

IDEAS IN PROGRESS

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**DECODING
ADVERTISEMENTS**

Ideology and Meaning
in Advertising

LONDON

Marion Boyars

NEW YORK

L-S: the cultural frame

Culture represents itself
in a shape to nature - to focus
of what it has changed

CHAPTER FOUR 'COOKING' NATURE

Nature is the primary referent of a culture. It is the 'raw material' of our environment, both the root of all technological development and its opposition; that which technology strives both to improve and to overcome. If a culture is to refer to itself, therefore, it can only do so by the representation of its transformation of nature—it has meaning in terms of what it has *changed*. In the first part of this chapter I discuss some advertisements which refer to this change itself, its process, by giving 'natural' objects cultural forms. I shall then go on to examine images of 'science', including their place in human relations, at which point it will become clear that the scientific image feeds back into an image of nature itself: 'The Natural' (cf. Chapter 5).

(a) 'The Raw and the Cooked': Representations of Transformation

Lévi-Strauss describes the cultural transformation of natural objects as a process of 'cooking': society requires food to be cooked and not raw for it to be acceptable. In cooking, nature, in the form of raw material (e.g. meat) enters a complex system whereby it is differentiated culturally (for example it may be roasted or grilled). In just the same way, images of nature are 'cooked' in culture so that they may be used as part of a symbolic system. In the ads that follow, both sides of the 'cooking' process are presented *simultaneously within the product*, so that it carries the *charge* of the transformation itself: natural, 'raw' things are shown in the terms of the product—like the orange that has been formed into the outline of a marmalade jar (A60).

A60



There's nothing quite like an Olde English breakfast. CHIVERS

There is an advertisement poster for Heinz mushroom soup which shows a mushroom whose stalk is a tin of soup. Here, the cultural artifact, the *tin*, has appropriated the raw mushroom, and *stands for it* in that it represents the mushroom stalk—it has 'taken over' the natural object. Yet the cap of a real mushroom, pictured on top of the 'tin-stalk', ensures that we retain an image of *what has been transformed*, thus defining the extent of the process in indicating both its source and its result.

The image of manufacture is very apparent in all the examples to follow: lids, screw-tops and bottles are given to natural objects, demonstrating the value of 'cooking', improving nature, lending it their seal of approval only in this technologised form. In the next chapter, the reverse will be described. Once nature has been drawn into culture it is given a meaning: one that can be transferred to products. In this sense, nature has been transformed into 'the Natural'. It can become a symbol once it has been 'cooked': because 'science' introduces it into a system of differentiations, giving it an order and cultural place which enable it to 'mean'. However, here 'raw' nature *means* precisely

raw nature (slight modifier) signs of manufacture)
becomes a symbol of what culture has transformed

because it is a symbol of what culture has transformed: the Sanatogen vitamin pill ad in this section, for example, (A64), shows how messy orange peel is compared with the clean bottle that contains 'cooked' vitamin C. Yet at the same time, even here we have a slight suggestion of 'the natural' in that the raw element, since it *has been* safely transformed, also has the function of giving the cultural product a 'natural' status, so that the supposed *quality* of the 'natural' is retained, but not its *form*. This is obviously a false distinction, yet it arises from the fact that the whole of society's relationship with 'nature' is very much one of having cake and eating it.

The two sides of this relationship, the systems of connotation described above, are perpetually slipping backwards and forwards into each other, but here we are primarily concerned with the referent system as the 'cooking' process, not as 'nature' itself. 'Nature' has simply become a referent of a 'cooking' society: it has meaning in terms of its relationship with what has transformed it, but is not valued in itself. Thus the 'raw', the natural object, becomes in this context a symbol, not of nature, but, ironically and in alienation from its original place, of the culture that has worked it over.

Not so 'simple' -
- nature is valued
- cooking is valued
- manufacturer's (and) also eggs
to appear more 'natural'
- more 'natural'
- more 'natural'

A61: 'What nature did for eggs, McCain have done for chips'. Raw nature, the potato, is 'cooked' by being transformed into frozen, ready-made french fries: in fact they have been so 'cooked' by the manufacturing process itself, that you hardly need to do it yourself: 'Because they're almost fully cooked by McCain they take only a few minutes to fry'. You are thus saved any direct contact with the raw object—that the cooking should be so thoroughly performed by the manufacturers provides a literal example of the idea that I have been using metaphorically to apply to all cultural transformation. However, this ad, besides being an ad for a cooked product, the chips, relies on the system of the cooking process for its referent; on several different levels, which feed into one another. The image of the chips coming out of the potato shell is a simultaneous representation of the 'raw' and the 'cooked', the two ends of the process. The potato reminds us how different potatoes and chips are, how annoying potatoes are to clean and peel; in seeing the difference between the two we become aware of all that must be done to turn one into the other—cutting up and frying. All this gives chips a superior status since they are the result of this process, they eliminate it for us. But the whole process is turned back to front temporally, while not detracting from this superior status of the chips: they are, in addition, given an *anterior* status, by coming out of the potato, they were there 'already' inside it. Potatoes are full of chips—this picture shows that potatoes are *made* of chips, not chips of potatoes. So the product gains status in two completely different ways, which are actually contradictory, or rather, work in opposite directions

A6

What nature did for eggs..

McCain have done for chips

First consider the egg:

1. Eggs come in their own single, easy to open pack.
2. They're good value for money.
3. There's no waste.
4. They take only a few minutes to fry.
5. They have a perfectly natural, wholesome, homemade taste.
6. They're consistently the same shape and quality.
7. They go well with chips.

Now consider McCain Frozen French Fries:

1. They come in their own single, easy to open pack.
2. They're good value for money.
3. There's no waste.
4. Because they're almost fully cooked by McCain they take only a few minutes to fry.
5. They're crisp golden outside and light fluffy inside so you get a perfectly natural, wholesome, homemade taste.
6. They're consistently the same shape and quality.
7. They go well with eggs.

around the raw/cooked axis: chips are both connected with, and simultaneously distanced from, potatoes. The distance is filled by the cooking process (it is the referent of the potato/chip gap, as it were) and the contingency gives this process a 'guarantee' of 'natural' order.

This advertisement does not do all this 'unconsciously', however: it actually provides a parallel to its own image, in the image of the egg and egg shell. McCain is doing what nature has already done to eggs: so it is copying nature, but of course, copying it to *improve* on it. And the egg is described in manufacturing terms; *not* manufacturing, in natural-egg terms. 'Eggs come in their own simple, easy-to-open pack . . . they have a perfectly natural, wholesome, homemade taste.' So this ad still very much depends on the image of *cooking* as its referent, as a criterion for efficiency and desirability: to extol the virtues of the egg, we must say that it is easy-to-open and tastes 'homemade'—for these cultural terms are indications of goodness, value.

The advertisement rounds off by connecting the two 'cookings'—the actual 'cooking' of the raw potato into the chips, and of the raw idea of the egg into a cultural way of looking at it: by suggesting that you literally cook the two together and have egg and chips. This ties the McCain-cooked chips and the technically described 'cooked' egg in a way that allows them to exchange values, so that the naturalness of the egg (after all, *nature* 'packed' it) and its culturally defined convenience, attach to the chips, where a manufacturing-cooking has slipped in between the simultaneous qualities (rawness and convenience) of the egg, transforming the former into the latter. Finally, in that McCain foods are 'Europe's largest processor of frozen potato products', they are endowed with some of the omnipotence and ubiquity of 'nature': the 'size' of the manufacturing company makes it technologically impressive and its work effortless, almost 'natural'.

eggs described culturally

A61

gs...

hips

h Finest

pack

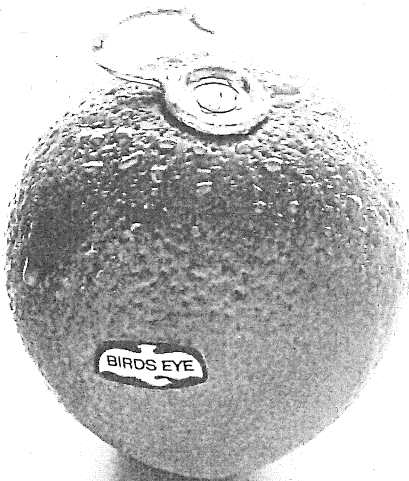
on they

then give

is more

try

A62



Birds Eye Florida Orange Juice tastes of pure, whole oranges. Because that's exactly what it is.

It's because the pure orange juice...
Birds Eye Florida Orange Juice...
Each glass is thick with oranges...
Birds Eye Florida Orange Juice...
We take out the natural...
and that can be seen...
the surface of the...
and get to taste...
Each glass is thick with oranges...
that of nature...
the best orange juice...
because that's exactly what it is.

A62: Here again, the *image* of nature is actually 'cooked'—the orange may be showing that Florida Orange juice is made from oranges, but it does not do this by presenting a 'raw' orange. In giving the orange the features of the product (can top, label) it emphasises the 'cooking' that has transformed the orange into the can of juice. When the small print says that 'each glassful is thick with oranges' it is obviously referring to oranges as a 'cooked' term, in their transformed and symbolic form—because a glass could hardly be thick with real, untouched oranges. It is thick with Florida-ised oranges, in other words, canned juice. The label on the orange in the picture shows that the manufacturers have appropriated the reality of the 'natural' orange, even though it is allowed to retain its shape (not like the Chivers ad A60): the orange is only allowed to signify as a Birds Eye can, it can only mean *as cooked*, and what it *means* is that it has been cooked. It shows us what Birds Eye can *do* with oranges, not what oranges are like in themselves. The orange is made to signify the product literally, in the picture, rather than the product signifying the orange. This illustrates how the signified orange becomes a signifier in its 'cookedness': thus 'cooking' is the *system* referred to, and the orange hollows out an empty place in it, in which the product may be inserted.

* Summary of J.W.'s central argument

A63: This shows the 'cooking' of the sun. 'Sunshimmer' imitates the sun, in that it tans you, but it compensates for all the sun's inadequacies: it tans you evenly, unlike the sun, moisturises your skin, unlike the sun, and above all, is *available*, unlike the sun: 'Some days the sun doesn't even come out. But Sunshimmer comes out anytime you squeeze the neat, little tube.'

As in the previous examples, we thus see that the natural thing, the sun, is used as a referent for what Coty has *improved*: it is the *difference* between Sunshimmer and the sun, that is the chief selling point of the ad. In a 'neat, little tube' you can buy 'cooked' sunshine; the whole advertisement is an exposition of the *gulf* between the 'real thing' and Coty's product. Yet Coty is presented as the real thing: with a little help from Coty, the sun '*really*' shines. The advert has taken the reality of nature, scooped out its actual content (i.e. the real sun) and placed the product there, so that it *means* in terms of a certain system, it appropriates the *place* of the sun, while filling this place with a transformed content, a tube of fake tan. The advertisement draws attention to the difference between the two actual objects, the sun and the tanning gel—showing (as with the chip ad) how much more convenient the gel is—but an exchange is made whereby the transformed object, the product, which is the 'cooked' version of the sun, is given significance in *terms* of the sun; in a 'referent system' that endows the sun, and hence the product, with the connoted meanings of 'naturalness', 'health', 'beauty', 'perfection' and so on.

Thus a system-of-meanings, a referent system, is used in its entirety to give significance to the product. And since the product cannot have a place in a pre-existing system, its link with the referent system is provided by an intermediary object, that both belongs within the system, and is also tied to the product. This was the thesis set out in Chapter 1, and I have demonstrated how the link between the product and correlating object can be made by colour, by formal arrangement, by a linguistic connection like a pun, by replacing one for the other in a narrative, and so on. Here (A63), the basic process of exchange remains the same, but the product and the object are linked by the fact that the product is actually a *version* of the object: it is the technologically 'cooked' model of a natural phenomenon. Catherine Deneuve was linked to the Chanel bottle by a simple juxtaposition: the bottle then took Catherine Deneuve's place in a differentiating system, a system of meanings. It is in this sense that I refer to the place in the referent system as a 'hollow', since it is referred to by the presence of one of its elements, simultaneously with the exchange between that element and the product, so that the product ends up filling that place—a *position*, merely. With Coty and the sun, the transference is blurred because not only does Coty replace the sun 'semiologically', that is, in the sense I have just described of

Even the sun can use a little help.

The night, you know, the sun doesn't come out. But Sunshimmer comes out anytime you squeeze the neat, little tube. And above all, is available, unlike the sun: 'Some days the sun doesn't even come out. But Sunshimmer comes out anytime you squeeze the neat, little tube.' The sun, with a little help from Sunshimmer, really shines.

Sunshimmer by Coty



A63

exchange along the axis of a *form* of knowledge—it replaces it literally, in terms of *content*. It even retains the original in its name—'Sunshimmer'. There are thus two links between the element from the referent system, and the product: one, is that the product is equated with the sun, the element of the system, by being put in exactly its place as regards connotation; the other link is the opposite since the product gains meaning by being different from the sun, *not* being it, by-passing its inadequacies. Nature thus participates in both a symbolic and an imaginary system—given meaning by being drawn in to a system of differentiation created by culture, being significant by its very opposition with culture, but in being given a symbolic status by this, it merges on an imaginary level with that 'other' that was used to give it symbolic status. The ideology of culture appropriates all the network of images and connotations, the structure of significance, of nature; but devoid of its real content.

All the advertisements in this section show this very clearly. The product (the equivalent of the Chanel bottle, to keep referring back to my 'paradigm' example of A8) and the correlative object from the referent system, are merged, present simultaneously in one image: the orange *and* the Florida can of juice, the orange *and* the Chivers marmalade jar, the chips *and* the potato—these are elided, because the 'cooking' process performs the function illustrated in other ways under the heading of 'objective correlatives'. The product takes on simultaneously the properties of *orangeness* and *non-orangeness* (A62), sun-ness and non-sun-ness (A63). It is essential to recognise the contradiction here: not for the sake of making a semiological point alone, but because this contradiction embedded in the sign itself, inherent in the signifying process, is the contradiction in the very relationship between nature and culture, as seen (ideology) and represented (sign systems) by our society.

The categories of imaginary and symbolic have a precise value here as areas both of which are fundamental to human 'consciousness', yet irreconcilable: constantly attempting to merge and yet in their inability completely to do so, providing a perpetual momentum in the form of desire, along which the subject is carried to regions purporting to fulfil such desire. These categories need not remain entirely the property of psychoanalysis, and their ideological meaning and function must be very clearly defined. The so-called 'unconscious' denies many of the contradictions in ideology, since the Symbolic, the creation of meaning, depends on an A/not A dichotomy, while Freud said that the imagination does not know the word 'no'.

product: both
nature (orange)
and not-nature (non-orange)

parallel difference b/w
nature / culture

is seen (ideology)
and represented (sign systems)

A63

If we apply this to 'nature' and 'cooked nature', in the light of the examples above, A60 to A63, it becomes clear that the 'cooking' process is one of differentiation, of entry into the symbolic, but in these ads is simultaneously placed in such a way as to suggest an imaginary *unity* of the two 'ends' of the process, the 'raw' and the 'cooked'. McCain's chips are an immense improvement on ordinary potatoes, but they *are* potatoes, and moreover, this improvement has simply been carried out in imitation of Mother Nature's own idea, as manifested in the egg and eggshell. Technology is always using nature's 'ideas' (this can be seen also in the eyeshadow ad A78, in Chapter 5 below). Everything done by society is *always already there*: it is ratified by Nature (the primary system of Order—although of course, it is invested with this Order by science, a cultural practice)—this is how *ideology* conceals the transformations of which it also boasts, but deprives of origins—of a place in a historical process.

So, 'cooking' is the way in which we transform nature, but the products of the transformation are reinserted in the place of their object. This second part of the circular process will be examined in more detail in Chapter 5. However, the first part, the 'cooking', as represented in the ads in this section, functions as a sign, in the way described above: by referring to the 'natural' system, while also defining itself *against* it, differentiating the product from the natural object. This differentiation and the fact that the replacement or exchange which is always the essential generator of meaning in an ad, must be made *between these differentiated things*, whose material content if *different*, means that it is only a *form* of knowledge, emptied of content, that is ultimately referred to by the ad. Coty fake tan is *not* the sun. But the ad generates *connotative* meaning for the product in terms of a system of knowledge *about* the sun, its qualities, its 'place' in 'nature' etc.; and in filling this place yet denying its original content, it is clear that only a hollow structure, an ideal or imaginary *system*, is used. Our knowledge is denied all material content because on the level of *denotation* Coty is not *like* the sun, but *unlike* the sun. We do not make an exchange which involves a real concrete element of our knowledge and experience; only the *form* of this knowledge is appropriated—so real things and our knowledge of them, are constantly being both assumed and denied. We feel as if we know, because we certainly know the things about the sun that the Coty ad refers to and uses as a framework for its product: yet *what* we know is actually negated by the replacement of Coty for the sun. In other words the connotation and denotation work in opposition: Coty is denoted as *not* sun but connoted as *like* sun. The

to label a product a
'natural' is to
conceal the transformation
and to make it historical
(always already there)

Connotation
Denotation

sun, or an orange, or a potato, are as it were *shells* of signs: there is nothing *in* them (except tans, juice, and chips—literally, in A61) since they are hollowed out and the product inserted as the 'reality' that fills their inherent vacancy as symbols.

This is all part of the argument of the last chapter, where I suggested that in ads real things are constituted as symbols, forming a system of 'pure' meaning that can never be brought down to the ground and connected to the materiality of life, precisely because the symbols are stolen from that materiality, and also refer to it—they are its *meaning*: this amounts to a tautology of 'it is what it means, and it means what it is', but one which takes place through circuits of signifying systems (of which advertisements are only one example) whose materiality (hence the importance of the signifier, the *material* carrier of meaning) guarantees this tautology a solidity, an inevitable 'realness' since it is a 'meaning' found through 'real' things. (Cf/ Chapter 3: the hermeneutic discovery of meaning 'behind' reality.)

Nature is absolutely fundamental to all this because it is the hunting ground for symbols, the raw material of which they are all made. But as nature is ransacked for symbols, it is, of course, transformed. I have stressed the fact that in the ads of this chapter the *images* are 'cooked', the *referent itself* is 'cooking' nature. We are never shown a 'raw', whole and untouched natural object: even the potato which appears in A61 has fancy-cut jagged edges and is unnaturally hollowed out, filled with chips: a perfect illustration of the metaphor I have used for this signifying process, where the natural thing signifies only as an empty form, to be filled by the product. The orange becomes a symbol only with a label and can top on it: or with a label and the shape of a jar. This shows precisely that symbols involve differentiation, are a differentiation; since the orange, the potato do not mean anything by themselves, they only mean when brought into a contrast: here between nature and culture; *both of which* are represented in the image of the product itself.

A64: This Vitamin C ad plays strongly on the 'raw and cooked' idea; the 'cooked' form of Vitamin C needs no peeling, like the 'raw' orange skin shown. The vitamin is, paradoxically, more available—you don't have to peel it, wash it, or cook it... it's never out of season or expensive or difficult to get'; one obtains it 'as easily as opening a bottle'; while it is, at the same time, more remote, removed from us physically, inside the glass of the bottle and the screw-top lid and the cardboard

symbols robbed
of materiality
mean only what
products mean them to be

nature as the
hunting ground for
symbols

process appropriating form w/o content

manufacture symbols + products from undifferentiated nature then substitute symbols + products for nature

packaging. You cannot hold or touch these pills, as you would an orange. The only feature of our relationship to the natural object retained is that of consumption, the only function of a product. There is no other point of contact with the manufactured vitamin: you touch the bottle, the box. Mechanisation and packaging enclose nature, attempt to bring it under control, and at the same time remove it from us completely while seeming to bring it closer, 'more available'. We are denied actual contact with natural objects: again, the shell, the orange peel is the sign: an empty signification to be filled by Sanatogen, which is exchanged with the substance of the orange.

The process of reaching the 'Natural' goodness, through the product, instantly ('as easily as opening a bottle of Sanatogen') and the microcosmic nature of the pill, the streamlined version of nature, a force encapsulated only to be re-released, lead to the idea of magic, in Chapter 6. Magic is the process of undoing the 'cooking' and condensing of nature shown in this chapter (cf. such products as 'WonderMash' where the magic and wonder are in the release, the retransformation of potato powder into potatoes—*instantly*).

The 'cooking' process in representation, then, is one of appropriating form without content; of manufacturing symbols and products simultaneously out of the raw, meaningless and undifferentiated mass which is nature, and then substituting these symbols and these products for nature. The products symbolise both nature and anti-nature, embodying the inherent tension of a society which both ravages the natural world and violates natural human needs, yet seeks to represent its workings as natural, hence inviolable.

(b) Science

... the scientist never carries on a dialogue with nature pure and simple but rather with a particular relationship between nature and culture definable in terms of his particular period and civilisation and the material means at his disposal.¹

'The raw and the cooked' showed how society's conception of its relationship with nature produces certain images of transformation in which the tensions of this relationship are held in a perpetual dialectic. 'Science', at once the most prestigious and, as we shall see, the most transparent of society's 'cooking' processes, produces and justifies these images, and is also conditioned by them, as the image of 'science' first defines, and then supersedes, the image of 'nature'. 'Science' can really only be defined in relation to nature: which is its object; yet as

¹Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, p. 19.

= tensions

the second section on 'science' will show, science can take on the nature of a referent system in itself—endowed with a mysticism which equals that of the 'Romantic' vision of 'Nature', and an authority which partakes of the inevitability of Nature. As with the chips and the potato, or the fake tan and the sun, it acquires some of the connotative qualities of what it replaces, while seeking to define by contrast precisely that which it replaces: 'The Natural'.

As Science investigates the world, it defines (thus differentiates) 'The Natural' constantly and necessarily, since 'The Natural' is the object for science's subject, for the 'knowing entity' which science appears to be. A science, it has been suggested,¹ should be 'subjectless', yet in our society Science is one big subject, a sort of 'meta-subject' whose knowledge is somehow far greater than that of all the particular people in whose heads this knowledge exists, put together: it is a kind of giant brain which *already knows*, into which actual 'scientists' can only feed in hope of a glimpse of this wonderful bulk of metaphysical knowledge. Clearly I would not wish to deny the possibility of a science in any field nor to underestimate the value of real scientific research; but I am here talking about the image of science, its ideology—which means the distorted representation of our relationship with something that may very well be real and valid, only we are misplaced in relation to it, with science one might say displaced, completely. For 'Science' is never *our* knowledge, indeed, is never anyone's knowledge: yet it is not truly subjectless because instead of being simply *a science*, it is Science—it has a proper name, almost a character. It is spoken about as having achieved things and discovered things, as owning knowledge which, as I have said, no actual person is credited with knowing; it becomes a unified entity, rather than a practice.

I have emphasised the existence of 'Science' as an independent area because it will be shown as a referent system in my second section here, and as such its disembodied quality, an ethereal system of True Meaning, reintroduces the idea of hermeneutics, already shown to be a central part of ideology. But Science can never maintain for long this detachment which is, as it were, the turning point or apex of an elliptical curve around which it feeds into, and out of, nature and the natural, forever turning towards it and away from it, reworking nature *into* 'the natural'. Science comes at a central point in this inevitably rather blurred

¹Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*.

discussion of 'cooking' nature and returning to nature, because it is a product of culture that studies what is natural: it appropriates nature for culture by placing it within an order of things.

(b1) *Ordering Nature*

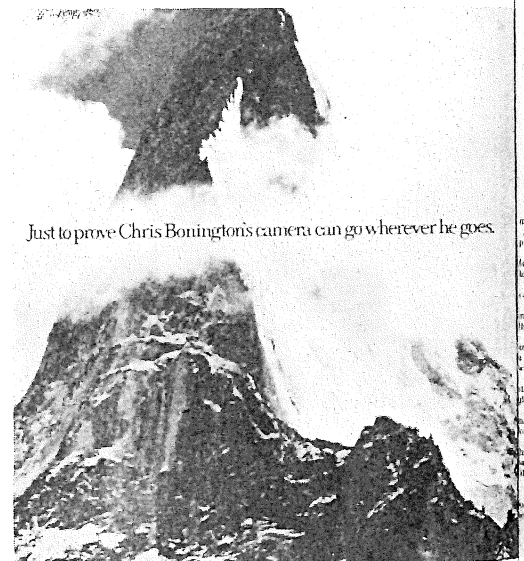
Just as in the last section, manufactured *forms* imposed an order on the *image* of nature (and this section was put first deliberately because, as Lévi-Strauss suggests above, the relationship expressed in these images is what *conditions* the 'content' of scientific research, rather than the other way round)—for example, the form of the marmalade jar on the slices of raw orange—just as this ordering of nature in images provides a way of formally controlling it, so the actual achievement, the 'content' of science, is seen as literally to control it, to capture, review, and reinterpret it. Of course, the physical ordering of nature and the production of images of order go hand in hand: to know is to classify, to classify to order, to order to overcome. The following three ads differ fundamentally, however, from those previously shown, since it is not so much the image in the ad giving meaning to the product, that involves controlling and improving nature: it is the product itself that provides an image by the fact that it actually does this in real life, is a scientific instrument that can defy nature, or at least claims to.

A65 (a) The Battle With Nature: Here the product of technology, the car, is shown as still *in nature*, engaged in combat with it. The machine can withstand and fend off the dangers of an extremely 'natural' environment, that is, one far removed from culture—in this case, the location is the North Pole. Nature appears as a referent connoting danger, isolation, destruction: the car provides safety, enclosure, and above all, a means of getting *out* of nature, away from it literally. 'Your car breaks down here, you're dead': in other words, you must be able to get away and drive back to 'civilisation', and the car provides a literal escape route from nature to culture, the technological means of getting from one to the other.

The verbal side of the ad emphasises the precision and durability of the product—words like 'stress bearing component' help, conveying rather a tone and general idea (i.e. connoting) than a precise message. ('He knows every stress bearing component and every casting is crack-tested and scrutinised.') There has to be (as in the next example too) the convincing detail of a *minor* fault ('the only problem he's had is a little trouble with the rear door lock'): this is the ultimate guarantee for the truth of the whole ad; clearly it conceals nothing. And that something

A65

Your car
breaks
down
here,
you're
dead.



Just to prove Chris Bonington's camera can go wherever he goes.

A66

More
mountain
Men
profession
to go
multimed
with a
New
camera
in a
light de
the star
You
and more
to go on
The
indiv
to see
If you
markab
search
What
to 22.5K
are the
oblique
The
Trio
Comp
with a

You probably wouldn't think of Peugeot straight away if you headed north to get about in the Arctic Circle.

But up here, life can depend on the car you drive. So you do not necessarily buy the first car you think of.

In a village, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Johan Fors runs a combined taxi and ambulance service.

The car he drives is a Peugeot 804. His fifth Peugeot.

When it does up to over 2,000 miles a year. And throughout the 12,500 miles he's covered in his present Peugeot, the only problem he's had is a little trouble with the rear door lock.

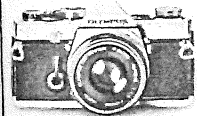
He knows he's already can give you a 100% guarantee against a car breaking down. But he's learnt from experience.

He knows every Peugeot engine is test run before being installed in the car. Likewise the gearbox.

He knows every stress-bearing component and every casting is crack tested and scrutinised. And he knows we make each and every car with a degree of care and attention that amounts almost to obsession. (In fact, we have twice as many quality control inspectors as most other manufacturers.)

That's why Johan drives a Peugeot. After all, the Arctic Circle is no place to break down on a cold night. Nor is the AI.

PEUGEOT
The better built, more reliable car.



It shod up very reasonably to absolute high-altitude conditions. One or two faults did develop - for example, a bit of dirt got into the window - but you'd get this with any camera. At the end of the trip, all the equipment was still working.

I took seven images, all of which gave excellent results. In particular, I thought the standard and zoom lenses were first class.

Probably the most unique scene that was the meter, which went on working far below the minimum temperature claimed by the manufacturer. In normal conditions, it was remarkably consistent, although as with all but a very few meters, you had to use a bit of judgement above the operating limits. I've never had such a consistently exposed set of transparencies.

It's a very nice, nice camera. Like it. I'm going to take it on my next expedition?

If you'd like to find out more about it, send the coupon to David Williams.

To find out more about the Olympus OMI, please call 020 2792 1234. Or write to Olympus UK, Dept. Newsletters, 1000 Longwalk Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, U.K.

Name: _____
Address: _____

Olympus OMI
from David Williams

can go wrong (though not with the stress bearing components, of course) serves to give us a surreptitious reminder that this is a dangerous situation, serious business: this is For Real. The terse caption, with its grammatical insufficiency (lacking the 'if') adds to the sense that this is all very basic, nitty-gritty: down to the bare bones of nature and of sentence structure, as it were.

So technology overcomes the raw and provides safe transport from its uncooked dangers; although here we see the product before it has escaped from nature, placed within the referent system from which, by opposition, it derives its image of safety and control. (For a further analysis of this placement in nature, see A65 (b), page 130.)

From an example where the product is situated in nature, we move to one where nature becomes located in the product.

A66 (a) Capturing Nature: While in A65 the car was still there in the landscape, here the landscape is captured in the camera—which has provided the picture photo for the ad. This photo represents the experience of the struggle with nature, but also draws attention to the fact that the photographer has come back, and is no longer engaged in that struggle, but is able to represent it in its absence. Chris Bonington has to bring back 'faultless transparencies'—technological transparencies through which we can perceive nature—but at a safe distance.

That the photograph in the ad is the one produced by the camera is shown conclusively by the fact that the camera and Chris Bonington are not in the picture, but the camera is pictured separately, in the area of the words—the conveyors of truth, camera and language, share the right hand half of the double page lay-out: the camera coming first, since it is what has told us—pictorially—about the mountain, and then the words, which tell us in turn about the camera. The coupon at the end of the ad, in the bottom right hand corner, is a sign of available information, of our further access to truth and scientific knowledge. There are thus three grids through which the perception of nature must pass, a triply removed lens: the camera, which describes the mountain, the words which describe the camera, and the space for us to enter the whole process for ourselves, via the canonical persona of 'David Williams'. Nature is captured and interpreted by subjects: Chris and David, these two friendly people who offer us a frame in which we may insert nature, too.

Apart from the crucial development of having captured nature and returned home with it, rather than being pictured as still within it, this ad works in a similar way to the Peugeot one. There is a whole genre of camera, wristwatch, and suchlike, adverts that has developed: the 'I took it to the North Pole/up a mountain/fifty degrees below zero/smashed it on a rock/dropped it in the sea' kind of story. The emphasis is always on the instrument's precision in measuring (light meters, watches, thermometers etc.) or otherwise ordering nature (the photograph imposes the order of a frame), and on its endurance in

withstanding nature, overcoming the most extreme natural conditions. (Of course, these conditions never affect 99 per cent of us. Hence the unreality of this 'For Real' ness: cf Chapter 5, A65 (b), and A66 (b).) The camera in this ad is shown to be impervious to nature—it gets 'knocked against rocks' and, we are told, 'mountains are not good places for cameras'. But transparencies are good places for mountains. The camera can reproduce nature, on a page instead of in the freezing cold outside. However, as has been shown in previous examples, a bit of the mountain does rub off onto the camera—literally: 'one or two faults did develop (the validating detail)—for example, *a bit of grit got into the works...*' Of course it did: and highly necessary too, because the working of the camera must have the image of being *nitty-gritty*, it needs a piece of real grit to ensure the rock-like, basic, hard and compact quality that the camera must have, in order to oppose exactly those features of the natural landscape. As in 'the raw and the cooked', some of the mountain's image thus attaches itself to the cultural, 'scientific' artifact, as a fragment of the mountain lodges in the mechanism itself.

A67 *Re-organising Nature*: We now have the landscape actually brought into the scientific enclosure of the greenhouse: to be observed, not only *through* Science, as in the last ad, but *by* Science; and of course this is very different from A66 in that nature is brought back within the confines of culture not on film but in its physicality. These are real plants taken over by science—which controls more than their image; it controls their growth, their very existence: the plants are as streamlined here as products in a factory. On the other hand, the light bulbs grow down from the roof of the greenhouse, from a network of pipes and wires: an inverted image of the root and the plant. In this hot-house nature and technology interact—as natural minerals are made into 'chemicals', and chemicals applied to natural plants, which in turn produce minerals, and so on. Science here is intervening in the natural cycle: killing bugs... 'We try to control them...' and weeds, but protecting crops. So science tries to reorganise nature according to the needs of society: this is its final goal and of course it can be very beneficial, but this is not the issue. In ordering nature like this, 'Science' steps between us and it, between 'civilisation' and wild 'nature', only preserving 'The Natural' for our organised enjoyment. The natural environment that is left for us is described in totally 'cooked', cultural terms: an 'attractive landscape' populated with 'interesting wildlife'. These double words like landscape (= land) and wildlife (= animals) and the adjectives 'attractive' and 'interesting', which inherently imply a subject (someone to whom these things *are* attractive and interesting), show the way that cultural terminology distances the real phenomena by translating them through concepts. 'Landscape' and 'wildlife' are abstract terms, ideas: they are connotative, they do not denote an actual field or a specific animal. That we have turned land into landscape, seeing the former always through the conceptual glass of the latter, shows how it is the imagery and language of culture that actually

A67

'Yes, we are trying to feed the world. Yes, we do make a profit. There's a connection.'

Jim Newman, ICI

ICI is the world's largest chemical manufacturer. It produces a wide range of products for use in many different industries. ICI is also a major supplier of fertilisers and pesticides.

ICI is committed to the development of new products and processes to improve the world. ICI is also committed to the protection of the environment.

ICI is a leading manufacturer of fertilisers and pesticides. ICI is also a major supplier of chemicals for use in many different industries.

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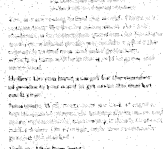
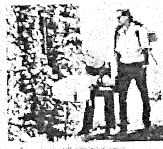
ICI is a leading manufacturer of fertilisers and pesticides. ICI is also a major supplier of chemicals for use in many different industries.

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Ideas in action

misogony = language of culture that determines what we see as nature.

determine *what* we see as nature—because how we see it is inseparable from what it 'actually is', to us. 'Wildlife' is, similarly, a concept that can never apply to any specific creature, and thus is always an image or translation of nature; it denotes what is 'Natural', but not nature. The notion that nature must be attractive and interesting further shows that it is seen through the eyes of culture: a value judgement is attached to it.

It is interesting that this very 'cleaned up' and Romanticised (cf. Chapter 5) view of nature as attractive landscape populated with interesting wildlife, should be part and parcel of the view that seems so different, of scientific contact with nature, tackling the raw. Yet of course, they go together. They also go with making a profit: as the ad itself says, 'There's a connection'. But the sceptic who voices and thus anticipates our fears and criticisms of ICI and chemical research, precludes any further criticism: the very form of the ad, a transcript of an interview, has the aura of *research* (research into research—creating an ideology of ideology) and of scientific 'truth': it is less an interview than an experiment, a challenge put to ICI and scientifically rebuffed. Thus the form of the ad signifies a certain faith in science, as well as testing that science and hence allowing it to justify itself. There is a current idea (particularly prevalent on TV discussions on Ireland, Africa, and on advertising itself) that if two opposing views are juxtaposed the result is total objectivity. This is clearly nonsense: but it provides the basic structure of the verbal part of this ad, the internalised opposition somehow making it more genuine (as with the admission of faults in the last two ads), = objective = scientific.

A67

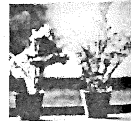
Finally I repeat, this does not pretend to be an analysis of science, but of the presentation of science through the ideological form of advertising.

(b2) The Natural Order

Once nature has been brought into the enclosure of the greenhouse, under the eye of science, it is no longer necessary to go outside to investigate it, out to the 'raw' undifferentiated natural world: nature can be investigated, as A67 showed, within the parameters of science, *through* science. However, once science has interpreted nature we are invited to interpret science, instead of nature: what was once the 'transparency' that brought us nature, the grid of differentiations through which it was revealed, has now become a transparency which reveals nothing but itself. This has partly been shown in the linguistic self-enclosure by which culture defines what it sees, and sees what it defines, a point which arose in the analysis of A67. Inevitably, as science orders and classifies nature, it sees nature in terms of those classifications, and so on: this is simply a basic feature of all language. But it is one thing to represent reality,

ed
a profit.

in Newman, ICI



ICI
ideas in action



read through science
to science itself
(part of system)

another to replace it. In Chapter 3 I have discussed at length the creation of a world of symbols, the interpretation of which ultimately replaced the interpretation of the world that *they* claimed to interpret. A certain opacity in the signifying system is enough to deflect our attention from what it deciphers, to deciphering *it*. Thus the means of knowing becomes all that need be known: this is the same as my argument in 'the raw and the cooked', that only *forms* of knowledge are appropriated by advertising, so we always use the grid by which knowledge is culturally ordered, but never actually find *what* is known. The obvious ideological function of this is to make the subject feel *knowing* but deprive him of *knowledge*. (Hence the trap of a structural analysis without a context: it slips *around* a historical reality, merely.) Similarly, in culture things may be *natural* (how many products use this word) but *they are never nature*.

The ideology of science tends very much towards the kind of closed, symbolic system described in Chapter 3. In that science creates or formulates a system of nature, complete with laws, hierarchies, internal relations—in short, law and order—it then works on this system, so that in a sense it is working on itself, as I have already said: but the significance of this system for the *ideology* of science, is that its complexity renders it mystically incomprehensible to nearly everyone and so instead of helping us to understand *nature* we are confronted with our difficulty in understanding *it*, with its strange words, cryptic diagrams, and magical, mathematical symbols.

This density which we must decipher to find 'science', let alone 'nature', can exist, paradoxically, alongside the other image of science, that of clarity and perfection. The necessity of penetrating to the complexity of science is illustrated in a whole genre of ads for scientific equipment etc.:

Science
purposefully
disfigures it?

A68 *A Hermeneutic of Hi-fis*: The clean surface of science masks a complexity which is just hinted at: 'It looks even better on the inside'. We now 'read through' science to science itself; it becomes its own referent, indeed, comes to reveal its own 'raw and cooked' system:

A69: Here, the 'cooked' surface is partially removed to reveal the 'raw' workings of the washing machine. The numbers attached to different parts of the picture, the various internal components of the machine, are used in the text, in the description of the machine: we are thus offered a 'key', invited to participate in interpreting the workings of the washing machine. Its secrets are 'revealed' in image by the removal of the machine's outside, so that we break through the surface of science to get drawn into its internal system. But this system is not immediately comprehensible to us and the verbal part of the ad provides the other part of the hermeneutic revelation, a sort of 'interpretation by

A68

It looks even better on the inside.
 You might not believe it to look at the CS 705D cassette deck, but Akai think that what's inside is more beautiful than the casing.
 That's because Akai like to live up to their worldwide reputation for advanced hi fi technology.
 And the CS 705D does just that. Beautifully.



CS 705D CASSETTE DECK
 This is a new from Akai—two super-sensitive permalloy heads, four record/playback heads and one erase head and an induction motor so stable it can wow and flutter to less than 0.005% WPM.
 It has a Dolby "noise reduction" system to get rid of tape hiss, a peak level indicator for clean super-quiet white recording, and a built-in multiple filter to make your stereo radio recordings as clear as the original broadcasts.
 And the CS 705D has a tape selector which alters recording bias, equalization and level together with playback equalization to suit whichever of today's 11 top quality tape types you're using: from cassette CR-2 to FC-50. (Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories.)

AKAI Starting at the top and working upwards.

Miele.

What's behind that pretty face?



For many years now people have been buying Miele washing machines. For their great looks and superb reputation for workmanship, we know you had an insight into the quality that has made Miele a name.

Let's deal with a common question: How do you get the speed to wash clothes? Miele's answer is simple: the speed is in the motor. We use a special motor, the Miele motor, which is built to last. It's the only motor in the world that can last for 20 years.

There's more to the Miele motor. It's built to last. It's the only motor in the world that can last for 20 years. It's built to last. It's the only motor in the world that can last for 20 years.

very slowly (the motor is built to last for 20 years). It's built to last. It's the only motor in the world that can last for 20 years.

We've shown you a few examples. The Miele washing machine is built to last. It's built to last. It's the only motor in the world that can last for 20 years.

Miele
Anything less is a compromise.

A69

numbers'. Of course, numbers have a particular 'scientific' significance of their own: they are signifiers far more than signifieds, for who understands what the expressed claim of '800-1000 rpm' really means in terms of drying washing? The point is that the numbers signify scientific *fact*, and 'objectivity'.

The exposure of inner workings achieved in A69 by the removal of the outside of the machine, is a permanent feature of much electrical equipment nowadays—for example, the stereos with transparent covers that show all the works—a sort of ideological metaphor. It is this self-revealing, innocent transparency which gives science the status of a 'natural' because 'obvious' order. Thus science, by offering itself to us as something to be seen and understood, rather than the means by which we see and understand, is always something already there, like nature, something full of 'facts', like nature, something Natural—replacing nature.

There is a whole nexus of connotation around this idea of the obvious, the natural: what is *revealed* is always assumed to be more basic than what concealed it, transparency always gives the illusion of getting right there to the bare bones of something; it also implies *proof* simply by *showing*: 'there it is, it must be so'. Everything is revealed, and nothing explained.

The transparency that replaces the decorative with the *visibly* functional has a great deal of the puritanical in it: especially in the sense of an anti-aesthetic tone. 'Beauty is more than skin deep': and 'you might not believe it to look at the CS705D cassette deck (A68), but Akai think that what's inside is more beautiful than the casing.' In A69 Miele showed us what was 'behind that pretty face', using the same idea. The connection between science and puritanism is an obvious one: both have a clean, clinical image, and both claim to ignore appearance, superfluity and irrelevancy and to get 'down to the basics'—the basics always being *natural*. But the irony of puritanism is that it also believes in covering up: it is rather like getting made-up to achieve the 'natural' look, as is seen in many cosmetic ads. This parallels the way that science in exposing its own incomprehensible intricacies, achieves the look of the 'natural'.

The anti-aesthetic image, always so closely associated with 'truth', comes to be applied in advertising to advertising itself:

A70: This ad shows a conscious rejection of the 'romantic', 'pretty' ad and packaging, of flowery language like 'powdered orange blossom' and so on, claiming to be 'serious' and 'scientific'. 'The secret of beautiful, healthy skin lies not in exotic sounding ingredients, or fancy bottles but in scientifically developed and clinically tested preparations.' Thus we are at the outset offered 'science', knowledge, rather than exotic words. The caption for the diagram, a 'scientific' diagram showing a cross section of the skin magnified, is 'to make skin care that works, you have to understand the skin'. Then underneath the diagram, 'The skin is complex and very delicate. Vichy's preparations are conceived by dermatologists who understand its complexities and made by pharmacists who use only the purest, proven ingredients. . . . We are told that the makers of Vichy understand the skin, but we do not understand it: the diagram tells us *nothing*. It is just a picture of the skin: it represents, but does not explain. So again we see how representation is a closed circle: the diagram *shows* us, it conceals nothing, it *is* the skin, enlarged to make it even clearer; but it does not help us to know anything. While seeming to be an explanation, it is really a *symbol*: it denotes the skin, but connotes *science, facts, seriousness*; it represents the whole miraculous system of science but is empty of meaning in itself. This shows that science, supposedly a system full of knowledge, is for ads (and ideology) a referent system like any other, and our knowledge of it is exploited (Vichy takes from this diagram all the connotations of purity, certainty etc. of science) while our knowledge *in* it is denied. (We never find out how Vichy works or how the skin works.) If you use Vichy every day 'soon you'll feel and see the difference in your skin': feeling and seeing are supposed to be the ultimate test, but they still do not *explain*. Obviousness, transparency, 'The Natural' (it's only natural etc.) become attached to Science as a referent system, but defy the possibility of a science.

The preceding ad showed the prevalent idea that knowledge of things resides *in* them, to be revealed by looking closely, by feeling or touching, rather than in systems of relations between things. The entire hermeneutic idea is based on everything revealing its own meaning, that to know something is simply to know it, rather than to know *about* it. To know something directly involves purely a relationship between you and the thing, between subject and object: while to know the relation between two things involves a relation between two objects, and though the subjective position can never, of course, be removed completely, its central and privileged role in the process of knowledge is superseded. In any case, a *subject's* relationship

A SERIOUS STEP FORWARD FROM TROPICAL MIST, MOUNTAIN DEW AND POWDERED ORANGE BLOSSOM.

The secret of beautiful, healthy skin lies not in exotic sounding ingredients, or fancy bottles but in scientifically developed and clinically tested preparations.

TO MAKE SKIN CARE THAT WORKS, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THE SKIN.



The skin is complex and very delicate. Vichy's preparations are conceived by dermatologists who understand its complexities and made by pharmacists who use only the purest, proven ingredients to fulfil specific needs of a woman's skin.

FOUR BASIC SKIN TYPES.



There are four main skin types - oily, dry, normal and sensitive. Only Vichy offers you a range of products corresponding to the particular requirements of all four types. With Vichy every woman can have milk, tonics, lotions and moisturising cream for everyday use. And masks and night creams for special treatment.

YOU PAY FOR A BETTER YOU, NOT A BETTER PACK.



Some beauty packaging looks as though it has cost more than the product inside. When you buy Vichy, you pay for valuable ingredients, not an expensive pack.

VICHY IS MADE BY PHARMACISTS, SO IT'S SOLD IN PHARMACIES.

It's reasonable to assume that a pharmacist will know more about skin care than a grocer. And Vichy think you should always have the best advice. The pharmacist will give you the Vichy booklet and help you select the right range for your skin type.

NO SINGLE PRODUCT CAN REPLACE VICHY.

How can you expect one product to address diet and climate, and at the same time restore the natural balance of moisture and vitamins that healthy skin needs?

Vichy's preparations work in harmony. Each preparing the way for the next stage of the beauty routine.

Use Vichy every day and soon you'll feel and see the difference in your skin. Skin gets so healthy.

But only the science of dermatopharmacy can help you keep it.

VICHY SKIN CARE
the new dermatopharmacy

**DEW AND
DM.**

NOT A PRETHER PACO.



ticks as though it
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CHEK UP IT'S SOLD IN

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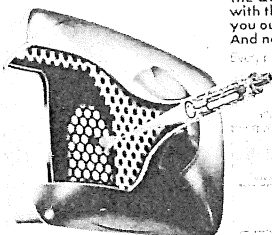
ARE

stems



A70

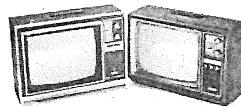
Make sure your next color TV has more than one prefocus lens.



The Quintrix picture tube
with the extra prefocus lens gives
you our sharpest picture ever.
And no other picture tube has it.

Every other picture tube
has only one prefocus lens.
That's why their pictures are
not as sharp as ours. Our
Quintrix picture tube has
two prefocus lenses. One
focuses the electron beam
on the screen. The other
focuses the electron beam
on the screen. This double
focusing gives you a picture
that's sharper than any
other picture tube can give.

It gives you a picture that's sharper than any other picture tube can give. And it gives you a picture that's sharper than any other picture tube can give. And it gives you a picture that's sharper than any other picture tube can give.



Panasonic.
Just slightly ahead of our time.

with an *object* places the whole process in an arbitrary position, like trying to find your bearing by only one landmark: while in looking at two or more things, at relations *between* objects, the observer's position is much more clearly defined.

It is therefore clear that knowledge of relations can be far more valuable than knowledge of 'things'. It is an opportune moment to comment yet again on the benefits and dangers of 'structural analysis', an area which I think has not been considered carefully enough by either Marxists or 'structuralists'—who seem to have been placed in an opposition based on historicity versus 'structure'. Because of the way ideology is structured, in fact the way society is structured, a stress on structural relationships is invaluable; it removes the myth that anything can be known in isolation, and removes the emphasis on the subject. But as I started by saying that knowledge of particular things is found not in them but in their relations, it is crucial not to forget that it is, ultimately, particular things and social phenomena that we wish to know and understand. The knowledge of systems is important because they are not, in reality, empty structures but systems of things and people, and systems of signifying the relationship between the two—which is the concern here.

A71

Having argued for a kind of knowledge that *can* have substance, I have not, I hope, gouged all meaning out of the word 'science' and made it as hollow as it becomes when merely a referent of advertisements. The diagram in A70 merely 'referred' to 'science' in this way: what should be *signified* by the diagram, the workings of the skin, is replaced by the diagram's function as a *signifier* of a vague, connoted *image* of scientific knowledge. This same replacement, an exchange of connotation for denotation, of reference for explanation—an exchange disguised by the fact that the referent *seems* to be there in the sign (cf. Chapter 3)—can be seen in A71, where the whole advertisement functions similarly to the Vichy diagram.

A71: Nobody reading this advertisement can have any idea what a 'prefocus lens' is: here again, the diagrams conceal nothing but themselves, the language seems explanatory but like the picture, only refers to scientific knowledge and does not actually offer it. The entire advertisement is a sign pointing to Science, but empty of science.

Science has thus become constituted as a referent system in itself, completely separate from nature, against which it was originally defined. It protects us from nature, but this protection becomes so complete that science itself seems to be

the basic order of things, full of symbols for our society, just as nature provides a universe of symbols for tribal society. But science has never finished with nature. The relationship between the two is one of dialectic: science both conceals and reveals, it protects us from nature and then presents us with 'the natural': in its own 'natural' laws, but also with the 'attractive landscape and interesting wildlife' that ICI promised us in A67. This representation is the subject of Chapter 5, where the circuit of imagery is completed by the location of culture *in* nature.

(c) 'Cooked' Sex: 'Civilisation and Its Discontents'

Lévi-Strauss' dichotomy of the raw and the cooked applies not only to natural objects but to sex. In this area we can see all the tensions, the 'cooking' process yet the appeal to 'the natural', that have been discussed so far in this chapter. Here, however, the 'cooking' does not simply involve 'nature' or our view of 'nature', it involves ourselves; our bodies and our passions and our images of them. Sex becomes a referent system, always hinted at, referred to, in innuendo, double entendre, or symbolism: but never 'raw'. Thus again the illusion is that sex is being revealed, while in fact it is concealed behind its own references.

A72: Here the referent is wildness: 'for those of you who've been civilised long enough' implies both discontent with civilisation and simultaneously, culture as an élite group—it is for those of you who are at the apex of civilisation. Coty claim to be 'unleashing' this 'most sensual, frankly arousing fragrance', throwing off the control of civilisation: yet, 'Now Coty's *coaxed* the dangerous Wild Musk (like an animal) into its *own* creme fragrance compact'. That the compact should be *its own* implies that it 'naturally' belongs there. As with the Florida orange ad, A62, and the others in that section, the opposition between nature and culture is represented in a way that overcomes it—so that we may have both civilisation *and* its discontents. We can be made to feel both 'tamed' and 'unleashed'.

The product, having 'cooked' nature, can then offer a safe passage 'back' to it. It can re-present nature to us in a form where it may be consumed.

consume nature
in a "cooked",
safe form



Enter
also pe
in the
luggage
you post
go - that
address



A74

A72

A73

Five overlines, steady road holding, top speed of 107.6 mph, 6.60 in the second gear, and the sort of luggage space you need when you just want to get up and go—that's the MGBGT. A worthy table companion to cars like the Midget.



MGB and MGBGT's. Look out, too, for the limited edition of 750 specially equipped MGBGT's, built to commemorate MG's fiftyth year. When you're behind the wheel of an MG, you're driving a true thoroughbred.



You can do it in an MG.

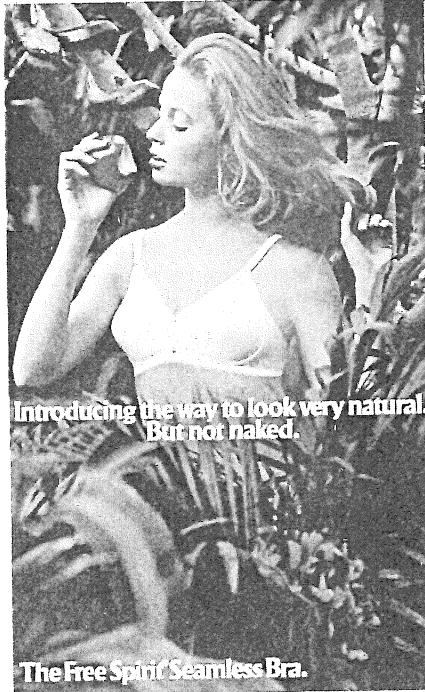
A73: This example is similar to A46 in that the caption may be read in terms of the car's acceleration rate, described in the verbal part of the ad, above the picture, but 'IT' also has the connoted meaning of sex. We all 'know' what 'it' means—another hollow referent.

The product involves a double cooking in that it offers a cultural version of riding a horse—"when you're behind the wheel of an MG you're driving a true thoroughbred"—which is in itself a metaphor for sex. And its implicit offer is that you can have sex in an MG. Not only is the product, the car, a 'cooked' version of a horse and a vehicle for enclosed sex, it is also itself located inside a strong cultural referent—it is parked in the courtyard of a Tudor house. However, the couple who have previously occupied the car, and presumably 'done it', are walking outwards into the garden. Having 'cooked' their sex in the car, they may be 'unleashed' into the garden, a controlled natural environment.

The couple's entry into the garden obviously connotes a sort of return to Eden—this is denoted literally in the following ad.

A74

A72



The Free Spirit Seamless Bra.

If you don't want to go around looking naked to the world, and you don't want to look puffy either—here's what you do want. The Free Spirit Seamless Bra. With bra's soft cups that shape like a bonnet, not like a bra. Cups without a single seam. And comfort? Ever heard never had it so good. Free Spirit Seamless soft cup bra... also available in fiberfill or fully padded styles with cups in a mesh polyester tricot that won't stretch out. Only from Playtex.



A74: Here, the snake and the apple literally refer to the garden of Eden—which itself connotes both innocence and wickedness combined and thus is a suitable image to represent what is both desirable and undesirable about 'raw' sexuality. The element of naughtiness suggested here will be seen again in images of nature—cf A81 below. Yet the only way the idea of temptation really fits into the ad is in that we are being tempted to go out and buy the bra. In doing this we are improving on our natural state: 'Eve herself never had it so good.' But in this improvement we are also returning to perfect freedom: although the bra encloses and confines the body it is also the release, apparently, of a sort of Hegelian Free Spirit: it is, after all, the Free Spirit Seamless Bra. It has a natural form—"body-soft cups that shape like a bosom, not like a bra" (although it comes in 'fiberfill or fully padded styles') but an unnatural function.

However, it *claims* to be 'introducing the way to look very natural': the product actually creates, introduces 'the natural' (thus showing that 'the natural' is a cultural concept, since it is introduced by an artifact) while also preventing nakedness.

Setting up naturalness and nakedness in opposition is using the 'raw' to give status to the 'cooked', and indicates that culture, having once given nature a significance, may then safely lead us back to it.