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In the Footsteps of American Marketing: Cigarette Television Advertising and Finnish Post-War Americanization

This article looks at Finnish and American television advertising from the mid-1950s to the end of the 1960s in the light of Americanization. This media and social historical study analyses cigarette commercials as an example of American influences in Finnish post-war television advertising, and looks at the similarities and differences between the pioneering model and its rapidly developing follower.

Americanism and the spread of television were two of the most important phenomena in post-war Europe, and they were integrally linked together. As a medium television was (and is) well suited for the circulation of the American image and, together with advertising, it became an effective vehicle for transferring American consumption-centered models to non-Americans. In Europe Finland was one of the pioneers of commercial television and the distribution of American ideals.

During the 1960s, the most important influences for Finnish advertising came from America: American marketing ideas and Americanism as a referent system for advertising could clearly be seen in Finnish television commercials. Thus, although Finland was the only western country participating in the Second World War, which did not receive the post-war Marshall Aid package, I argue that Finland received instead "the

Marshall Aid of ideas". These ideas are perhaps best depicted in cigarette advertisements.

Anna Byckling

Selling with landscape Test drillings to the nature rhetoric in advertisements

During the last few decades, nature has become an interest to social and cultural sciences. The politics of nature have since the 1960s been discussed in philosophy and sociology as well as in law and popular culture. This article draws an outline of the social and cultural research on nature and presents ecocriticism, a still marginal but interesting ecocentric critical cultural approach.

Ecocriticism, or green studies, began in the USA in the late 1980s and in the early 1990s in the UK. The approach varies slightly between the continents, but is prominently a political, environmentally oriented mode of analysis. Ecocritics maintain that ecological problems are not only problems in ecology but also features of our society, and thus subject to cultural analysis. Ecocritical reading is interested in the ways nature and environment are represented and talked about, ie. in the rhetoric on nature.

In this article, ecocritical viewpoints are projected on two Finnish advertisements. Advertising is nowadays widely researched and its promotional representations analysed. However, representations of the environment and nature have mainly been viewed as a background. Ecocriticism can serve as a way of bringing

landscapes to the front and casting light on the ideas of nature in our culture.

Nature cannot be treated as a fixed creature independent of social and cultural phenomena. What we see as nature and natural is cultural, a product of social practice and discourse. This makes the values connected to nature historically specific, and also strongly symbolic and metaphorical. Thus, analysing the rhetoric of nature in advertising can serve to examine the culture we live in.

Liina Puustinen

"The Most Desirable Target Group" Advertising Professionals Talking about Gender and Age

Since the beginning of the modern era consumption has been regarded as feminine practice, and therefore women in particular have been seen as an important target group for advertisements. Even today advertisers and advertising agency workers say that the most desirable target group of the market is "women of 25-44". On the other hand it is argued that gender and age are losing their significance in the context of consumerism.

In this article I present discursive categories of the ideal consumer group on the basis of 23 interviews with Finnish advertising professionals. They describe women of 25-44 either as housewives or urban trendsetters. Younger women are seen as more receptive to advertisements than the older generations. The interviewees

talk about the idealization of youth in our culture and note that there is a general assumption of everyone wanting to be forever young. Therefore it is assumed that this young target group works as a model for older consumers, and consequently the young target group actually represents the product.

The qualitative data in this research is small, but it gives a snapshot of the process of constructing gender and age in advertising practices. Nowadays men are also considered as consumers, but women are represented as the principal consumers. This empowers the female sex on one hand, but on the other the hierarchy of consumption decisions continues to be gendered: women are held responsible for small daily shopping whereas men decide the bigger purchases (such as cars). I maintain that the categories of age and gender are in a process of being reconstructed and modified, but they are continuously used as significant markers of social difference and segregation in consumerist discourses.