder to casually incorporate into a storyline than brands like Coke or Honey Maid.

**Table 5. Product Focus Applications**

	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Interspersed</i>	<i>Unrelated</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>			
<i>Assimilable</i>			
<i>Transitional</i>			
<i>Identifier</i>			

### **Product Categories**

Products can target different consumer segments based not only on the brand essence but on the functionality of the product itself. Some products can be used by all consumers, which opens the brand up to using any of the multicultural strategies. Others are more specific in their audience, which can eliminate some of the techniques from consideration.

#### **Universal**

Universal products are those products which can be used by anyone, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, etc. These are the most versatile in terms of how they can be portrayed. Since they can reach any audience, it is up to the brand to determine what targeting strategy it wishes to implement.

Amazon's commercial about the priest and the imam is one example of a universal product category. While the specific product – the knee brace – is not necessarily universal,

Amazon as a company has significant diversity in terms of offerings. The basic service of fast and easy delivery can be targeted at a very broad audience. Amazon chose to feature subcultural elements in the advertisement, thus increasing levels of accommodation (CNN Money, 2016). This, however, was not essential to the explanation of the service.

As a fast food chain, McDonald's can advertise to a very broad audience. With its "House Divided" commercial, it was able to focus in on a specific group and target it with a special play-to-win promotion for the World Cup (AlmaAgency, 2014). While McDonald's could still use mainstream advertising to target larger groups, this allows them to demonstrate to their understanding of Hispanic consumers' specific needs through accommodation.

Honey Maid focused on the universality of its product to tie a common thread between a variety of families. The campaign "This is Wholesome" embraces the idea that anyone, regardless of background or association, can enjoy Honey Maid products. The resulting campaign emphasized the similarities between the groups to reinforce the fact that everyone can share in the same experience (Honey Maid, 2014b). In-group bias, then, is a significant advantage.

Coke took a different angle when representing a variety of groups in its "America the Beautiful" commercial (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). In the previous example, Honey Maid focused on different subcultures consuming the product in the same way (Honey Maid, 2014b). Coke, by contrast, focused on the consumption of its product in a multitude of contexts (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). In doing so, Coke utilized stronger levels of accommodation. This focus on individuality as opposed to commonality exemplifies the range of portrayals available to advertisers in this product categorization.

## Demographic-Specific

Ethnicity-specific products are those that target specific group because of the inherent nature of the product. Categories like cosmetics, beauty, and haircare typically have to depict key segments in their advertisements so that consumers can better connect with the brand.

Additionally, the product formulas may vary based on the segment the brand chooses to target, which can then influence the messaging. These are then categorized as the Identifier quadrant, since the focus is away from the mainstream ideal and instead on subcultural benefits.

Pantene released a commercial entitled “Celebrating Strong, Beautiful, African American Hair.” This was targeted at African Americans, whose haircare needs are distinct to their subculture. The focus was on empowering this consumer segment to embrace their natural hair and not focus on fitting into mainstream categories (Pantene, 2017). This very much emphasizes Pantene’s understanding of the consumer, which increases the accommodation level. In accordance with the polarized appraisal theory, this complete focus on the group will be more intensely analyzed by the target audience. If the advertisement was well-executed in the audience’s eyes, though, this allows the brand to maximize success among this group.

Age-specific products that target different generations should also be mindful of these categories. Brands looking to attract Millennials and members of Generation Z may want to shift towards the Multicultural quadrant, so as to reflect the changing demographics and consumer preferences. Brands focused on attracting older consumers may want to remain in the Assimilables quadrant, unless they are looking to shift towards a younger demographic. Making the shift could also be beneficial if the company wishes to develop a more accepting brand image, so that the transition is more natural when appealing to aging Millennials and members of Generation Z.

Guinness, for example, made a commercial about friends who played wheelchair basketball. At the end of their game, all but one of the men stood up and walked off the court. The remaining man stayed in his wheelchair, as he was handicapped (CaSjUs212, 2013). By showcasing both groups, Guinness unexpectedly added to in-group bias. This allows multiple consumers to identify with characters in the commercial, and it reinforces the portrayal of a mainstream group's appreciation for a subculture. The accommodation in this commercial is slightly more complex than in other advertisements, as the consumers know that most of the athletes playing wheelchair basketball are not actually a part of their subculture. As a result, there may be more room for forgiveness if the activity is inaccurately depicted.

Toyota's "One Team" commercial focused on inclusivity, which will be increasingly important as Generation Z consumers are starting to drive (Alpha SQUAD Official, 2018). As aforementioned, Generation Z is 13 percent more likely than Baby Boomers to appreciate minority representation in advertisements (Barkley & Futurecast, 2017). By featuring characters from four major religions, Toyota also increases the potential for consumers to identify and place an emphasis on in-group bias (Alpha SQUAD Official, 2018).

**Table 6. Product Category Applications**

	<i>Universal</i>	<i>Ethnicity-Specific</i>	<i>Age-Specific</i>
<i>Multicultural</i>			
<i>Assimilable</i>			
<i>Transitional</i>			
<i>Identifier</i>			

## Chapter 5

### Advertisement Categorization

As previously discussed, each individual component of an advertisement could serve as the reason to place it in one of the four framework categories. Since advertisements are comprised of multiple components, however, each needs to be carefully considered and weighed in order to fully assess the commercial's strategy. By looking at various examples within each category, this chapter looks to analyze the major factors considered when labeling commercials.

### Multiculturals

Multicultural advertisements, found in the upper right quadrant, strike a balance between mainstream values and subcultural values. Because this form of advertising does have mainstream elements, the target audience is fairly broad. The commercials could appeal to anyone. Subcultural values are highlighted in these advertisements, however, so brands can show their appreciation for different consumer segments.

**Table 7. Multicultural Advertisements**

<i>Advertisement</i>	<i>Religious Leaders by Amazon<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>“America the Beautiful” by Coke<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>W. Basketball by Guinness<sup>3</sup></i>
Groups Referenced	Muslim	Muslim, Blacks, Jewish, Native American, Asian	Disabled
Number of Cultural References	2 – Mosque focus, Church focus		1 – wheelchair basketball

<sup>1</sup> CNN Money, 2016

<sup>2</sup> Vassar Drive Music, 2014

<sup>3</sup> CaSjUs212, 2013

Product References/Focus	2	Minimal (towards the end)	1 – at the end
Setting	Suburban Home, Mosque, Church	Mountains, cities, movies, beach, desert, restaurant	Basketball court, bar
Dialogue (language, accent, dialect, etc.)	N/A	Various languages	N/A
Product Diversity	Universal	Universal	Age-Specific
Length	1:21	1:00	1:01

Amazon, for example, tells the story of the friendship between a priest and an imam in a mainstream American setting. They send each other knee braces, which they then use while praying in their respective places of worship. Amazon manages to both highlight aspects unique to the subculture while still showcasing the similarities between the men. The role of Amazon is also essential to the advertisement, so it is not solely a message about equality (CNN Money, 2016). This purposeful inclusion of subcultural elements adds a layer of authenticity.

In “America the Beautiful,” Coke depicts various cultural groups across the United States. The point of the ad is to celebrate these groups and show that everyone makes America special and unique (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). To some extent, this focuses on assimilation because it is showing that everyone falls under the American umbrella category. As a result, it falls close to the y-axis on the framework. Nevertheless, it does show brief cultural distinctions, so it manages to blend the American and cultural categories. This balance between the two goals makes this a fit for the Multicultural category.

Guinness portrays Multicultural qualities in a slightly different way by featuring a different minority group. As aforementioned, this advertisement depicts a group of friends playing wheelchair basketball. At the end, all of the men except for one stand up after the game. The group of friends then goes to the bar for Guinness. The ad focuses on “true character,”

which aligns with the brand capsule “Made of More” (CaSjUs212, 2013). This advertisement almost takes the Multiculturals category a step further, because the mainstream group is participating in the minority “culture,” so to speak. It shows that the two cultures can blend very easily and highlights the commonalities amidst the differences.

In all of these advertisements, the companies focus on harmony. The emphasis is on people being people. While the brands still want to come across as American, they also want to come across as modern. They want to celebrate differences and broadcast this to a wide audience.

### Assimilables

Assimilable advertisements make up the upper left quadrant, as they rank high in mainstream values and low in subcultural values. These commercials require the smallest amount of risk, as they deviate only slightly from traditional advertising. Minority characters, though featured, play very mainstream roles. There is no sense of cultural heritage that can be detected in the commercial. In most cases, the minority characters could be replaced by anyone else without changing the storyline.

**Table 8. Assimilable Advertisements**

<i>Advertisement</i>	<i>“This is Wholesome” by Honey Maid<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>“How We Family” by J&amp;J<sup>5</sup></i>	<i>“So Lashy...” by CoverGirl<sup>6</sup></i>
Groups Referenced	Gay, Black, Hispanic, Military	Gay, Black, Asian, Biracial	Gay, Black, Asian, Muslim, Hispanic
Number of Cultural References	0	0	References to eyelash types

<sup>4</sup> Honey Maid, 2014b

<sup>5</sup> TYLENOLOFFICIAL, 2015

<sup>6</sup> COVERGIRL, 2016

Product References/Focus	4	0	Constant
Setting	Middle-class, suburban America	Middle-class, suburban America	Studio
Dialogue (language, accent, dialect, etc.)	N/A	N/A	Accent
Product Diversity	Universal	Universal	Universal
Length	0:32	1:08	0:30

A common theme in Assimilable commercials is acceptance, which is exemplified by Honey Maid's "This is Wholesome" advertisement. One particular example depicts a variety of American families eating graham crackers. The whole point of the commercial is to show inclusivity. Different minority groups are shown acting like "standard" American families in suburban settings (Honey Maid, 2014b). By being so inclusive, the advertisement prevents almost everyone from being in an out-group. The point was to show the similarity between families, but in doing so, the ad fails to highlight cultural differences between the groups. As a result, this would score low on subcultural values.

Honey Maid went so far as to create a family profile, entitled "Honey Maid Documentary: Dad & Papa." This was not so much an advertisement as it was a campaign extension. While it certainly falls under the advertising umbrella, it had only a brief product placement in a video that is almost two minutes. This was part of Honey Maid's "This is Wholesome" campaign, and it depicted two self-proclaimed "traditional guys" and their sons. It showed them as a very typical, suburban American home with photos of their previous generations on the wall (Honey Maid, 2014a). If one of the fathers were to be replaced by a mother, they would seem like the idealistic mainstream family. This emphasis on similarity keeps this campaign qualified as Assimilable, since the goal is to make the family seem ordinary.

Much like the Honey Maid commercial, an advertisement by Johnson & Johnson focused on showcasing all different types of families. The tagline was “#HowWeFamily.” The cast, however, all seemed very similar. They were upper-middle class families who fit into the mainstream image of American life. There was never a moment when the product was shown, so the advertisement focused entirely on emotional appeals. In order to tie in the brand, the theme of the commercial serves as a reflection of Tylenol’s slogan, “For what matters most” (Tylenol Official, 2015). Again, the opportunity to incorporate subcultural elements is sacrificed for depictions of “average” families. As a result, this advertisement fits into the Assimilable category.

In a slightly different take on the Assimilable category, CoverGirl focuses not so much on how everyone is similar; rather, the brand focuses on how everyone can use the product in the same way. “So Lashy! BlastPRO Mascara by COVERGIRL” was part of CoverGirl’s Lash Equality campaign. The claim is that this mascara can be used by anyone, regardless of the type of eyelashes they have – long, short, fine, etc. The purpose of the equality campaign is twofold, however, as CoverGirl focuses on inclusion of different minority groups, with respect to both race and sexual orientation (COVERGIRL, 2016). As a result, they focus on assimilation. While they highlight the differences, the overarching message is that everyone is basically the same.

The advertisements that fall into this category focus on standardization. The point is to focus on commonalities. By emphasizing these unifying factors, advertisers hope to show that they respect all groups and can connect with all groups. Their consumers are viewed as equal, regardless of the subculture to which they belong. In doing so, however, advertisers avoid celebrating what is unique to different target segments.

## Transitionals

Transitional advertisements, found in the lower left quadrant, score low on mainstream and subcultural values. In what is perhaps the most specific in terms of targeting, transitional advertising tries to appeal to groups who do not know how to identify. They do not feel fully connected to either mainstream culture or a subculture.

**Table 9. Transitional Advertisement**

<i>Advertisement</i>	<i>“House Divided” by McDonald’s<sup>7</sup></i>	<i>“The Journey Begins” by 84 Lumber<sup>8</sup></i>
Groups Referenced	Hispanics	Hispanics
Number of Cultural References	1 – soccer team	Various – scenes of Mexico
Product References/Focus	2 (both groups eating)	0
Setting	Suburban	Various
Dialogue (language, accent, dialect, etc.)	Spanish, accented English	Spanish
Product Diversity	Universal	Universal
Length	1:04	1:30

McDonald’s showed the struggle of fitting into the Transitional category, with their “House Divided” advertisement. This ad depicts a teenage boy whose parents are immigrants. They are speaking to him in Spanish and rooting for their home country in soccer games. The boy seems slightly embarrassed to be rooting for the United States with his friends because of that. The commercial highlights the similarities between him and his father, and they eventually win a trip to the World Cup through a McDonald’s promotion. This advertisement showcases a

<sup>7</sup> AlmaAgency, 2014

<sup>8</sup> 84 Lumber, 2017b

transition phase for the family. The son feels very connected to his American surroundings, but he also feels the need to be connected to his culture because of his parents (AlmaAgency, 2014).

The Transitional category can apply to those already living in the United States or to those moving to the country. As aforementioned, 84 Lumber released a two-part commercial focusing on the immigration story of a mother and daughter. Their journey from Mexico was long and treacherous, which was emphasized by the fact that it could not be shown all in one commercial (84 Lumber, 2017a & 2017b). Their journey comes to an end just as they almost give up hope. In the middle of a wall dividing the border between Mexico and the United States, there is a door made of wood from 84 Lumber (84 Lumber, 2017a). The entire plotline focused on a transition phase, showing that the characters wanted to be American. They were not officially American yet, but they also would not identify solely as Mexican.

The overarching theme of these advertisements is a sense of being a “misfit.” There are elements of various cultures that are portrayed, but the main characters do not know where they belong. This may be more important in the industry in the coming years, as population trends shift (Macke, 2017). The Hispanic population is increasingly disassociating with their subculture as generations intermarry and become entrenched in American culture (Hugo Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera, & López, 2017). While that may be the case, proper and meaningful representation of their culture in advertising is still key (McCarthy & Alcántara-Díaz, 2016).

### **Identifiers**

Identifier advertisements, found in the lower right quadrant, have weak mainstream values and strong subcultural values. These advertisements are traditionally more targeted to

specific segments and might not be found in mainstream channels. They emphasize a sense of understanding between the brand and its consumers.

**Table 10. Identifier Advertisements**

<i>Advertisement</i>	<i>“Talk about Bias” by Procter &amp; Gamble<sup>9</sup></i>	<i>“Celebrating Strong...” by Pantene<sup>10</sup></i>
Groups Referenced	Blacks	Blacks
Number of Cultural References	0	“Our history”
Product References/Focus	0	Focus is hair, but product is never shown
Setting	Home, baseball field, school; different eras	Studio (white backdrop)
Dialogue (language, accent, dialect, etc.)	N/A	N/A
Product Diversity	Universal	Ethnicity-Specific
Length	1:11 (2:09 extended version)	1:02

Some Identifier advertisements place a strong emphasis on storytelling. For example, in Procter & Gamble’s “Talk about Bias” commercial, the company depicts African American families talking about prejudice. It is very targeted to people who identify with this group. Its goal is to relate to them and thus increase consumers’ positive association with the brand (Canned Bommercials, 2017). If this commercial is shown in a general market setting, however, the majority of viewers will be in the out-group.

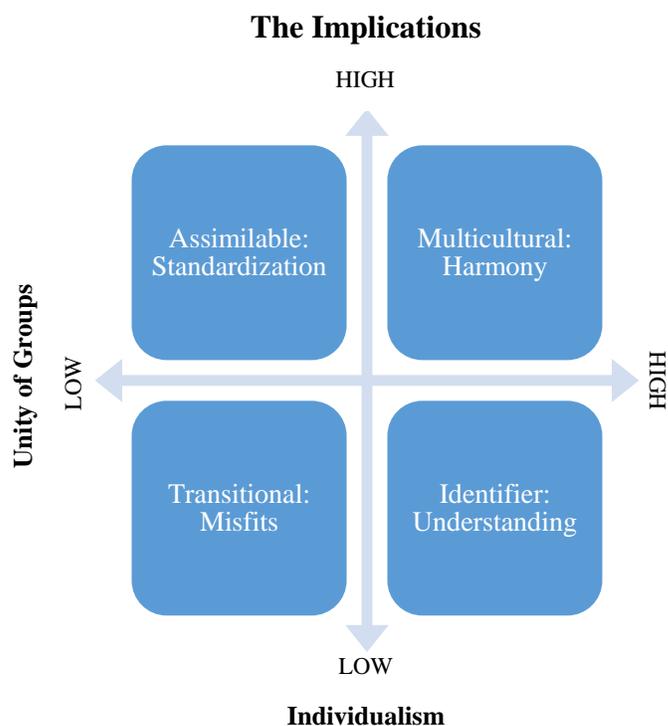
Other Identifier advertisements may still incorporate storytelling, but they do so in conjunction with stronger product focus. Pantene’s Gold Series created an advertisement targeted specifically at African Americans, for example, entitled “Celebrating Strong, Beautiful African American Hair.” Since this is targeted to a certain population, it can appear in targeted channels.

<sup>9</sup> Canned Bommercials, 2017

<sup>10</sup> Pantene, 2017

The advertisement showcased the diversity of hairstyles even within this subset of their target audience, which emphasized that Pantene understands them as a consumer. The narration was also from the point of view of an African American woman (Pantene, 2017).

These advertisements place an emphasis on understanding. The purpose is primarily to connect with the consumer by emphasizing that they are, in fact, different from the rest of a standard American audience. While this does not make them any less American, it makes their cultural heritage the key differentiating factor. These commercials reinforce the idea that a consumer's heritage is something to celebrate rather than hide. In doing so, the advertiser shows the ultimate level of commitment, as they forego the opportunity to connect with a larger audience.



**Figure 2. Framework Implications**

Each of the framework categories lends itself to a relationship-based theme. When assessing the advertisements, analysis can be done on a basis of individualism and unity of groups. Individualism refers to each character celebrating traits unique to them or their subculture. Unity of groups refers to the extent to which multiple groups coexist.

Based on the advertisements analyzed, four basic themes emerge. Multicultural advertisements score high on both characteristics, giving their category an overall sense of harmony. Multiple groups are referenced, but each is featured in a way that accepts qualities specific to them. Assimilables score high on unity, as they typically feature many groups. Since they are strong in mainstream values, though, they score low on individualism. This focus on similarity gives these advertisements a recurring theme of standardization. Identifiers have the reverse scoring, with high individualism and low unity of groups. Since the focus is typically on one group, there is no need to represent multiple. They do, however, zero in on the values that

are characteristic of the group. The brand's top priority, then, is to relay a sense of understanding. Finally, Identifiers score low on both characteristics, making them the "misfit" group. Since they do not know which group they belong to, they do not have a strong sense for which qualities make them unique. There is also minimal need for these commercials to depict multiple groups.

## Chapter 6

### Effective Component Implementation

In order to illustrate the potential effectiveness of these tactics, one can look to the example of Coke and Pepsi. These major brands both sell colas as their primary product. Their advertising methods, therefore, could theoretically be very similar. The two brands have very distinct personas, though, which are reflected in their advertisements. Pepsi represents the youth generation. Coke, on the other hand, represents classic America and tradition (Bhasin, 2012).

These very distinct strategies prompt questions about these two companies' subcultural advertising tactics. How is it that Pepsi, a company so dedicated to youth and this generation, was recently so unsuccessful representing modern multicultural America? How is it that Coke, a company rich in tradition, can be so ahead of the curve in representing minorities?

Pepsi advertisements can be categorized as Assimilables. Although they sometimes feature minorities, their main focus is being mainstream and current (Bhasin, 2012). The consistent use of celebrities epitomizes this aspirational element. Simply put, Pepsi is supposed to be "cool." By focusing on these specific people, however, Pepsi sacrifices the chance to focus on a deeper message.

In 1984, Pepsi released an advertisement with Michael Jackson. The advertisement depicted a diverse group of young kids who decided to dance in the street. The leader of the group is a young African American boy who, after drinking a Pepsi, is able to dance just like Michael Jackson. Shortly after the group begins dancing, they are met by Michael Jackson and his friends. They then join as one large dance group. The song in the background is "Billie Jean,"

but it is rewritten to talk about the “Pepsi generation.” The advertisement exudes happiness and positivity, as well as excitement. There is no deep meaning associated with it, nor is there a definition for the new “Pepsi generation” (GiraldiMedia, 2009). No distinction is made between the “Pepsi generation” and the general generation.

Pepsi had continued this focus on celebrities in other advertisements. For example, Britney Spears was the main focus in one of Pepsi’s commercials. The advertisement shows her in split scenes dancing and drinking Pepsi. Between the scenes of her, there are clips of people in different jobs and eras watching excitedly. By doing so, Pepsi is able to depict various people. The backup dancers also represent different minority groups, although this diversity is fairly limited to the background. The primary focus is certainly Britney Spears (ThisIsTheMusic201x, 2010). Pepsi is implying that it will make its customers seem more cool and youthful like her. Therefore, although Pepsi features multiple subcultures and implies unity of groups, this is not the primary focus.

More recently, Pepsi released a commercial that created a great deal of buzz. Unlike the hilltop Coke commercial, this advertisement was famous because it was so off the mark. The commercial depicts a large group of protesters. This crowd is populated by young people of almost every minority group. They are seen dancing and marching, with signs in many languages asking for peace. The commercial highlights a few characters who join the march after drinking Pepsi. An Asian musician and a Muslim photographer are the first two. Kendall Jenner is the last of the three highlighted characters. Mid-photo shoot, she decides to join the march. She rids herself of her blonde wig and wipes off her makeup, embracing her natural features. She then not only participates in the march, she leads it. She walks up to a policeman and offers him a Pepsi. The policeman accepts the Pepsi, takes a sip, and the march ends (Kendall and Kylie, 2017).

In attempting to connect with minorities, Pepsi effectively tried to switch categories from Assimilable to Multicultural. In doing so, however, Pepsi failed to properly represent minorities. With Kendall Jenner as the main character in the advertisement, the focus again shifted back to the superficial celebrity idealization that characterizes most Pepsi advertisements. This downplayed the seriousness of the real-life protests, which was insulting to minority groups. In particular, many people connected it to the Black Lives Matter protests (Washington Post, 2017). Consumers who find themselves in the majority also couldn't connect to the advertisement. While they might want to identify with Kendall Jenner, the focus on these protests alienates them from the start.

In order to better make the transition from Assimilable to Multicultural, there are a few things Pepsi could have done. First of all, Pepsi should not have used a celebrity. The use of a celebrity took the focus away from the message and gave it a superficial tone. Kendall Jenner specifically was an interesting choice, since her career has been based off of modeling and reality TV. Had the celebrity been someone who was more relatable or – ideally – more connected to the cause, the message might have been taken more seriously. Additionally, the distribution of the advertisement could have been more strategic. Since the topic was so controversial, it could have been better off as an Identifier advertisement. Had the focus been on targeting specific groups, better attention would have been paid to the qualities that said groups look for when connecting with brands.

Coke, on the other hand, focuses its advertisements on the idea of being classic (Bhasin, 2012). Rather than focusing on people, Coke focuses on emotional attachment. Coke avoids using celebrities and instead showcases average, everyday Americans. They are shown in typical settings, with which the consumer can more easily identify. The consumer can effectively place

himself in the ad. By using more casual depictions, Coke also doesn't need to worry as much about misrepresenting hot topics.

One of Coke's most famous advertisements features people from all over the world, standing on the top of a hill in Italy (Andrews & Barbash, 2016). Singing in harmony, they proclaim, "I'd like to buy the world a Coke." The song was actually released as a radio jingle before the commercial was even made. Due to its immense popularity, Coke decided to create a commercial that reflected the sense of unity described by the song. The cast represents a myriad of cultures and countries. This simple yet profound message emphasized the fact that Coke was a product for everyone, no matter where they were from (Ryan, 2012).

Almost 20 years later, Coke returned to this sentimental and unifying message. The actors from the famous hilltop commercial were assembled once more on a hill, but with the addition of their children. This time, they sang, "Can't beat the feeling." Once more, Coke focused on inclusion. People from a diverse assortment of backgrounds were included (Throthelens, 2011). They were not simply included for the sake of checking boxes, however. They were included to exemplify the unity in Coke's message. Although Pepsi also attempted to showcase the unifying experience of drinking their product, Coke did so in a less controversial way. The overarching theme is harmony and peace in Coke's advertisements, whereas Pepsi starts with a tone of defiance before dramatically transitioning into a celebration.

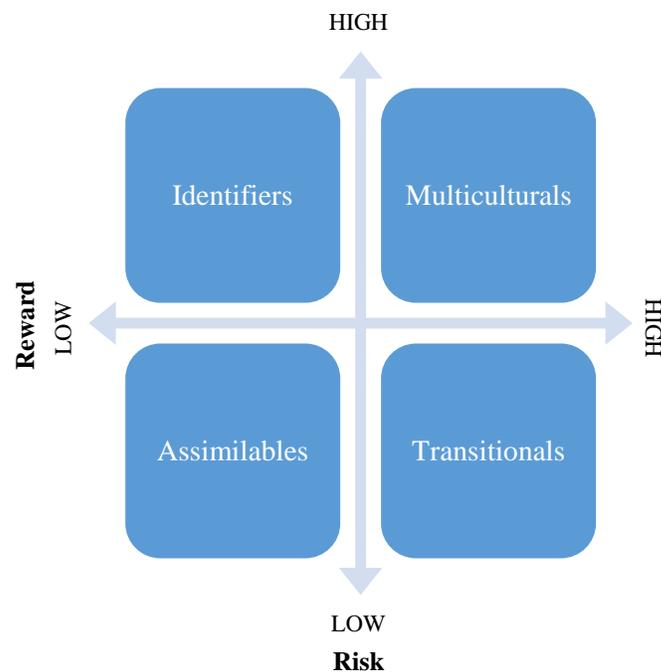
In recent Super Bowl commercials, Coke has continued its theme of unity and inclusion. In 2014, for example, its commercial was entitled "America the Beautiful." As previously mentioned, people representing a variety of American subcultures were featured over the course of a minute. Instead of attempting to make them seem similar, Coke focused on the distinctions between them. Different ethnic groups and geographic regions were shown to emphasize the

differences. Despite these differences, however, everyone was enjoying Coke (Vassar Drive Music, 2014). Whereas the hilltop commercials focused on bringing everyone together, this newer advertisement emphasizes the commonalities between groups without even having to be in close proximity with others.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

Due to the shifting demographics and values of American consumers, properly incorporating minority groups in advertising is essential to the success of companies moving forward. With each new campaign, it is important that these companies assess the risk level of producing an advertisement that heavily emphasizes subcultural values. In order to illustrate these risk levels, the subcultural categories can be evaluated using the following framework:



**Figure 3. Risk & Reward Framework**

If companies want to connect with subcultural consumers on a deep level, the focus should be on Identifiers. With a message solely directed at specific groups, accommodation levels can increase. In doing so, consumers form a stronger connection to the brand. This brand

loyalty could then translate to purchases or even lifelong consumers. On the other hand, it can pose a risk. It has to seem genuine and authentic, or else consumers will not take the advertisement seriously. They may even dislike the company because of superficial attempts. With that being said, since only one group is being targeted, a brand only runs the risk of being perceived as insincere by one group.

For a similarly high level of reward but additional risk, brands can pursue the Multicultural category. One of the initial hesitations a company might have is the social impact of such an advertisement. As referenced by Zmuda, brands are often slow to shift towards progressive representations of society because they do not wish to alienate any current consumers (2014). In a 2016 study conducted by the Harris Poll, only about half of consumers ages 45-54 preferred a multicultural cast, and the numbers decrease with older consumers (McCarthy, 2017). Just as with Identifier advertisements, various subcultural elements can be included in these advertisements. These allow for high potential accommodation levels, although in a less focused manner than in Identifier commercials. Because multiple groups are depicted, these advertisements can appeal to broader audiences. This increases the potential for in-group bias. The more groups shown, the more viewers are likely to identify with at least one of the characters, which combats the lack of representation felt by 25 percent of television viewers (Hulkower, 2017).

With that in mind, however, the company has more opportunities to misrepresent a group. Each additional subculture featured requires additional research to accurately portray. Whereas Identifier and even Transitional advertisements might use multicultural agencies to create campaigns, Multicultural commercials would be the job of general market agencies (Zmuda, 2014). These agencies would not necessarily be as equipped to represent the subcultural values

consumers consider most. In an attempt to avoid misrepresentation, advertisers might scale back subcultural components, which would shift the advertisement into the Assimilable category. By scaling back, however, it might seem disingenuous on the part of the brand. If the subcultures are portrayed as being mainstream, it may seem like a cheap effort to incorporate other cultures.

Assimilable advertisements have an equally broad reach, but they have lower reward levels among subcultural consumers. Just as with the Multicultural category, Assimilables have the potential for maximized in-group bias. People from various backgrounds can be incorporated into these commercials, allowing consumers to connect with different characters. Since there is minimal emphasis on differentiation between subcultures, however, accommodation levels are low. In an effort to portray mainstream values, these commercials avoid the risk of improperly portraying any subculture. The consumers who identify with these subcultures may feel disconnected, though. In an interview with eMarketer's Alison McCarthy, David Iudica explained that Hispanic consumers in particular "[are] looking for ads that are about relatable scenarios and authentic experiences vs. relatable faces" (McCarthy & Iudica, 2016). If brands do not reflect these ideals in their advertisements, they risk losing customer connections.

Finally, the Transitional category poses high potential risk with low reward levels. Increased emphasis on subcultural values creates greater potential for higher accommodation. If these subcultural elements are misrepresented, however, consumers will be very skeptical of the brand, in accordance with the polarized appraisal theory (Karande, 2005). Much in the same way that Identifier advertisements run a risk, Transitional advertisements need to carefully incorporate these elements. Unlike Identifier advertisements, however, there is decreased certainty in terms of potential reward. Because consumers targeted by Transitional advertisements do not identify entirely with mainstream culture or a subculture, there is less of a

guarantee that the featured elements will resonate with the consumers. While this is the riskiest category, it might have growing importance in the future years with the shifting demographics in the United States. Hispanics are one group expected to grow in the future, and they appreciate “empowering brand relationships” (McCarthy & Alcántara-Díaz, 2016). If brands can tap into what is important to these transitional consumers and find ways to “empower” them, there is certainly room for growth in this category.

### **Future Research**

In order to further this research, additional factors could be considered. Elements such as the generations or celebrities featured could shed light on the importance of characters to the commercial’s categorization. Another potential element could be brand heritage. As referenced by Natalie Zmuda, niche brands are able to shift into multicultural marketing because of their respective target segments (Zmuda). Is it possible that newer brands, whose target audience may be more flexible, will more easily make the transition into multicultural marketing?

Another potential consideration for future research would be alternative platforms. Although this study focused on video advertisements, research on social media could be especially useful in the coming years. Based on consumer responses and brand interactions, data could be collected to more numerically assess the impact of different tactics.

Additional research could focus on an in-depth financial analysis of these decisions. This will include tracking the performance of a company’s stock prior to, during, and after the release of a campaign incorporating subcultural elements. In order to legitimize the conclusions, financial analyses will need to be run for industry competitors.

Finally, this could be analyzed on a global scale. Since the treatment of minorities varies from country to country, this research will likely need to be conducted in conjunction with historical and sociological studies.

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# GRACE A. DESJARDINS

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## EDUCATION

<b>The Pennsylvania State University</b> Schreyer Honors College, Smeal College of Business, Sapphire Leadership Academic Program Bachelor of Science in Marketing with Minors in International Business & Psychology	University Park, PA <i>Class of May 2018</i>
<b>International Studies Institute</b> Smeal College of Business Program: Florence, the World of Business and Culture	Florence, Italy <i>May-June 2015</i>

## WORK EXPERIENCE

<b>Comcast Corporation</b> <i>Multicultural Marketing Intern</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Compiled information from various groups for the Internet Protocol Tiers of Service Marketing Playbook</li><li>Analyzed 3 second quarter campaigns for the South Asian, Filipino, and Brazilian market segments</li><li>Devised a campaign for the Hispanic segment to encourage them to experience the World Cup on X1</li><li>Selected as a member of the 6-person Spring/Summer Co-op &amp; Intern Digital Yearbook Committee</li></ul>	Philadelphia, PA <i>June-August 2017</i>
<b>The Vanguard Group</b> <i>College to Corporate Service Recovery Intern</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Created a 46-page internal marketing plan for the Service Recovery department, which outlined various events, appropriate timelines, and necessary correspondence</li><li>Updated the Service Recovery SharePoint site, allowing for easier and more efficient navigation</li></ul>	Malvern, PA <i>June-August 2016</i>
<b>Penn State Athletics</b> <i>Recruitment Volunteer</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assisted Penn State Football as a tour guide during home games and additional spring practices</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Apr. 2016-Sept. 2017</i>

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

<b>Penn State Prime</b> <i>President (2017), Vice President &amp; Teaching Assistant (2016), Co-Founder &amp; Secretary (2015)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Co-created an organization that provides students with hands-on marketing projects to enhance their skills in media, branding, and marketing analytics through weekly tutorials in the fall semester</li><li>Contact companies via emails and conference calls to establish connections for projects and sessions</li><li>Plan a spring semester advertising and branding practicum for members to further enhance their skills</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Jan. 2015-Present</i>
<b>Penn State Dance Marathon (THON)</b> <i>Hospitality Captain: Family Meals</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Solicit food donations for THON events and holiday Family Baskets with a focus on Family Meals</li><li>Train a team of 26 committee members with a co-captain to prepare them for THON Weekend</li></ul> <i>Family Relations Captain: Athletics/PR Liaison</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Collaborated with Penn State Athletics to plan activities for students and families at 8 athletic events</li><li>Facilitated Four Diamonds families' interactions with media outlets leading up to and during THON</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Sept. 2017-Present</i>
<i>THON 2016 Captain</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Led a team of general members and 8 chairs in fundraising, family relations, donor relations, and morale</li><li>Exceeded fundraising goal of \$15,000 despite restrictions and budget cuts, raising a total of \$15,956.92</li><li>Danced for all 46 hours of THON in an effort to raise money and awareness for pediatric cancer</li></ul> <i>THON 2015 Special Events Co-Chair</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Led fundraising efforts at meetings and through numerous events, raising a total of \$19,279.31</li><li>Coordinated plans biweekly for events on a team of 7 other chairs and fellow Sapphire Ambassadors</li></ul>	<i>Sept. 2016-May 2017</i>  <i>Feb. 2015-Feb. 2016</i>  <i>Sept. 2014-Feb. 2015</i>
<b>Penn State Lion Scouts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Volunteer to market Penn State through tours, student panels, and additional outreach programs weekly</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Oct. 2015-Present</i>
<b>Project Haiti</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fundraise for the organization's partners in Haiti and travel for a week-long service trip to Haiti</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Sept. 2017-Present</i>
<b>Catholic Campus Ministry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enhance public speaking skills while serving monthly as a lector for the 9:00 p.m. Mass</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Sept. 2014-Present</i>
<b>The Daily Collegian</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wrote articles and web updates for Campus beat on a weekly basis, with a primary focus on Greek life</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Sept. 2014-May 2015</i>
<b>National Merit Aon Corporation Scholarship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Scored approximately in the top 1% on the national PSAT/NMSQT in high school</li></ul>	Villanova, PA <i>Fall 2014-Present</i>
<b>Glick Sapphire Honors Scholarship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awarded to business students in the Schreyer Honors College and Sapphire Leadership Academic Program</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Fall 2017-Present</i>
<b>Sam Wherry Honors Scholarship in the Smeal College of Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awarded for strong academic performance as a business school student</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Fall 2016-Present</i>
<b>PwC Case Competition: 1<sup>st</sup> Place</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contributed to a 5-person team to problem solve an international tax liability case for a tech company</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Oct.20-Nov.3, 2015</i>
<b>The President's Freshman Award</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Received the honor for earning a 4.00 cumulative grade-point average</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Mar. 2015</i>
<b>Deloitte Case Competition: 2<sup>nd</sup> Place</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Collaborated on a market share case with a 4-person freshman team competing against upperclassmen</li></ul>	University Park, PA <i>Feb.4-6, 2015</i>