1999

The Influence of Religiosity in the Construction of Meaning from Advertising Messages Intended to Promote Lifestyle Values

Lillian Billing
Brigham Young University - Provo

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd
Part of the Mormon Studies Commons, and the Public Relations and Advertising Commons

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/4531

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
The Influence of Religiosity in the Construction of Meaning from Advertising Messages Intended to Promote Lifestyle Values

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Communications
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts

by
Lillian Billing
June 1999
This thesis by Lillian Billing is accepted in its present form by the Department of Communications of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Daniel A. Stout, Committee Chair

Kathryn S. Egan, Committee Member

Allen W. Palmer, Committee Member

Date June 2, 1999

Allen W. Palmer, Graduate Coordinator
ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOSITY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING FROM ADVERTISING MESSAGES INTENDED TO PROMOTE LIFESTYLE VALUES

Lillian Billing
Department of Communications
Master of Arts

Religiosity has largely been ignored by consumer research as a factor in the negotiation of meaning from magazine advertisements containing lifestyle messages. A meaning based study was undertaken to seek to identify its presence and emergence within a religious audience. A qualitative methodology employing in-depth, phenomenological interviewing was designed. Six members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, three men and three women, were invited to give their interpretations, thoughts, and feelings towards four magazine advertisements. A second in-depth phenomenological interview was conducted with each participant to provide individual lifeworld contexts. Analysis employed a previously tested conceptual construct, Life Themes, to identify a paramount, existential motivator unique to each participant. Life Themes were consequently examined for influences of personal and institutional religiosity. Expressions of religiosity were found to be influenced by individual Life Themes. Though findings indicate conflicts with personal values derived from religiosity, interpretive consensus was not found in particular incidences or on particular
values. Findings also suggest that proximity to Christian lifestyle values, rather than to simply "Mormon" lifestyle values, more fully suggest incidence of shared interpretive strategy in evaluating lifestyle appeals within advertising messages. The study indicates that aligning a product with messages containing values that promote lifestyle conflict is not serving the best interests of the product, nor its intended market.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Significant support from many people has helped me to fulfill all the requirements for this degree. I am particularly grateful for the unfailing encouragement and guidance I have received from members of the Faculty and staff within the Department of Communications, throughout all my time at Brigham Young University. In particular, Daniel Stout, my Committee Chair, provided unstinting scholarly focus, interest and friendship throughout my studies. JoAnn Valenti never failed to be an example of excellence and generosity, and from whom I learned so much. I am also in grateful debt to Kathryn Egan and Allan Palmer for their support and participation on my Thesis Committee.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to those beyond the campus who contributed so much; my family in England, and many good and true friends, in particular Esme and Gary Anderson and their family.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement and Justification of the Research Question</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of Qualitative Method</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Magazine Advertisements</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> FINDINGS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Andrea”</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Belinda”</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Claire”</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Alan”</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Boyd”</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Clive”</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research Recommendations</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Interview Transcripts</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Magazine Advertisements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1
Synopsis of Primary and Secondary Life Themes 180

TABLE 2
Influence of Religiosity on Life Themes 181
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly research investigating whether religion has a role to play in making meaning about advertising messages is scarce. Yet it has been observed that both religion and advertising speak to human needs to fulfill desires, as well as provide solutions for identity and meaning (Peck, 1993). Kavanaugh (1984) observes that the core values of capitalist society, marketability and consumption, are used to define human aspirations and act as measures of individual self-worth.

Is there, then, an arena of conflict for people who are audiences to both religion and advertising that begs recognition? In the absence of a body of scholarly literature, this study proposes to gather data with the aim of identifying emergent patterns of meaning negotiation. Research will proceed on grounded theory assumptions suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), namely that qualitative data most usefully serves emergent conceptual frameworking and that comparative analysis of qualitative data provides evidence with which to support conceptual categories. Such a research rationale privileges theory construction over theory testing and is particularly appropriate for mapping new conceptual domains.

Statement and Justification of the Research Question

Most ads originate from, and disperse through, the same socio-cultural context as the consumer, yet a meaning-based perspective has not been
comprehensively theorized or researched (Mick & Buhl, 1992). Existing meaning-based studies deal with interpretive analyses of ads and their formal features, without actual consumer/audience data (e.g., Goldman, 1992; McCracken, 1989; Scott, 1990; Stern, 1989; Williamson, 1978). However, a minority of researchers within the field of consumer research have argued for increased use of personal interviews for consumer advertising research (e.g. Buhl, 1991; Lannon & Cooper, 1983; Mick and Politi, 1989).

Religion and advertising both speak to human needs to fulfill desires and provide solutions for identity and meaning (Peck, 1993). In a similar vein, Stout & Buddenbaum (1996) observe that the primary issue is how religiosity contributes to interpretive processes. For consumer research, the effects of religion as a possible mediating variable in interactions involving mass media, specifically advertising, must look to the religious audience as its unit of analysis.

It has been proposed that advertising plays an important role in capitalist society by helping to persuade citizens that the construction of self and individuality is dependant upon discerning consumption. The promise from advertising is a unity of substance and identity through consumption (Peck, 1993). The myth is that desired personal qualities and social relationships are attributes of objects that can be purchased. By consuming the object, an individual acquires the qualities of their image (Williamson, 1978). Advertising research mostly fails to evaluate audience mediation strategies of advertising messages and tactics. It fails to account for what Lindlof et al (1992) calls a "conflict over the emergence and articulation of meaning in the cultural sphere" between author-text-reader. From an advertising viewpoint the conflict is one in which "capital is gained or lost in the struggle over effective symbolism" (Peck, 1993).
From a religious audience perspective, an empirical study of consumer reading evaluations in terms of consensus and dissensus is desirable to understand the negotiation of conflict between commodity-defined self value and realizing self-hood by “believing, trusting and loving one another, themselves and God (Kavanaugh, 1984).”

Lastly, audience research is significant to feminist scholars as it is thought to provide for a better understanding of the influence of popular culture by asking the audience about their interpretations, uses and experience (van Zoonen, 1994). Religiosity and gender are both rooted in heavily prescriptive traditions. Wilson’s (1978) survey of religions in American society concludes that the single most important contributor to the definition of sex roles is religion. Further, ideas about gender roles and attitudes have traditionally been guided by religious norms (D’Antonio, 1980; Lampe, 1981). Religiosity, then, appears to be inextricably linked to the construction of self-identity, perhaps providing a metanarrative of identity that subsumes or at least influences all other social prescriptors of identity.

In a similar vein, media are generally construed as “technologies of gender” that express and incorporate gender discourse (van Zoonen, 1994). Stern (1993) proposes that by using gender as a segmenting variable, it is possible to uncover expectations and values commonly defined as masculine or feminine in media texts. Similarly, the influence of religiosity on gender needs to be understood in order to account for any negotiation of conflict in secularized and religiously influenced gender roles.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Fitting a Communication Model

The literature review builds upon an observation by Stern (1994) that advertising is most often researched upon an inadequate communication model. Drawing upon the work of Umberto Eco (1987), the traditional model of communication representing Sender, Message, Receiver, presumes that decoding occurs on the basis of a shared code between Sender and Receiver. Such a model, however, ignores the fact that there are a number of codes and subcodes as well as socio-cultural factors that contribute to make a message "an empty form to which various possible senses can be attributed" (425).

The root problem with this model is that it is derived from oral speech models. As such, Eco would claim that it fails to capture the communicative interactivity between advertisers and consumers. Instead, it treats sources and recipients each as singular constructs, does not account for diversity of interpretation, and assumes a passive message recipient (Stern, 1994).

There are special characteristics, however, that distinguish advertising from word of mouth constructions that render it more akin to created literary text. Like literary text, advertising employs the same fictionalizing techniques of story, drama, poem, song, lecture etc (Stern, 1994).

Another important consideration not anticipated by the traditional, generic, communication model is that both source and receiver are capable of multidimensionality as singular entities in the real world, whereas literary text and commercial advertising text is the only entity in the communication triad that resides solely within it. According to reader-response theory (See Staton 1987, for review), multidimensionality of source and receiver requires that the communication model account for the recipient as a co-creator of meaning. This acknowledges that readers must fill in textual gaps and become creative.
participants in interpretations (Stern 1994).

Applied to commercial advertising text, meaning becomes a dual function of, firstly, actual consumer willingness/unwillingness to "play along with the persona’s expectations implied within the text" (10) and, secondly, that meaning also resides in the author/sponsor’s intentions and expectations driven by sources outside the text.

Stern adapts Martin’s literary model (1986) to represent the transformation of Lasswell’s speech communication model to accommodate advertising as text:

- **Generic:** Who-Tells What-To Whom
- **Speech:** Sender-Message-Receiver
- **Literary:** Author-Text-Reader
- **Advertising:** Sponsor-Advertisement-Consumer

The triad has become relevant to advertising as text in that it specifies the literary components in marketing terms.

With these comments and observations in mind, the literature review will concentrate on those theoretical approaches to meaning that privilege its construction and location in the processes of interaction between individuals and social phenomena.

Although the review will present key theories offering conceptual insights consistent with the theoretical aims of the research question, a justification of their fittedness to this research enterprise is also attempted.

**Religiosity**

It is interesting to note that as early as 1961, Gerhard Lenski proposed the idea of religious groups as networks of informational relations and communications. Lenski proposed that distinctive norms are a reflection of
the experiences of past generations, not merely the result of the socioeconomic condition of the religious group (Sood & Nasu, 1995). Though Lenski’s work suggests an anticipation of Lindlof’s “interpretive community” construct, subsequent consumer research has not focused on an interpretive meaning dimension of religiosity. This is evidenced in a variety of studies (see McDaniel & Burnet, 1991 for a review). An examination of religiosity as a variable in meaning construction, in the tradition of mass communication theories of social construction and social semiotics, has only recently begun to make an appearance (see Stout & Buddenbaum, 1996).

It is already understood that religion plays a role in the socialization process of children by their parents (Terpstra & David, 1991). In adults, religion continues to influence values, habits and attitudes affecting lifestyle choices including consumer behavior (Delener, 1990; Harrell, 1986). It has also been noted that religiosity may be pivotal in problem-solving and decision making processes (Kaiser, 1991; Pargament, et al, 1988).

Empirical investigation of religion and religiosity constructs in consumer behavior has been rare (Delener, 1994). Nevertheless, the viability of religiosity as a construct in examining consumer behavior has been established by Wilkes, Burnett & Howell (1986). Findings from their empirical research showed that religiosity successfully correlated with selected lifestyle variables, contributed directly to their model along with gender, age and income; and could be operationalized through multiple measures.

Stout and Buddenbaum (1996) observe that, as important as religion is to the social fabric of the United States, studies of mass media rarely account for its influence. Most insights draw from research in the sociology of religion yet this research fails to account for the importance of communication phenomena in the development of personal religiosity (7). The debate instead
centers on the role of mass media as being on the one hand a useful institutional tool to aid personal spirituality and, conversely, having a distracting or secularizing influence (8). Both instances presume a powerful effects model of mass media.

Scholars of mass media have usually defined religiosity in terms of the expectations of religious institutions, often ignoring the idea that personal religiosity may be a factor in media use. Yet as Stout & Buddenbaum (1996) observe, a primary issue is how religiosity contributes to interpretive processes.

To understand religious constructs, an important distinction is drawn by Sood & Nassu (1995) between religion and religiosity. They observe that religion, like nationality, is more an ascribed condition; religiosity, however, is predominantly a personal phenomenon. Cornwall et al (1986) note that a key mechanism for maintaining a personal religious identity is a focused emotional attachment coupled with behaviors that find their source in personal and individualized religion. The researchers identify two modes of religiosity: personal and institutional, each mode comprising three components - belief, commitment and behavior. These are used to identify six dimensions of religiosity, namely traditional orthodoxy, particularistic orthodoxy, spiritual commitment, Church commitment, religious behavior and religious participation. In testing the model, the researchers found it to be generally useful in studying Mormons and that their results support their contention that religiosity is best viewed as multidimensional.

For consumer research, the effects of religion as a possible mediating variable in interactions involving mass media, specifically advertising, must look to the religious audience as its unit of analysis.

In an audience where religiosity is a factor there appears to be immediate
and irreconcilable differences of ontology, epistemology and value systems between capitalist consumer culture founded on comparisons of envy, desire and power (Goldman, 1992) and the Christian imperative of “believing, trusting and loving one another, themselves and God (Kavanaugh, 1984).” In brief, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), commonly referred to as “Mormons,” see their place both in the world and in their church as part of a great pre-ordained plan that explains their pre-earth existence, the purpose for their mortality, and the inevitability of death as a gateway to continued progression towards a Christ-like nature.

Truth may be apprehended by means of spiritually drawing close to God, its source, who is described in LDS scripture as the same yesterday, today and forever and who does not vary, presumably allowing LDS Church members access to epistemological absolutes.

Materialism is held to be the consequence of insufficient focus on the purposes of God and in trusting in appearances; materialism equates with the “vain things of the world” and “the glory of men.” In their covenants between themselves and God, LDS Church members dedicate their time, talents and everything God has given them to the building up of his kingdom on earth.

The Mormon work ethic has become firmly established within common lore, with the LDS church’s 19th Century emphases on abstinence, modesty, thrift, prudence, self-sacrifice and self reliance continue to be major themes in modern-day LDS church conferences. LDS pioneer heritage, its lessons, sacrifices and values is a theme that is promoted and reinforced tirelessly in conferences and Sunday church meetings. These traits suggest an interesting parallel with Max Weber’s observation of a correlation between similar ethics in Protestant countries in Europe and increased industrial development compared to more modest strides in Catholic European States.
A significant proportion of Utah's present LDS population traces its
descent from 19th century pioneer emigrants whose family records, memories
and faith are continually revived as teaching examples to the rising generation
of Saints.

And yet even a casual viewer of Mormon society in Utah observes that its
communities appear to be comfortably, enthusiastically even, assimilated
within mainstream American consumer society. What then is to be made of
Lenski's (1961) idea that distinctive norms are a reflection of the experiences
of past generations?

Social Semiotics

According to James Beniger (1987) mass communication research
programs have experienced a "paradigm shift" that can be characterized as
changing dependant variables from attitudes to cognitive processes, and
independent variables from persuasive communication to active audience
engagement in mass communication. The interest in the new paradigm focuses
on processes involving information on both an individual and societal level.
From a media use perspective, Jenson (1991) notes that few studies have given
much attention to its context and purposes. Instead, the focus has
concentrated on the texts and production strategies of media as such.

Jenson (1991) locates the antecedents of contemporary social semiotics
(and the idea of an interpretive community) in the philosophical pragmatism
of Charles Sanders Peirce. Simply stated, pragmatism for Peirce represents a
shift from a philosophy of the human subject to a philosophy of language, and
the development of a new conception of truth that is linked to communication
and practice. From Peirce, such a conception understands knowledge as
processual and mediated by signs; that knowledge is the sum of historical
constructions of social consensus having practical consequences; and lastly that the institutions of knowledge and communication are key in the process of social change. The philosophical import of this conception of meaning production departs from the Cartesian notion of the individual as the foundation of knowledge and introduces instead “communities of knowers as the only possible public sanction of knowledge (ibid).”

**Interpretive Communities**

1 from Literary Criticism

The idea that audiences can be identified as communities through their shared strategies of interpretation suggests that audiences may have pre-existing meanings that mediate mass media offerings (Littlejohn, 1992). At issue here is the tension between an essentialist approach in media content analysis and a more relativistic tendency that allows for divergent interpretations (Lindlof, et al, 1992).

Conceptions of interpretive communities differ in significant ways. From literature, the idea is credited to Stanley Fish who was looking for a way to collapse the subject-object dualism to account for the dynamic process of reading texts. Fish proposed that an individual's interpretive reading of a text is legitimimized by the interpretive community to which a person belongs (Lindlof, et al, 1992). The interpretive community establishes conventions towards texts such that a text becomes the sum of strategies used to produce an interpretation. Meaning is therefore removed as an inherent characteristic of an object and is instead the result of numerous factors of social construction. Importantly, the idea of an external objective standard of judgement, or some sort of metadiscourse, is eliminated. Lindlof further comments that “while its physical character is fixed, only an actual reader can
activate the codes and strategies that create meaning” (ibid).

2 from pragmatic semiotics

While acknowledging that mass communication studies credit Stanley Fish as the source of the argument, Jensen (1995) points to the notion of interpretive communities as originating from Peirce and pragmatism. Drawing on Peirce that signs are “not what we know but how we come to know we can justify saying we know” suggests that interpretation is a continuous process of social negotiation rather than one act. The result is that the meaning of signs is not determined by reference to inherent characteristics but rather by their position with the system of meaning production as a whole.

Applied to mass communication studies, social semiotics views media reception and use as social practices which operate in institutions and interpersonal relationships (Lindlof, 1992). Findings from qualitative studies of audiences indicate that specific meanings intended by mass media are often modified or opposed as well as appropriated by audiences for alternative understandings of social reality. These findings lead Jensen (1991) to consider “meaning as both a social and a discursive phenomenon” (p?), both in people and texts.

The role of interpretive communities in relation to social institutions reveals that contradictory constructions emerge as ambiguity, or polysemy, in audience discourses. The concept of polysemy states that several interpretations coexist as potentials in any one text depending on an audience’s culture and interpretive conventions (Jensen, 1995) Polysemy is not only a feature of different meanings that audiences derive from media discourses, but may also be a feature of audience discourses (Jensen, 1991). For the audience/public, mass media become “institutions to think with” about other institutions. Acting as an “in-between realm” (p.22), mass media
produce a “cultural forum” (Newcomb & Hirsch, 1984) that not only serves consumption purposes but also allows for a culture to trace beliefs, test boundaries, and provides for individuals to explore alternative identities and realities (Jensen, 1991).

However, Jensen (1991) does not believe this analysis goes far enough as it “represents a perspective from only one type of social institution,” does not consider “the relations of feedback between the mass media and other institutions” and “stops short of a model that might account for the specific social and cultural differences made by mass media, and by their recipients, including the difference that consists of maintaining the status quo” (22).

Jensen’s emphasis on the significance of social structures of mediation as well as the discursive phenomena from mass media, is that together these combine to bring an interpretive community into existence. This anticipates the phenomenon of the LDS religious community. Obedience and heed to Church authority directives and counsels is accepted by the majority of church members as an indication of both religious ascription as well as defining a common measure of a member’s degree of religiosity. The corporate structure of LDS Church authority thus serves to orientate LDS membership world views in general and, for the purposes of this study, mass media in particular (see Stout & Buddenbaum). As such, the Church becomes an “institution to think with” for LDS membership, serving to legitimate preferred strategies of interpretation and understanding.

**Defining Interpretive Communities**

According to Lindlof (1988) interpretive communities within mass media audiences reveal recognizable properties that he terms genres of content, interpretation and social action. As such, an interpretive community comes
into being as social needs, literacy skills and interpretive procedures converge on the content of a specific media offering (for example romance readers, see Radway (1984)), stimulating regenerative processes for that genre. Semiotic commonalities of interpretation, such as selection, decoding and application exhibit dimensions of intersubjective agreement. Lindlof's genre of interpretation comprises not only an identification with a specific genre, but the individual's own construction of those generic conventions, producing a conversation between the individual and the generic tradition. Referents of acculturation not only allow interpretive communities to understand the content in similar ways but delineate shared sets of behavior towards a media offering. Taken together these genres provide a "repertoire of descriptors" and "symbolic alignments" constituting an interpretive community.

A topology of defining factors is also proposed by Jensen (1991) as a condition for the emergence of interpretive communities. Being socially competent means that an individual is able to recognize and decode forms of communicative interaction and interpretation. These skills arise from exposure to mass media. Firstly then, discourses and genres of media offerings require relevant strategies of interpretation that orient specific practices and begin to define an interpretive community. Secondly, because mass communication presents the audience with depictions of familiar socioeconomic institutions, these institutions serve to provide a context for the interpretation of everyday reality. Thirdly, Jensen defines practices as socially meaningful activities that constitute a framework, orienting not just specific interpretations, but also routines of media use. The configuration of practices and institutions combine to form a contextual historical configuration in which mass media recipients interact and from which interpretations arise. In this way, Jensen believes that meaning arising from interpretive communities is
both discursive and social.

Jensen’s (1995) insistence on socially contextualizing media experiences in order to fully account for meaning construction requires an understanding of how the relationship between church and individual plays out in an interpretive negotiation of advertising texts.

**Advertising**

Advertising and advertisements work because audiences understand how to use the rules that govern the movement and connection of meanings in ads. The structure or form of ads is its own ideology according to Robert Goldman (1992). He believes that ads carry interpretive rules that perpetuate a logic of commodity relations.

Commodity logic is an ideology of consumerism, compelling an audience to participate in the assumptions of consumption. This has become so commonplace that it appears to be normal, namely to presume that “there is a line of equivalence between the product and the glamorized traits of the model (Williamson, 1978).” However, Goldman (1992) points out that in order to promote these assumptions as normal, meanings have been steered by advertising into signs that can be inscribed on products. The logic promoted by the commodity imperative to sell goods is that when signs are defined as real, they are real in their consequences.

Hence, the logic would make us believe that if we wear product A, our experience of the product is qualitatively different than if we wear product B because of the difference of image (Houghton, 1987).

Having convinced the consumer that the completeness of individuality is attained through consumptions, advertising endows goods with subjective qualities, presented as the consumer’s own qualities, which the consumer can
recover or enhance by purchasing the product (Peck, 1993).

A study of advertisements during the period 1977 to 1990 leads Goldman (1992) to propose that there has been “a dialectic of interpretive contestation and ideological reincorporation (serving) commodity culture” (p2). Simply stated, audiences have developed resistance to advertising and the process of being positioned by ads. In response to this alienation, advertising has hegemonized audience resistance by incorporating reflexive self-awareness about its own advertising tactics within the ads themselves.

Feminism is a case in point. In an attempt to manage the ideological contradictions between femininity and feminism, Goldman (1992) points to how advertising has reframed a political discourse into a discourse of style. By using a capitalist ideological rhetoric of possessive individualism, advertising tells women that, if properly outfitted, they can be in charge of their lives and their relations with men. Increased social power is presented by advertising as a function of voluntary self-festishization.

Rakow (1992) is skeptical of calling the discursive practices arising from advertising's interpretive strategies an interpretive community. She instead sees ads targeted to address a marketer's demographically identified interpretive community, namely a target market.

Properly understood, ...the interpretive community does not precede the reading or viewing of the advertisement; reading or viewing the ad is an instance of calling the interpretive community into existence. The work of the advertisement is to call the individual into that community whether (he/she) wants to or not, producing what I prefer to call a coerced interpretive community (p. 139).

The point is that Rakow, like Goldman, identifies an advertising logic which is far from innocent because it is a logic that calls into existence
communities based on categories the reader does not identify with herself or himself and who has no real inclination to participate in. Resistance serves only to stimulate ever more subtle uses of advertising logic by advertisers entailing further social consequences.

Goldman (1992) claims that the commodity culture imperative of ever-increasing production of commodity signs has lead to a crisis of credibility and relativising of value. When audiences are no longer able to differentiate signifier from signified there is no fixity of meaning. Constant symbolic construction and reconstruction of value has exhausted its truth claims.

The constant depletion of cultural signs to serve the inexhaustible need of commodity meanings has forced advertising to “cannibalize itself, feeding on the recycling and recombining of previous advertising styles and signs (ibid).” The result in much advertising at present is that it has become increasingly self referential and intertextual.

Clearly, from Goldman’s critical interpretation of advertising’s hegemonic practices, coupled with an invasive and, seemingly, a compelling consumer logic advertising qualifies as “an institution to think with.”

This begs a question of the research problem: how do individuals within a religious LDS community maintain the integrity of their prescriptive religious values in the face of advertising’s hegemonic and often oppositional lifestyle onslaught?

Stout (1996) has chronicled the attitude of LDS church leadership toward media issues, identifying numerous criticisms of how media are used in society. Admonitions to church membership to avoid soap operas, talk shows and R-rated movies are continuing themes. Advertising is criticized for promoting hedonistic values and enticing church members to unnecessary purchases. Also identified by Stout (1996) is an emerging trend in church
authority guidelines that depart from encouraging individual interpretation and analysis of media fare. Admonitions from the pulpit and in church publications now favor a more rules-based, didactic approach, perhaps reflecting the perception of media as a growing societal threat to family values. However, a quick view of LDS society does not suggest a community under siege nor, indeed, does it appear composed of individuals wracked by the angst of intolerable value contradictions. Some accommodation would therefore appear to be a reasonable assumption.

Recalling Eco’s (1987) suggestion that a number of codes and subcodes as well as socio-cultural factors contribute to make a message “an empty form to which various possible senses can be attributed” (425), it might be supposed that the recipient is indeed a co-creator of meaning through interpretations and accommodations not anticipated or intended by the source. An exploratory study that puts audience members at the center of its investigation is therefore warranted.

Jensen (1991) questions the critical argument that particular structures of media discourse may be a sufficient condition for an ideological impact. This argument assumes that ideology is located in media discourses. The issue is an argument over the location of meaning, ideological or otherwise. According to Jensen, a critical semiological theoretical framework represents media discourses as meaning products. Jensen argues instead for a contrasting framework that can accommodate the analysis of meaning production as process or social practice. Such a contrasting reformulation departs from the Cartesian legacy of mind-matter dualism and instead focuses upon meaning as a continuing and changing process of temporal and relational dynamics.
Active vs Passive Reader Models from Literature

Literary analysis tools provide a set of concepts for identifying textual elements in ads that both reveal and affect contemporary consumers. Stern (1989) considers them appropriate for uncovering the layering and complexity of advertising text that requires a multi-faceted analytic approach. Just as literary archetypists find common bonds in magic, myth, history, religion, and patterns in the unconscious, consumer researchers have investigated several of the same sources to explain consumption patterns in terms of rites and significances. For example, comparing advertising to myth and defining it as a metacommunication of myth and ritual (Stern, 1994 p323).

Reader Response Theory

Critics in the 1960s, favoring reader response and deconstruction theories, re-examined the role of the author and proposed instead a dynamic and transactional relationship between readers and texts. The active role of the reader in constructing the meaning of a text was emphasized.

In reader-response theory the reader is seen as being in dialogue with the text, filling in what the author leaves out and thus becoming a participant in the construction of meaning. What prevents meaning construction becoming isolated anarchy and makes possible a correspondence of similarity is a shared agreement in social communication and a communal familiarity with literary patterns and themes and social and historical contexts.

Structuralist literary critics believe literature occurs within the parameters of a subsurface system of textual codes. Polysemy of meaning is possible from infinite interpretations of a text. Reading and understanding fiction as fiction is possible because readers have internalized fictional conventions that allow webs of association. The implication of polysemy is that no two words ever mean the same thing making synonymity impossible.
Psychoanalytic critics such as Bloom, Lacan, Holland, were interested in the psychological relationships between reader and text. For example, they observed that fiction provides a panacea that reveals to the reader that hidden fears and desires are common to all mankind. By projecting themselves into the text readers create meaning by reading themselves into the text through identification with characters and settings.

Deconstructionist critics draw from post structuralist work and posit language as revealing binary structures. Concepts such as truth, self, etc that appear self-sufficient are said to be defined by negating the opposite, inferior one (Stern, 1994 p324-5).

**Meaning Based Studies of Advertising**

1 *Mick & Buhl (1992)*

Mick and Buhl (1992) note that a majority of advertising studies are interpretive analyses lacking consumer data. In developing a meaning-based model for empirical application, the researchers create a hybrid model based upon theoretical premises derived from symbolic and interpretive interactionism, existential phenomenology, personalogical and humanist psychology, analytic psychology, text reception, aesthetics, semiotics and anthropology.

From these theoretical underpinnings the researchers define two constructs to capture the mechanisms of the construction of the individual. Firstly, “Life Themes” which are limited and relatively invariant once developed, represent a person’s existential concerns of identity, relationships, status, sense-making. They share some conceptual features with, but are not linked to, values. Life themes are manifested in the second construct, “Life Projects.” These represent changing personal development of self-concepts...
selected from culturally available alternatives and reveal personal orientations. Life projects engage the individual in defining, planning, and coordinating a life. Consumers are thought to look at advertising for symbols, ideas and revisions with which to advance their projects. Life projects are distinct, though not mutually exclusive, spheres, that identify the self in some way. The national, community, and family spheres constitute the social self whilst, the fourth sphere, the private self, represents the individuated self that is autonomous and self contained.

The informants and magazine ads were purposively sampled. The study consisted of three brothers, aged 29-36, who were interviewed twice each using phenomenological-type interviewing modes to emphasize the human experience. The first interview introduced the ads and the second interview focused on lifestyles and helped to develop a picture of life history. From these interviews, patterns were looked for that related ad experiences to informants’ own life-world to identify life themes and life projects suggested by experiences of the ads.

2 Stern & Holbrook (1994)

Stern & Holbrook (1994) reproduced Mick and Buhl’s meaning based approach but additionally introduced gender as a component and accounted for textual regularities inherent in text or literary genre. Genre influences the writer’s observance of conventions and norms as well as the expectations of the reader.

Using a cologne ad from the 1980’s, as an exemplar, the researchers demonstrated that the exemplar conforms to genre conventions; in this case, the advertising author’s statements about what the text was intended to be lend validity to the internal evidence provided by the text. Examining both author and text led the authors to classify the advertising genre as “romantic
fantasy.” Following a literary analysis of romance genre in terms of male and female reading styles and preferences, the researchers hypothesize that male and female interpretations and evaluations of the ad’s nature and meaning will differ.

The method used by the study adapts Holland & Sherman’s (1988) approach of conducting dialogue with each other to produce male and female interpretations of gothic novels. Instead of entering into a tape recorded discussion that is later transcribed, the researchers use agreed written interpretive protocols, independently produce their own responses within these protocols, and exchanged with each other by mail in successive interaction. Though not representative, the study is presented as an exploratory effort to elicit male and female reader responses to an advertisement targeted to both sexes. The interpretive analysis of the data used a framework of binary oppositions in genre conventions for male and female fiction such as traits, social standing, sexual identity and overall appraisal for both heroine and hero. Also, the attitude of each toward the relationship.
Summary

The literature review is indicative of a significant development in the field of mass communications audience research. As Livingstone observes (1993), attempting to maintain a polarity between administrative and critical modes of research ignores the complexity of the interaction between text and viewer. By seeking insights from different approaches to guide this study, it is hoped that the resulting pluralsim may provide a more comprehensive ability to capture the meanings offered by the participating respondents. The task of this study and the literature review, then, is to attempt to integrate sociocognitively oriented work on the comprehension of text with connotative interpretive work. It attempts to treat interpretive mediations from both a discursive as well as social framework.

In considering text, audience, and context, this research project subscribes to abandoning the separation between cause and effect that characterizes the old polarities. The traditionally isolated categories of viewer, media, and effect are untenable as research shows text and audience as interdependent rather than discrete elements. Similarly, the traditional separation of interpersonal and mass communication must also account for the overlapping processes that underlie both (see Silverstone & Hirsch, 1992).

The key understanding to be drawn from the literature review is that each of the variables under investigation is multidimensional in nature. For example, messages remain empty until activated with any number of codes and subcodes (Eco, 1987) or, in other words, “texts must be considered virtual until realized by actual - rather than ideal - readers” (Livingstone, 1993, p7). Advertising works because audiences understand how to use the rules - which codes and subcodes reveal a denotative reading and which reveal connotative or ideological levels of meaning. Here we are interested to know if a particular
polysemy of interpretation arises from LDS culture and interpretive conventions and what its contours may be.

If religiosity is a group network whose norms are informed by the experiences of past generations, how does one account for a seemingly trouble-free assimilation of LDS norms into American mainstream consumer culture?

On the one hand religion is said to influence values, habits and attitudes affecting lifestyle and consumer choices and on the other that advertising promotes an irresistible consumer logic that compels a reader or viewer into a "coerced" interpretive community. Clearly a simple polarity of media effects is insufficient to explain a complex social contradiction confronting LDS audiences.

Uncovering the layering and complexity of advertising text calls for a multi-faceted analytic approach that allows for a dynamic of interrelationships between variables. The several dimensions discovered of religiosity in general, and here one suspects also true for LDS religiosity in particular, provide layers of interpretive expression for both personal and institutional religiosity.

Firstly then, do LDS audience members see conflicts in values they learn from advertising with values derived from religious associations?

It is reasonable to ask whether, when reading an advertisement portraying lifestyle images, there arise differences of interpretation ascribable to personal and institutional religious consideration?

Further, do these individuals employ considerations of what they believe their church would say when interpreting ads?

**Life Themes**

The argument of the new paradigm is that research needs to give attention to context and purposes or, as Harroway puts it, knowledge must be situated in order to have meaning. Within interpretive community theory, the
need to consider the relations of feedback between the mass media and other institutions is critical to understanding. Afterall, it has been proposed that a combination of both discursive and social elements bring an interpretive community into existence. With this in mind, the study proposes to account for context by utilizing the humanistic concept of life themes.

Life themes have been identified by philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty and Sartre as well as psychologists such as Allport and Kelly as the way people structure goals and means to create coherence. Socio-cultural and transformational experiences give rise to life themes. Pertinent to advertising is Holland’s idea that literary interpretation emits from identity themes, with text meanings being neither inherent to nor about a text, but of and about readers. Research suggests that once developed, life themes are stable (Mick & Buhl, 1992).

Because most ads circulate through the same socio-cultural context it is reasonable to distinguish between first order significations which correspond to obvious meanings, and connotative meanings, the latter being more variable and less predeterminable and, for the purposes of this study, the more revealing (Mick & Buhl, 1992).

This departs somewhat from a pure application of phenomenological interviewing in that the interviews will be semi-focused for the purposes of attending to the ads, and questions of biography to encourage life themes to emerge.

It is anticipated that religiosity will influence life themes, but to what degree? Also, what parts of personal and institutional religiosity influence life themes? Can these be recognized as manifest in the context of personal and social practice?
CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to review how the research question was practically examined. The chapter comprises: a review of the research question and theoretical concepts; a justification of the qualitative method selected; a justification of a phenomenological approach to data collection; a discussion of the preliminary survey questionnaire; the selection of the ads; the selection of the study participants; and a review of the data collection and analysis.

Research Problem and Theoretical Concepts

The challenge of the study was to understand the processes of meaning construction arising from individuals who appear to share distinct, communal norms of communication, personal religiosity and allegiance to an organized, institutional religion, one which emphatically rejects the materialist and self-indulgent values promoted in much lifestyle advertising.

The paradigmatic premises of the literature review cast meaning, knowledge, religiosity and gender as being processual and relational, rather than essential, in nature. Meaning is not a feature of objects but of dynamic interactions characterized by consensus rather than Descartes' a-priori or a-posteriori dichotomy of discovery. This being so, Cartesian method and its successor measures of knowledge are ill-equipped tools for methodological understandings that display a post-modern suspicion of Cartesian dualism. Knowledge has explanatory value only when it is situated, displaying context (Haraway, 1988).
Peirce, for example, stated that knowledge is “the sum of historical constructions of social consensus, having practical consequences” (Jensen, 1995). Similarly, religiosity, though a multi-dimensional personal phenomenon, nevertheless is arguably “a reflection of accumulated norms reflecting the past” (Lenski, 1961 cited in Sood & Nassu, 1995). Reading, as Fish suggests, is a dynamic process involving both text and reader, defined by strategies and practices common to literary genres and communities of readers (Pratt, 1986). Fish’s aim is to challenge any notion of a ‘correct’ reading of texts. This is apparent whether the text is literary or commercial in nature (Stern, 1994).

An attempt to chart meaning construction from advertising texts will view audience as a “tension between an essentialist approach in media content analysis and a more relativistic tendency that allows for divergent interpretations with a post-modern understanding of self as less essentialist and more relational” (Grodin & Lindlof, 1996). It will also account for the context and purposes in which the study is carried out, operationalizing a conception of meaning that is “both discursive and social” (Jensen, 1991).

Habermas uses the idea of “knowledge interests” to characterize the relationship between ways of producing knowledge and the social interests that guide its application. Three forms of knowledge interest are proposed: control through prediction in the natural sciences; contemplative understanding from the humanities; and in the case of the social sciences a legacy from the first two of both quantitative and qualitative analysis to engender emancipation. Habermas sees social science as not only serving what should be but also what might be. In spite of the legacy from both the natural sciences and the humanities, the balance tilts towards generating knowledge that serves predictive control over social agents and institutions. For example,
"explaining the cognition and action of media users with reference to their demographic characteristics" (Jensen, 1995).

Although social science research stemming from traditions in the humanities offers a contemplative understanding of media texts as cultural expressions, Jensen believes methodologies are called for that position audiences in a process of reflexivity about the social purposes of mass communication. This will avoid the limited explanatory value of text centrism without also examining institutions and audiences of mass media that too often fall to the abstract theoretical analysis of critical theories.

**Justification of Qualitative Method**

The goal of interviewing is to capture the participant's understanding and meanings of things (Singletary, 1994). In selecting indepth, phenomenological interviewing as the method for this research, and consistent with the philosophy of meaning as process, the interviews anticipated that responses would not be independent of the contexts that produce them. The interviews encouraged the respondent's own language to reveal their thoughts, and provided for both respondent and interviewer to mutually negotiate the meaning of the objects of inquiry. (Lindlof, 1995).

According to Lindlof (1992) Fish's aim for the concept of interpretive community is to challenge any notion of a "correct" reading of texts on theoretical and epistemological grounds, and not the study of actual communities with social and historical identities. As a result, he offers no framework of theory or method suitable for studies of culture and communication. However, Anderson and Meyer (1988) suggest looking to audience interpretations that may be the result of social categories such as class, gender or race, or communicative practices that transcend all of these.
Returning to Jensen’s point that knowledge interests dominate modes of inquiry, he calls for a methodological pluralism, a combination of different forms of evidence, as the only possible source of new insights into the social conditions of reception.

As this study was concerned with understanding not only the audience’s personal religiosity, but also the social context comprising both advertising imperatives and church directives, Jenson’s recommendation of a methodology accounting for both discursive and social elements was fitting. Alone, a discursive notion of “interpretive community” does not adequately capture social influences and predictors contributing to meanings that may be distinct to an LDS interpretive community and that is, as such, a socially constructed interpretive community.

**Phenomenological Interviewing**

This approach trades on the premise that meaning becomes accessible when the individual reflects on the constitutive factors of personal experience (Schutz, 1967).

The idea that meaning is a process of reflexivity has its early antecedents in Blumer’s critique of traditional analysis of variables which he considered insufficient to accommodate the interpretive behavior of human action. Instead, he proposed research that privileged the people who have developed their own activities of defining experience (Attinasi, 1992).

In practice, the phenomenological interviews used in this study were semi-structured, carried through according to an interview guide designed to elicit a “detailed description and understanding of the meaning of themes in the life-world of the interviewee” (Mick & Buhl, 1992, p.317)

Six possible phases have been identified that may occur between

28
description and interpretation (Kvale, 1983):
1 A spontaneous description of the interviewee’s life world with respect to the phenomenon of interest.

2 The spontaneous descriptions allow the interviewee to discover previously unrealized meanings about his or her life world.

3 Confirmation and/or clarification is achieved by the interviewer explaining his/her interpretation back to the interviewee.

4 Transcribed interviews are interpreted on three levels:
   a) interviewee’s self understanding
   b) drawing in broader contexts to read between the lines to extend the interviewee’s meaning
   c) interpretations drawing upon theoretical assumptions

5 The analysis is given back to the interviewee in a second interview for correction and elaboration of interpretation

6 A possible extension of the description-interpretation continuum to action from resulting experiences and insights affecting both interviewer and interviewee

Jensen (1995) argues that phenomenological interpretations that bracket experience account only for “an empathetic, aesthetic understanding of familiar phenomena ... with little reference to situated social agents or practices” (p.46). He further argues that “current theories of culture, and communication especially, require concepts and methods for examining communication as a contextualized social practice” (p.195).

Survey Questionnaire

Assessing the dimension of religiosity through interview alone seemed doubtful. People are often naturally reticent about intimacies of religious
belief.

It was therefore decided to use a survey questionnaire to allow the researcher to gain a fuller understanding of the religiosity of each interviewee from their self disclosure. Following Jensen's concern that phenomenological interviews require grounding in context, the use of the survey served to aid understanding of the degree of belief and involvement for each participant in LDS religious and institutional practices. The questionnaire followed the religious dimensions identified by Cornwall et al (1986) and used in their conceptual model, which was tested to account for specific LDS religious dimensions. An important advantage of this model is that it distinguishes between personal and institutional religious beliefs, allowing for responses to questions of belief, behavior and commitment.

The questionnaire was administered to participants in advance of meeting the researcher and their interviews to encourage participants to be candid, and to avoid answers given for impression management for the benefit of the researcher.

Given Jensen's insistence on accounting for social institutions other than media institutions, accounting for the influence of institutional religious belief contributed towards an understanding of the relationship between subject, religiosity and advertising messages.

**Selection of Magazine Advertisements**

The study employed four ads from popular magazines available during the first half of 1997. Each was selected on the basis of its appeal to a lifestyle/value theme with which to position a product, and also provide symbolism for reader interpretation. Of the four ads, one was selected that made an exclusive appeal to a female audience, another to a male audience,
and two that appeared to target both genders.

1 Pure New Wool

This ad was selected on the basis of an appeal to both men and women with elements that may provide an interpretive talking point for a religious audience. For example, a public display of affection, a man and a woman in a prone position, a revealing neckline on the woman’s sweater, and advertising copy that suggests a double entendre.

2 GMC Jimmy

The target audience appears to be women and the ad was of interest because of the accoutrements of a lifestyle that seems consistent with upper middle class pursuits, skiing, art collection, horticulture and European style equestrian preferences. The female model suggests an active and organized lifestyle with money and leisure consistent with a moneyed social class. Her profile is one of graduate education, professionalism and independence from day to day family routine.

3 Bally

The Bally shoe ad is targeted at men and was selected from GQ Magazine. This ad, and its product, was of interest because of the distinctly individual style of the shoe and its European provenance suggesting a refined taste, unusual quality and a commitment to fashion. The party atmosphere of the ad and the pre-war salon setting displays a young dancing couple that invites lifestyle interpretation. The woman’s dress is skimpy and sleeveless in contrast to the formal lounge suit and tie worn by the man.

4 Versace Couture

The double page black and white glossy spread is an appeal to both men and women who may have a taste for and interest in European high couture. The ad was interesting for its representation of an extended family and a
pronounced appeal to social class. The inclusion of two non-caucasian children ads an element of speculation and is discordant with immediate preconceptions of a socially formal family and challenges traditional social ideas. Though the viewer is supposed to understand a photo from a family album, its dissonance with LDS ideas of family should raise interesting comparisons.

Interview Subjects

The study population consisted of six participants, three men and three women. The researcher asked a long time friend and resident in Utah to identify possible participants from her church, social and work circles, who were unknown to the researcher. Given that religiosity was a key interest in the study, participants were further qualified as being "active" or practicing Latter-day Saints or "Mormons." The selection of participants was also to some extent determined by the relevancy of the ads to the demographic and socio-economic variables targeted by the advertisers. However, within this target, some diversity of profession, education, and family situation and status was attempted. This enabled life themes to emerge from different circumstances to allow for a greater variation of community religiosity.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questions implicitly identified as constitutive of the general research question, and guiding the study, called for a reflexive contemplation in response to the ads. Further, the research project also called for a method of analysis that anticipated the correspondence between personal and wider social contexts from which meaning construction can be understood.

It was therefore decided to conduct two interviews of approximately one
hour's duration with each participant. Employing phenomenological-type interviewing, the interviews followed a similar interview agenda to the one described by Mick & Buhl (1992), namely: a semi-focused approach to how the ads were experienced forming the first interview and, during the second, a personal interview using questions to prompt self description in order to reveal life themes. Both the first and second interviews were conducted and tape recorded in the residences of all but two of the participants, who found it more convenient to be interviewed elsewhere.

**Pre Test**

A pre test with a male and a female participant was carried out to evaluate the proposed methodology, the use of the religiosity survey and subsequent interview procedures. Both confirmed that they felt no hesitation in complying with an anonymous survey and confirmed that they were comfortable and relaxed with the format of the first and second interviews.

**First Interview : Presentation of the Four Magazine Ads**

At the commencement of the first interview, each participant was allowed time to look at each of the ads and read the copy. When the participant indicated that he or she had finished this exercise, the researcher asked them to select the order in which each ad would be discussed. As each ad appeared before the participant, and after allowing for time to look at and read the ad, the researcher’s opening request was “Tell me about your first impressions of this ad.” Further remarks or requests from the researcher either followed the participant’s own responses or attempted to draw further self-revelatory disclosure and analysis.
Second Interview: Exploring the Participant’s Life World

The second interview was arranged at the conclusion of the first and within one week of the first interview. The purpose of the interview was to allow the participant to talk more generally about their lives and topics of personal interest from which to later determine primary and secondary life themes. The interview began with the researcher asking each participant to describe how they imagined their close friends and family might describe them to a third person. From that point questions emerged from participant comments as well as questions that attempted to have the participants illustrate their own priorities and motivations in respect of themselves and their families, and with some reference to the advertisements discussed during the first interview.

Analysis of Data

Analysis began by following the procedure used in Mick & Buhl’s (1992) meaning based study of advertising. Transcripts were typed from both recorded interviews. The data consisted of twelve interview transcripts totalling three single-spaced pages, the researcher’s interview notes and the four magazine ads used during each first interview. Insights from transcript readings were recorded in margins and correlated with either the advertising or life world interviews.

Units of Analysis

Life World Interview

1 Primary Life Theme

From the Life Theme Interview, analysis proceeded to look for each participant’s primary life theme, through emerging patterns, after numerous
readings with different formulations variously compared for fittedness and inclusiveness throughout the entire Life World transcript. Incidences of the appearance of the participants' primary life theme were then underscored using coloured crayons.

2 Secondary Life Theme

Color coding was also used to identify a secondary life theme, one shared by virtue of common community and religious affiliations by all participants. Though a shared secondary life theme was identified, it was felt that this theme also revealed significant differentiating characteristics for each participant that would be useful for increased explanatory value. These were duly noted and explicated for each participant's shared secondary life theme.

3 Religiosity

Incidences of religiosity that were either manifest or latent were also color coded, and further insight was gained by reference to each participant's religiosity survey questionnaire to discover insights into the composition of the religiosity within the Cornwall et al (1986) framework.

4 Advertising

Comments about advertising in general, advertising use, as well as comments about mass media related topics, were color coded and often referred back to the first interview where the four ads were presented for discussion.

5 Other Variables

Though not within the primary focus and scope of this research project, the researcher was interested to note the extent to which references to class and gender appeared, and these variables were color coded for later researcher comment and possible future reference.
Interview Presenting Four Magazine Advertisements

The Primary and Secondary Life Themes gleaned from the Life World Interview were used as units of analysis to interpret participants' comments about the four magazine advertisements. Color coding was used to identify the emergence of life themes in discussions about the various elements within each of the ads. Identification of the emergence of Religiosity as well as references to class and gender were similarly color coded.

Following the completion of comments about the ad the participant chose to begin with, the research asked questions about advertising and advertising use to provide a richer understanding of its context within the participant's life. Discussions on the second and subsequent ads were then continued.

Not surprisingly, cross-over of the variables under examination occurred with some frequency, and the variables were in turn cross-referenced between each participant's two interview transcripts.
CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS

Meaning-Based Analysis of Four Magazine Lifestyle Advertisements Utilizing Religiosity as a Segmenting Variable

The following studies explore the interpretation and negotiation of meaning of six research participants who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They comprise three women and three men who are actively involved in the religious and/or social life of the LDS church.

Following the rationale of Mick & Buhl’s study (1992) in which their meaning-based model stresses the individual, and where the objective is to understand advertising and the influence of religiosity from a consumer viewpoint, the following analyses are organized by participant rather than by privileging the ads used within the study.

NOTE: Each participant profile is the sum of three developmental analyses: namely:

1 An Explication of the Participant’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

The first analysis will illustrate the appearance of comments that contribute to the identification of each participant’s life theme, a theme that represents “profound existential concerns that the individual addresses - consciously or not - in the course of daily events” (Mick and Buhl, 1992).

A secondary life theme is also identified, one that is inherently common and influential to all as members of an LDS community in Utah, and as participating members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The
secondary life theme is focused on family centeredness, and its expression in terms of LDS institutional religious and cultural ideals.

Participant comments that are considered key to identifying their life themes are italicized. Both the participant’s primary and secondary life themes are only identified at the conclusion of the life-story excerpts (see also Table 1).

2 An Analysis of the Participant’s Use of Life Themes

The comments elicited by the four ads are explored for incidences of the influence of life themes in interpreting their message and meaning to the participants. Excerpts are presented to create a picture of meaning negotiation and the correlation of the ad with the participant’s own life world.

3 A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

Using participant excerpts, the influence of religiosity is firstly explored in relation to the participant’s life themes and, secondly, the influence of religiosity in relation to the participant’s use of life themes when interpreting meaning within the four ads.

Fictitious names have used to preserve confidentiality. The order of participant excerpts is arranged alphabetically, firstly the three female participants (Andrea, Belinda, and Claire) followed by the three male participants (Alan, Boyd, and Clive).
"ANDREA"

An Explication of Andrea’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

Andrea is 24 years old and works as a full-time L.P.N. nurse. She is also studying part-time to qualify as an R.N. nurse. As well as being divorced with a five year old daughter she is pregnant with a second child. Her ex-husband is not the father of the child, and she is no longer involved with the child’s father. She lives alone in a house that is owned by her mother, and plans to continue working and studying after the birth of her second child. At the present time Andrea says that “there are three things in my life that I am focused on right now and that is my family, and the church, and school.” Being pregnant, unmarried, and a single mother in an LDS community is somewhat unusual, but Andrea is enthusiastic about the support and love she feels from her church Ward. “I might be just stuck in the night, but I’ve found in the situation I’m in, I’ve found there’s just a lot of concern and a lot people wanting to help.”

Much of Andrea’s energy and concern is concentrated in providing for her family, and school is a means for Andrea to do that. She is acutely conscious of the material and lifestyle sacrifices her present financial ability requires. “Sometimes I get frustrated. I try not to notice them. I don’t go out shopping a whole lot. It is frustrating, and its hard, and its not fun having to live on so little.” She goes on to explain:

A: School is so that I can afford my family. Yeah, basically the only thing we take with us after this life is education and nothing is more unattractive than an ignorant person. Education is very important to me, number one, I have a real thirst for learning in a lot of different areas, not just nursing and a lot of it is so that we can have a nicer life.

By “nicer life” Andrea means “not living on welfare, not living from
paycheck to paycheck, being able to afford nice clothes...” Not being able to afford nice things is not easy for Andrea:

A: Sometimes I get frustrated. I try not to notice them. I don’t go out shopping a whole lot. It is frustrating, and it’s hard and it’s not fun having to live on so little...

As a single parent in a traditional family neighborhood, Andrea is concerned about raising her children to be self-confident and secure people, adding:

A: I want to be a good mom to teach my daughter, and this little one, (pointing to her pregnancy) to teach her all about... to teach her educationally and to give her a strong testimony (A witness of truth in LDS terminology) and to help her have a really strong faith, and to be kind and patient and nurturing to help her grow in anyway that she cares to.

Q: How do you think your daughter feels about fitting in with other children in the neighborhood?

A: I don’t know if fitting in is really that important. I didn’t really fit in a whole lot in high school or elementary. I think a lot of the girls were really jealous and really made things hard and I never did fit in, but I’m really grateful for that experience, I think its made me stronger. I think as long as you can be yourself and stand up for who you are and what you believe in.

Andrea talked at length about learning to cope with fitting in at school and how she had believed that something was wrong with her “but then I realized there’s not and just because someone acts a certain way is not my problem.” Providing an example of family unity for her children is also important to Andrea. She is aware that “the focus of at least this neighborhood is good values and the family.” Her own parents divorced when she was in 8th grade, and her father’s presence was sporadic after that. Much of Andrea’s resolve originates from the example of her mother.

A: My mom has been the best example to all of us just because she
raised us all by herself and she's always worked very hard and is very clean and neat and does the best for all of us. She's set a really good example. There's four girls and we've all been best friends growing up, hanging out, doing whatever. My mom's tremendous, she loves her grandkids and spends a lot of time with them which really helps.

Completing her family by getting married again and having her children sealed to her is one of Andrea's dreams. Andrea believes that:
A: ...in this church women are kind of on a pedestal and they're revered. Men are supposed to care for them, take care of them. The General Authorities are always talking about how important women are...

Though Andrea's present circumstances do not conform to this ideal, she says that she does not find any pressure of expectation to be a certain type of woman:
A: I guess if there were I'd be hyper-sensitive because I'm a single mom and I've felt nothing but warmth and people wanting to help. I think the church and the gospel are here for one reason and that's to help everyone to make it to the celestial kingdom and the programs and different things are set up to help you get there.

In the meantime, though, nurturing self-confidence in her daughter so that she can feel comfortable being herself is a key focus for Andrea:
A: One thing I didn't have growing up was a lot of self confidence and I really try to instill that in her. She's got a lot and I think it'll just grow as she gets older and I think that she'll realize that hey, just because they're that way is their problem and I'm OK.

Living in a neighborhood of varied incomes, Andrea pointed out that her immediate neighbors, are "pretty comfortable, and just don't act the part." She describes their generosity as spontaneous and unfeigned and Andrea considers them to be good friends also. However, she recounts overhearing her
neighbor’s children talking about someone being poor.
A: It kind of upset me a little bit because I don’t think parents should talk about other people’s status in front of their children. I don’t know if they ever did, but I certainly wouldn’t talk in front of my children because I wouldn’t want them to treat those people any differently.

Andrea observes that “a lot of people will judge how good of a person you are by how successful you are or by the things you have.”
Q: How do you respond to that?
A: I think its pretty shallow. The church would say the world puts too much emphasis on how much you have or what you have or what you do, that kind of makes up who you are or how good you are or how bad you are, and of course that’s nonsense.

Though recalling this incident was clearly painful to Andrea, she doesn’t believe it to be representative of her neighborhood as the neighborhood is “relatively just moderate...and I don’t see that at all in our Ward.” The Ward is the term used to describe her local church congregation. However, Andrea’s participation in her Ward involves more than merely attending Sunday services. In talking about her Church she describes it as “people’s way of life, its what they believe in and how they live and it controls their life.”
Q: Is that a good thing, that it controls your life?
A: I think its a good thing, I really do. I think not in the negative way at all, I think you have a value system and you live up to it. I think anything that inspires you to live better than what you are, whether that’s LDS or - as long as you are always trying to acquire better and be better people, be kinder and more Christ-like.

While talking about life in an LDS community, Andrea described modesty of dress as being a symbol of Mormon identity, such as avoiding short skirts, thin straps and halter tops. Making reference to the Wool ad, Andrea used it as an example of the style of clothing to avoid.
A: Like, you know, the ad for wool sweaters, nothing that puts you in that sort of situation. The church tells you that you don’t want someone who wants you just for the way you look. It’s who you are that’s important. And being modest in your dress, and since I’ve become pregnant I can see how my attitudes and the way I dress affects my attitude and the way I act, and my thoughts and ideas and...

Interestingly, in a response to a question asking how her Church leaders respond to class, she believes "...they don’t come down on being upper class or acquiring things" and continues to describe her experience of dating a guy “who went out of his way to tell me all his suits were Armani, and all of his tennis shoes had to be Nike.” When I remind Andrea that earlier she had told me that she likes men in sophisticated clothes, she continues “I do, there’s a sense of class, a sense of status...”

In summary, Andrea’s life-story interview reveals a young woman who is aware of the comparative novelty of her situation within her community. Though she expresses feeling warmth and support from her community in spite of her circumstances, there is a definite sense that she is aware of her history of being outside mainstream conformity as practiced within her church and community, and many of the material rewards that flow from that model that she is unable to provide for herself or her children. Andrea is clearly fighting to preserve a positive self-identity and to promote the integrity of her social, material and spiritual purposes for her family. Andrea is intently focused upon her family’s growth and personal development, and recognizes herself as their most important influence, economically, emotionally and spiritually, in trying to create an environment and future in which her children can develop true, that is to say, aspirational, Latter-day Saint identities.
Primary Life Theme

Throughout all of her comments about her childhood, her family, and her future, Andrea is concerned about the need to develop a healthy concept of self within a community framework of religious beliefs and cultural practices. She recognizes that an important part of this is the ability to enjoy even a moderate material parity with her neighbors, and that presently she cannot attain this. Similarly, Andrea is anxious to improve her spiritual and religious life, for her own sake and for the sake of her children within an LDS community. Within this context, a primary life theme of Andrea’s could be described as a tension between being aspirational versus not being aspirational.

Secondary Life Theme

The secondary life theme which all the participants share is being family-centered. In Andrea’s particular case, her primary life theme influences her secondary life theme, producing a tension between family realism and family idealism.
“ANDREA”

An Analysis of Andrea’s Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:

*Being Aspirational versus Not Being Aspirational*

Secondary Life Theme:

*Family Realism versus Family Idealism*

Product advertising is something that Andrea tries not to notice. She finds the experience frustrating. Their images remind her of the things that she would like to buy but cannot afford. When this happens she chooses to remember things that she is grateful to have:

A: It would be nice to have those other things, I’m sure we will but when I start getting depressed felling I can’t afford this or I can’t afford that, I just think, well I have a lot.

When Andrea does notice advertising, she is quick to separate between advertising that she finds creative and that which she terms inappropriate. She questions the values that are used in advertising, and is sensitive to the messages her daughter may be exposed to. Advertising that makes an appeal to sex is particularly offensive to her. Andrea believes that advertising should be for advertising the product, because if she likes the product then the product will sell itself.

Pure Wool

Andrea desires to bring her life, and the lives of her children, into a conformity with standards that are expressed in terms of her LDS community and her interpretation of directives and teachings received from her church. Her present circumstances and their history fall short of her aspirations, and
she evidences some confusion in reconciling those differences. For example, from discussions about the pure wool ad, Andrea interprets the message of the that to be “if you wear the clothes the opposite sex will find you attractive, basically” which she thinks is inappropriate. However, by the end of the discussion she her further comments suggest a conflict with wanting to meet the attributes of being a desirable woman and confusion about how that can be given an appropriate expression:

Q: What do you think about appeals to be desirable?
A: I don’t think that’s wrong I think everyone wants to be desirable and attractive. I don't think there’s anything wrong with saying if you wear a product you will be desirable or you will be attractive, but not showing being desirable...maybe I’m just being over sensitive (embarrassed laugh).

Andrea’s recent sensitivity to this balance is expressed in a realization she shared from her life themes interview about standards of dress and modesty prescribed by her church, which also references the ad for pure wool:

Q: What does modest mean?
A: Don’t wear really short, short skirts, or halter tops or probably nothing more four inches above the knee because when you sit down it rides all the way up. Technically, short sleeves, nothing like thin straps or - I don’t know (laughs). Like, you know, the ad for wool sweaters, nothing that puts you in that sort of situation. The church tells you that you don’t want someone who wants you just for the way you look. It’s who you are that’s important. And being modest in your dress, and since I’ve become pregnant I can see how my attitudes and the way I dress affects my attitude and the way I act, and my thoughts and ideas and ....

At the moment, “who you are” is still very much an important matter of looks and appearance for Andrea, drawing critical comments about advertising practices, that are not without some irony, and again seem to point to uncomfortable comparisons, as well as confusion about what Andrea truly
aspires to be:
A: I really hate the way they get the really skinny, beautiful not the run-of-the-mill average kind of person, not everyone looks like that so don’t - a news thing on 20/20 or Primetime or something it was about this girl who had had umpteen face lifts and different things so she could look like Barbie. I don’t - I’m pregnant now but I usually don’t look like this, I mean I usually take really good care of myself and I’m usually in a size 6, I mean I’m not this big, horribly obese person.

Andrea is disillusioned about the lack of values used in advertising and the promises they imply:
A: I think that advertising as a whole, they don’t really use a whole lot of good values any more. I think its all oriented to you know if you wear this you’re gonna have this and so if you wear this you can be this. I think its all pretty risque now and more oriented to sex than anything. I don’t think this picture sells a wool sweater.

Her initial motive for criticizing the pure wool ad was based on her interpretation of the image, and that it was selling sex, which was offensive to her because of the possible negative impact it might have on younger viewers of the ad. However, the image also prompted uncomfortable feelings in its comparison with her own life, a comparison that touched on both Andrea’s primary and secondary life themes:
Q: How does the ad make you feel?
A: A little envious I guess, she’s skinny and I’m not in that situation where I can be like that with someone, or that - there’s no one in my life at the moment and I’m in a different situation, you know when you have kids, you know what I mean?

These are not helpful reminders, and Andrea suggests that to be effective, “if (pure wool is) all they wanted to advertise, it would make more sense just to have like the product and talk about the way it was woven or
whatever.” Andrea’s assessment of her use of advertising is simply “...if I like the product then its the product that will sell itself not, you know, the way they are...” which are messages that distract her appreciation of the product. Pure wool is a product that is consistent with Andrea’s desire to be able to afford nice clothes. Andrea wants to align herself with elegance, and wool as a natural fibre has a cachet for her that is comfortable with her primary life theme:

A: I love wool because of the way it feels, its thick and warm, and the ad’s not really to do with it being a natural fibre, which is what I really like I guess with my taste - I like elegance rather than cheap stuff, you know, like grunge style with the cropped tops and platform heels.

Bally

Andrea’s identification with natural materials and their association with good taste and style appeared in her comments regarding the next ad she considered, the Bally shoe ad:

A: I love leather and they were made in Switzerland and I would love to go there. A lot of the European products are, I don’t know, they look better, they feel better, I guess there’s a little bit of prestige. I’ve loved leather always, leather and suede.

Believing that successful businessmen and “anyone with maybe a little bit of style, or class and education” would wear a shoe like this, Andrea seems to draw a contrast between herself and others in her neighborhood:

A: Maybe not so much your average - especially not round here in Orem, in this little community, maybe it wouldn’t go over so much because its more expensive or, you know what I mean, people round here go to “Payless” (a low budget shoe store)...

48
A: ...in general a lot of the people around here are more just large family, smaller income and not so much worried about the fashion end of things, just the more down to earth, everyday, get food on the table.

This assessment is in contrast to the tastes of men that Andrea prefers to date, and suggests an aspiration for a partner and lifestyle that appreciates fashion and style as a distinction from simply being content with what Andrea describes as average:

Q How do you feel about men who wear products like this?
A: I’ve known a few men and I’m more attracted to men who are more classy, sophisticated, cleaner, and who dress better, maybe they seem more mysterious. They just look better, you know when men dress nicer then generally they’re successful and they’ve got some self-confidence and the way the carry themselves is better.

Without someone in her household for whom she would be able to buy a shoe like this, Andrea nevertheless identifies herself with the ad by remarking that her step-father, or her neighbor’s husband and even an old boyfriend would wear this type of shoe. These are people who she believes “would go out of their way to look the part, because they can carry it off, if you know what I mean.”

**GMC Jimmy**

Andrea’s identification with a style, class or ability to afford luxury items, though presently beyond her own means and circumstances, appears again with the GMC Jimmy ad:

A: I really like it, my sister has one of these, and I’d feel safer in a four wheel drive during the winter time. Someday I’ll be able to afford it, you look at it and think oh, someday!

However, even with her identification with the GMC Jimmy ad, and the
relevance of the vehicle to her own family lifestyle, and her association with it via her extended family with her sister owning that model, Andrea’s conclusion that “Yeah, it would be relevant to me, and my family, but price wise, no it’s not possible” invokes her secondary life theme of balancing family reality and family idealism.

Identification continues further when Andrea sees a relevance between herself and the female model who, though interpreted as being “probably the upper class, maybe not just your general run-of-the-mill lower class kind of people” shares similar activities with Andrea, who also likes the outdoor way of life, lives close to the mountains, likes to ski and loves horses. Far from an appeal to class alienating Andrea, the ad serves only to reinforce what she believes to be an aspiration that is true of everyone, however it is tempered again in conclusion with her secondary life theme:

A: everyone wants to be classy, to reach out of their little circle of life or what they’re doing. Everyone wants to improve their own means, I don’t know, I have a friend that says ‘champagne taste and a beer budget…I think its good that people try and move up or whatever. If you never stop reaching some day you’ll get there and I think its good so long as you can afford it, but then, I don’t know.

Versace

In contrast with Andrea’s willingness to claim even a removed identification with the Bally and Jimmy ads, the Versace ad does not provide any proofs of identification within Andrea’s own sphere of experience, those of her family members or anyone else she personally knows, and serves only to remind Andrea of the limits of her circumstances:

Q: Do you find any identification with this ad?
A: I’m stuck here in Utah, not in England. There’s really no identification, really except for it would be nice to be able to, it
makes me wish I were a part of it, to have the nice clothes, to have this as a house, a summer home perhaps.

While Andrea questions whether the Versace ad represents a family portrait, because if so it would appeal to an LDS value of family, Andrea’s family-centered secondary life theme causes her to reflect that “everything you have in life can be lost or stolen or broken.” Being family centered with a concern for providing a secure lifestyle for her daughter and unborn baby, Andrea’s circumstances force her to confront the tension between family reality versus family idealism. Both the Versace and Bally ads implicate Europe and European products, a continent that Andrea would like to visit and clothes that she would like to afford, but the reality is that “I’m stuck here in Utah, not England.”
"ANDREA"

A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence of Religiosity on Andrea’s life themes

Andrea’s response to the preliminary questionnaire, designed to measure various aspects of religiosity, expresses a full commitment in terms of belief, commitment and behavior to both traditional and particularistic orthodoxy. Though it seems apparent that in Andrea’s personal circumstances this may not have always been her situation, she currently desires to meet the standards and attainments prescribed within her Church’s belief system of doctrines and ordinances. The aspirational nature of her primary life theme is predominantly influenced by her adherence to the teachings of the LDS Church. To the extent that they emerged, these teachings serve to guide her interpretation of the motives and tactics she sees in advertising messages. Much of Andrea’s aspirational impetus is guided the particular orthodoxy of her LDS Church membership, as indicated in her desire to bring herself and her family into accordance with the directives of her church as she understands them.

While she makes necessary sacrifices to try to live within her means and recognizes the limits of her present situation, she is encouraged by the teachings of her church to strive to lift herself and her family into a higher standard of living. Andrea believes that this will be accomplished through her obedience to the teachings of her Church. As a result, she aspires to a number of achievements within the spheres of her family, personal and social life, most of these consistent with the life she desires as an LDS Church member and her ultimate heavenly or spiritual destiny:

A: I think the church and the gospel are here for one reason and
that’s to help everyone to make it to the celestial kingdom and the programs and different things are set up to help you get there.

Andrea is looking to bring her present life into a conformity with this goal by getting married and having “my kids sealed to me and give them a good life.” Andrea sees this objective being pursued and achieved in her own neighborhood where “families here care about providing for their families, both economically and spiritually” and where the focus is “good values and the family.” Having a marriage partner is an important part of Andrea’s self-identity as an LDS woman:

Q: What do you think it means to be a Christ-like woman in your Church?
A: When you think about being a woman you think about being a wife and a mother and having kids.
Q: And if not?
A: Just being the best you can be...whether you’re married or have kids I think they’re the same spiritual goals. You may not have to worry about someone else’s spirituality and spiritual growth but you still have your own.

However, remaining single, either unmarried or as a single mother, seems to fall somewhat short of the mark when one considers that “in this Church women are kind of on a pedestal and they’re revered.” Andrea justifies this by remarking that the “General Authorities are always talking about how important women are” and Andrea’s understanding of that importance is that “men are supposed to care for them, take care of them.” Until this state of affairs is accomplished in her own life, Andrea recognizes that some of the good life she wishes to provide herself and her children must come through her own efforts in her further education. In accordance with her secondary life theme, Andrea is not prepared simply to wait upon the chance of finding a marriage partner to take care of her lifestyle aspirations. Yet for Andrea
education has a critical personal dimension as well as a spiritual imperative:

A: School is so that I can afford my family. Yeah, basically the only thing we take with us after this life is education and nothing is more unattractive than an ignorant person. Education is very important to me, number one, I have a real thirst for learning in a lot of different areas, not just nursing and a lot of it is so that we can have a nicer life.

Q: what’s a nice life?
A: Not living on welfare, not living from paycheck to paycheck, being able to afford nice clothes, I don’t need a lot, just to be able to live better.

A thought that goes some way in compensating her for the frustrations of being able to provide so little for herself and her children is that “the church tells you you don’t want someone who wants you just for the way you look. It’s who you are that’s important.” At the moment, Andrea finds it hard and also frustrating to live on so little, and it is a situation and condition that she feels allows some people to “judge how good of a person you are by how successful you are or by the things you have.” Andrea states that she finds that to be “pretty shallow” and believes her Church leaders “would say the world puts too much emphasis on how much you have or what you have or what you do, that kind of make up who you are or how good you are or how bad you are, and of course that’s nonsense.” Even so, her circumstances suggest a sensitivity towards judgements of that kind, as for example when Andrea overheard her neighbor kids “saying something about someone being poor.” It upset Andrea because she does not think “parents should talk about other people’s status in front of their children.” Certainly there is no spiritual merit to be obtained in being poor, as Andrea believes her Church provides her with a value system that, if lived up to, will inspire both better character and aid a better living standard:
A: I think you have a value system and you live up to it. I think anything that inspires you to live better than what you are, whether that’s LDS or - as long as you are always trying to acquire better and be better people, be kinder and more Christ-like.

A belief system that provides for not only spiritual development but does not condemn social status or material prosperity is also how Andrea understands the attitude of her Church. Though the Church expects of its members to “help the poor type stuff and give to help to other people...they don’t come down on being upper class or acquiring things, I guess as long as you are being honest and paying your bills and paying your tithing.”

2 Influence Of Religiosity On Andrea’s Interpretation Of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

Andrea repeatedly cites her church, its teachings and its leaders in describing her thoughts about herself, her family and those things that are important to her, and it is with reference to her institutional religiosity that Andrea formulates many of her comments about the selected ads she looked at. This is particularly true for Andrea in relation to issues of sex and immodesty, with reference to appearance in particular. She admits that how you look is important when considered in light of Church prescribed standards of dress and modesty. Though Andrea says there are changes from more conservative dress codes, in order to “fit into an LDS community, though, dress modestly:”

Q: What does modest mean?
A: Don’t wear really short, short skirts, or halter tops or probably nothing more than four inches above the knee because when you sit down it rides all the way up. Technically, short sleeves, nothing like thin straps or - I don’t know (laughs). Like, you know, the ad for wool sweaters, nothing that puts you in that sort of situation.
Dress that Andrea considers immodest, and advertising that she believes makes an appeal to sexuality, conflicts with standards she has accepted from her church. In the ad for Pure Wool, Andrea uses the term ‘inappropriate’ to judge the meaning she reads from its visual. The message that she reads from the Wool ad is that “if you wear the clothes the opposite sex will find you attractive...I don’t think its appropriate...” This is reinforced for Andrea by her own experience that “the way I dress affects my attitude and the way I act, and my thoughts and ideas and -” Worse for the ad, Andrea believes “its selling sex” which is an approach that she says “is more offensive to me than anything...” It is the image that the ad uses that is too suggestive to Andrea. She believes that “everyone wants to be desirable and attractive” and she does not think there is “anything wrong with saying if you wear a product you will be desirable, or you will be attractive, but not showing being desirable.” In the Bally shoe ad she again notices the clothes and observes “...I wouldn’t wear that or let my little kid wear such immodest clothes...” Andrea is not only reading the ads for herself, she is also determining their potential visual effects on her daughter:

A:...Its kind of offensive but it doesn’t really - I mean you can look at it or not look at it or whatever, but I think there’s little kids and OK society puts so much on sex and immodesty and all these different kind of things, but I think the real problem I have with it is for the younger viewers who see it.”

Ads with lifestyle images like this “and especially some of those perfume ads” pose a threat to the religious lifestyle she wishes to encourage for her daughter’s development, “to give her a strong testimony and to help her have a really strong faith.” Immodest clothes are in direct conflict with Andrea’s idea of how a woman should be evaluated, because “the church tells you you
don’t want someone who wants you just for the way you look.” This is not the benign message that Andrea interprets in the ad for Pure Wool. She laments the use of female physical ideals, resulting in women “trying to look a certain way” instead of “actually being themselves.” The GMC Jimmy ad also depicts an attractively dressed model. However, Andrea ascribes the idea of class to the clothes the model wears and is immediately sympathetic with the lifestyle depiction. Nor is she troubled by the appeal to a social class, and in fact accepts that “...everyone wants to be classy, to reach out of their little circle of life...” As far as Andrea is concerned her Church authorities “don’t come down on being upper class or acquiring things” and this allows her to express a belief from her personal religiosity that sanction her ambitions “as long as you are always trying to acquire better and be better people, be kinder and more Christ-like.” The class appeal used in the GMC Jimmy ad is consistent with Andrea’s religiosity, and allows her to observe that:

A: I think its good that people try and move up or whatever. If you never stop reaching some day you’ll get there and I think its good...

Andrea uses her institutional religiosity to give authority to her understanding of her life and her aspirations for herself and family. To the extent that Andrea expresses religiosity that could be termed personal religiosity, it is an attempt to show that her desire for a better material life is not inconsistent with being Christ-like.
“BELINDA”

An Explication of Belinda’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

For both interview appointments Belinda arranged to come to the university campus after work. Belinda is 34 years old, is married with a teenage daughter and a younger son, and chooses to work full-time as an employee of one of her church’s institutions. Coming from a family that was completely immersed in the affairs of her church, and now herself working as one of its employees, much of Belinda’s comments were influenced by church context. Belinda is at a stage in her life where she has “just come to a realization...that I don’t do a lot for myself, because I have felt selfish if I take some time and go off and pursue this hobby or go out with the girls or something.” She talks about how hard she finds it to admit that she needs to nourish herself because of the guilt she feels.

Q: Where do you think the guilt originates from?
B: That’s a good question. I think probably from my own mother and because I was raised in the church and had a lot to do with the church. Sometimes other women actually make you feel more guilty, or they’re more critical of what you do than men are. Well, for example, as a working woman I’ve almost all of my married life been a working woman and although we don’t hear as much criticism at church as we used to fifteen years ago, you still get it, you know, you get Relief Society lessons about staying at home and being with your family and that’s what the Lord wants you to do, and the Prophet is telling you this.

She admits, though, that her number one priority is her husband and family. One of Belinda’s stated reasons for choosing to work now without economic necessity is that “I enjoy working, I feel like I’m a better person, I feel happier when I’m at home because I’ve got something I’m doing during the day which I feel is fulfilling to me.” However, she finds that other women are often
very critical of that, particularly women who are full-time homemakers.
B: And I’m not sure what’s the root of that. I guess what I think is that they, maybe they would like to do more and they don’t so they lash out at you...
Q: How do you manage the conflict between knowing what the Prophet has said and no longer having an economic necessity to go out to work?
B: I don’t feel guilty about it any more because I feel I have the right to make decisions for my own life and my husband I, you know we discuss it, its something I’ve not taken lightly and I just think Oh I’m going to do this. It was a big decision to make, we talk to each other, pray about it and it feels right for me and it feels right for my family, and so I don’t feel guilty anymore.

Working LDS women are not a minority, as Belinda points out, and she thinks that the Church may be changing in its attitude because of that fact “and so I guess I feel eventually they are going to come around to my way of thinking. I don’t feel wrong about it.”

In the meantime, Belinda is testing the water to find out how other women in her Ward feel, looking for different points of view. As a teacher in her Ward’s women’s meeting, she wants to feel that others will allow her to express her views.
B: I kind of slip things in I feel like sometimes, and its surprising the responses you get from the women in Relief Society, that its good to know that some of them feel the same way, and some of them will get upset about it, you know, they’ll want to stick to the lesson, but I will talk about working women and try to get across the point, not to change their minds necessarily, but just to get them thinking there’s another side to this.

Prompting the issue at her place of work is another way in which Belinda strives to “get them thinking about another side of the issue.” She laments that many of the young people who work around her are “so narrow minded,
they don’t see the whole world.” Having to unquestioningly conform to a consensus is not how Belinda views issues that affect her life and community. B: Mormons are a very small percent of the population and what we try to do as a church is make everyone think the same as us and I don’t agree with that. And so I sometimes will deliberately say something contrary to get a discussion going, to get them thinking about another side of the issue. An example of that is the gay issue. Last year I guess it was, the gay clubs in schools, which I’m not opposed to. I would have discussions with the people in my office, just trying to get them to think about the other side of it. Is it really a choice this person’s making, could that really influence other children to become gay or lesbian. Like I say, I’m not trying to change anyone’s mind and sometimes its not that I believe that, its that I want them to be more open minded. I don’t think the church encourages people to think for themselves or to be open minded. In fact it punishes people that do that.

Thoughts about her future, and getting older, have prompted Belinda to question what she might be when her children are no longer dependant upon her or if her husband should die. B: What do I have left? If I’ve given everything to them and to the house, and done nothing for me and they’ve all progressed, and I haven’t. Also I just want to be more independent, not that I want to leave my husband, but you know we do have a partnership, and more and more I realize - you know its interesting at the beginning when I got married I didn’t really like that, I wanted him to make decisions because that’s the way I had been raised and that’s the way my parents did it. But now I like the equal footing that we have and I just want to be able to continue to progress and to grow so that we can always be equal. Because he is, he is growing and progressing.

To illustrate her concerns, Belinda describes a young woman friend who attended her church’s privately funded university, Brigham Young University (BYU), not expecting to graduate because she thought she would get married.
When this didn’t happen, she went on a mission at age 21 for eighteen months, returned thinking that she would now get married and start a family. Now she’s graduating from BYU, has not married, and still has no other plans. B: I don’t want to be like that, I mean I’m past that point and I am married, but I don’t want to be dependent in that way, I want to be able to stand on my own two feet. If my husband should drop dead tomorrow you know I want to be able to handle the finances and be able to go out and buy a car and you know run the house and things like that, I don’t want to be a weak person.

Belinda feels that she is lucky to have a husband who supports her aspirations and shares household responsibilities with her. She feels resentful, though, of church directives that she thinks intrude beyond matters of faith. Q: Do you find any of your values present you with conflicts? B: The main thing to me, and fortunately I am in this church and was raised in this church, but more and more the main thing to me is just that I believe in Christ, I believe in God and I live a good life. And so sometimes the directives and the policies and the counsels are peripheral, I guess. I don’t feel that I have to... I don’t think they are important. And sometimes I think the Church gets into so many different little aspects of our lives that are not necessary, and we teach that we teach them correct principles and let them govern themselves. But the leaders don’t allow us to do that, and sometimes I resent them, because I think they really don’t allow us to.

This is perhaps further illustrated later in the interview when Belinda was asked how she felt about directives from church authorities on media offerings, such as avoiding R-rated movies. B: For me personally I like to be the one to choose the movie. I don’t stick to their directive, I don’t follow their directive. I never go and see a movie if I don’t know about it first, I’m not just blindly going to the movies. And so if its something that sounds interesting to me and appeals to me, I’ll go and see it even if its an R. I wouldn’t say that I’m desensitized to bad language or nudity.
When I see it I think well, I guess I wish it wasn’t there, but it
doesn’t make me want to walk out of the movie. *So, I guess I feel I
want to be able to make that choice myself.*

This sense of intrusion has become critical for Belinda at work where
she’s beginning to think she would “*feel more comfortable, I guess, with a
separation between the church and my job.*” She notes that its interesting how
she’s changing, “especially coming from such a strict religious home, the
church was my parent’s life and I’m finding that its not for me, actually. *Its an
important part of it but its not my whole life.*” Later in the interview,
Belinda returns to talking about her job and the struggle she has to be
recognized as a contributor in some of the decision making.

**B:** I was thinking about that about my job, and started to talk about
it and got side tracked, that very often, *well mostly men are the
managers, and when it comes down to a decision they always have
the final say and you know I think I have a lot to give to this, you
know, I’m an experienced person, its very difficult because they
will use the church and the priesthood to keep you in your place. I
guess my solution for that is to find a job that’s not connected with
the church.

Belinda points to efforts she and her husband have made to let their
daughter know “that she is a valuable person, *that she can do anything she
wants, have any job she wants.*” However, Belinda has already noticed
discrepancies in the attitudes she has tried to encourage in her daughter and
the experiences her daughter finds in her community church activities.

**Q:** Do you see your daughter in any conflict with church programs
and values?

**B:** She has already experienced that... She would come home from
the (youth) meeting and ask how can the boys get to go and
mountain climb and we paint little wooden things. *You know, we
have given her every opportunity and not kept her to just
traditional, feminine roles,* so she thinks she can climb a mountain,
I can play basketball like a boy, because she’s never been told otherwise at home. So it has been a conflict. Sometimes, another recent thing that happened, she came home from a church meeting and said is it true that the Prophet said you shouldn’t marry someone of another race? Because we have tried to teach, you know, you should love everybody no matter what color or what religion, what sexual preference even. We have been very liberal as far as that goes and so she - it seemed so strange to her that our church would encourage something like that, and she couldn’t believe it was true. So she is in conflict already with some of the teachings.

Concern for her daughter’s unfettered development leads Belinda to comment that she has been talking to her daughter about the importance of carefully choosing her friends, “I don’t want her to fall for someone that doesn’t treat her well, that abuses her or doesn’t value her or treat her as an equal.” However, Belinda notices that these concerns are less pertinent in her daughter’s mind than the importance of how she looks.

B: I acknowledge that appearance is important, you know your first impression is important, but as a society we place far too much emphasis on the outside and not what’s on the inside. And so its very unfortunate if you’re not a Vogue model, you don’t get taken seriously. On the other hand if you are a beautiful blonde you are pigeonholed, assumed to be beautiful and you’re dumb. I don’t know if men believe that you can be beautiful and intelligent. I mean I do, but I think it works against us as women. We’re constantly talking about that to (our daughter). I’m always talking to her about not placing too much emphasis on that, but you know she wants the boys to notice her and at this point the boys are not interested whether she can have a conversation with them about anything.

While accepting that her daughter is still young enough to be affected by advertising and peer proscriptions that promote values of appearance, Belinda is aware that, though she does not ascribe much importance to them herself,
these values are important to others beyond young people like her daughter.
Q: In what ways do you see yourself different from characters portrayed in advertising, or media images?
B: I wouldn’t describe myself as materialistic. It’s interesting, last time you asked me to look at the ads and describe what values I saw and I kept thinking, well I don’t see them promoting any values. And when I thought about that afterwards, I thought, that was a little bit narrow of me because I was thinking in terms of my values, of having a close family, belief in Christ, of service to others, things like that. And I was looking at the people and the ads and thinking there’s nothing there because from those ads they are materialistic, appearance and image was very important. Those were their values, but I was thinking they don’t have values because those are not my values. I like to look nice but I don’t think I’m consumed with my appearance or my image, and sometimes you get that impression from those ads.

Belinda and her family live in a neighborhood where the income level is generally higher than their own, with neighbors who are doctors, dentists and lawyers. However, making comparisons between possessions is not important to her. “I don’t find myself thinking well, I need to have a boat, because they have a boat now and we really should be buying skis and going skiing.
Q: How do you feel about the acquisition of goods?
B: Its distasteful to me. A show of money like that. People who do it just for show, buy something and park it out front so everyone can see it, I don’t like that, I think its sad, they’re lacking something to me in their lives, that they’re basing their value on their possessions. And it does happen in a Mormon community. I think the world generally is becoming more materialistic, more selfish, more self centered. I don’t know if we can blame advertising on that though, I’m sure its helping it along. But I think its a general trend and its happening in the Mormon community too.
Q: What is it that you think these people lack?
B: Maybe just self esteem, a feeling of individual worth. If they need outside things, showy things to get approval from other people, they’re lacking something personally, that maybe they
don’t feel good about themselves, they don’t feel confident, they need to have a nice fancy car so that they can feel the same as their neighbor and feel that they are worth something.

Belinda is more concerned with being worthwhile to herself and others, “I want people to like me because I am a good person, not because of the things I have but because they like me. That’s pretty simple but that’s how I feel.

In summary, Belinda has become aware of an evolvement in the way in which she thinks about her church, her family and her community that has meant realigning attitudes that she had previously accepted because of tradition or even comfort value. In particular, she is concerned about developing her interests and her thinking beyond the demands of her family responsibilities, to experience the personal growth she sees her husband attaining. Since the conclusion of our meetings Belinda has quit her job with the church and is now working in a corporate environment.

**Primary Life Theme**

Belinda’s primary life theme emerges from her agitation with a status quo in her attitudes that no longer fulfills her needs, leading her to experience a tension between Being Fulfilled versus Not Being Fulfilled.

**Secondary Life Theme**

Though Belinda is concerned to extend her personal development beyond traditional home-based roles, she is committed to being family centered versus not being family centered. The expression of Belinda’s family centeredness revolves around being inclusive of other people’s lifestyle choices rather than dismissing their validity.
“BELINDA”
An Analysis of Belinda’s Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:

Being Fulfilled versus Not Being Fulfilled

Secondary Life Theme:

Being Accepting versus Not Being Accepting

Belinda is at a stage in her life where she is keen to explore new ways of thinking, about herself, her family, her Church and her society. From her primary life theme interview, Belinda states that she has sometimes failed to recognize the beliefs and desires of others as values because they are not her values.

B: It’s interesting, last time you asked me to look at the ads and describe what values I saw and I kept thinking, well I don’t see them promoting any values. And when I thought about that afterwards, I thought, that was a little bit narrow of me because I was thinking in terms of my values, of having a close family, belief in Christ, of service to others, things like that. And I was looking at the people and the ads and thinking there’s nothing there because from those ads they are materialistic, appearance and image was very important. Those were their values, but I was thinking they don’t have values because those are not my values.

Being independent enough of any form of prescribed thinking to be able to make a personal evaluation also extends to Belinda’s attitude to advertising. Though she thinks that it plays a role, and that it is necessary as a way to inform people of available products, Belinda thinks that it can also mislead:

B: I don’t think it should become important that we should be getting role models or it shouldn’t be determining our values, so its a necessary thing but it shouldn’t have too much power.
Thinking beyond advertising messages and being able to critically evaluate them in terms of personally held values is an issue of maturity that Belinda believes renders some groups in society more vulnerable than others:
B: I think certain groups are more vulnerable, thinking about teenagers who are struggling and they’re at the point where they’re trying to find themselves and they are an especially vulnerable group that might glean the wrong values and messages from advertising.

The issue of vulnerability is largely connected with experience for this group:
B: I think some people might look at a picture of a pretty girl and think oh I can be like that if I do what she’s doing or have what she has or color my hair like she did. I may have felt that way when I was younger, but then you realize it doesn’t work.

A social responsibility that is cognizant of differing abilities within society, in response to the idea that advertising has a social influence, is a sentiment consistent with Belinda’s family centered secondary life theme. It is important to be inclusive in a consideration of others and not to think entirely within the framework of one’s own values and beliefs.

**Incidence Of Primary And Secondary Life Themes In The Interpretation Of Advertising Examples:**

**GMC Jimmy**

On first examination, Belinda’s response to the GMC Jimmy ad was that the female model was nothing like her, pointing to the woman’s pursuits as being in a different class, ”an equestrian” and “someone with lots of money, not just the regular mom type person which is what I guess I think I am, even
though I am a working woman.” The initial interpretation of the ad message immediately alienated Belinda’s consideration of the vehicle. To someone who is looking for new avenues of personal development, in line with Belinda’s primary life theme, the ad was threatening in its use of an exclusive appeal to a social class that Belinda felt excluded from, remarking that it was annoying “because I don’t want to feel that I’m in a lesser class than anyone else.” The ad also ran counter to Belinda’s family centered secondary life theme of being inclusive of others, leading her to conclude that the ad was “not promoting family values.”

B: It looks like we’re talking about a couple and their pets, and so with the value system that I have, which is very family oriented, this seems more selfish. I would say its promoting more material things and individualism rather than family.

Belinda did find other aspects of the ad’s message to be consistent with her primary life theme, and reflecting the transition in her thinking, from being wholly family and other focused to a focus on her own need for personal growth. From the initial dismissal of the ad in line with her established thinking, Belinda also offered a more reflective consideration of parallels in line with her primary life theme. For example, from her early comments Belinda states:

B: My first thought on reading this one is that this woman is nothing like me, you know, an equestrian. To me they are talking to a different class of people, actually.

Q: What class?
B: Someone with lots of money, not just the regular mom type person which is what I guess I think I am, even though I’m a working woman. I don’t think its talking to working women, probably a more educated woman, yeah because she’s pursuing her Masters. So, I guess it turns me off a little bit, just because its things that I’m not really into.
Whereas a little later, the initial disassociation gives way to Belinda’s own aspirations:

B: Well, actually I like it that she is so varied in her hobbies. You know, I think that’s a good thing in a person so that’s good...You know, I have a family, I have children and so for me my husband and my family come first, although I realize its important - at some point in my life I would like to go to school and maybe spend some more time developing hobbies, but at this point its just not appropriate for me I don’t think.

Although Belinda does not believe she will ever live the material lifestyle depicted, even after her children are no longer dependent, she decides that that lifestyle is more a matter of choice about disposable money than an issue of right or wrong. For Belinda, the real issue of choice is not simply material:

B: I don’t think there’s anything wrong, I think women should be able to pursue a career or education and better themselves, we shouldn’t be stuck in the home, well we shouldn’t not be able to have choices, I guess is what I’m saying. Obviously this woman has some choices, and the money to make them.

**Pure Wool**

The image used in the Pure Wool ad seemed to have little identification with behavior that she could recognize within herself - “I don’t think I would ever be as free as that, rolling in the grass in the park.” As an image to sell wool it was surprising to Belinda, causing her to remark that she would expect this type of image to accompany a perfume ad because it is usually how young people are portrayed. Belinda’s thinking is about her teenage daughter “who’s getting into that realm”

B: I honestly don’t like her to see a lot of public displays of affection...Not that its going to make her do anything, its just I
think a mother’s reaction at this point.
Q: Do you feel that you daughter is vulnerable to lifestyle
depictions?
B: I think people can become desensitized, you know there’s a time
and a place for intimacy, and when you see it - I mean its not
pornographic or anything, but when you see it in ads like that it
just becomes more matter of fact, more an acceptable thing.

This is not simply about inappropriate behavior in public. Comments
about her daughter from Belinda’s life themes interview place them in a
context that more clearly reveals her primary life theme expressed in terms for
her daughter:
B: I’m always talking to her about not placing too much emphasis
on looks, but you know she wants the boys to notice her and at this
point the boys are not interested whether she can have a
conversation with them about anything. They are looking at looks
and I’m trying to teach her that in the long run that’s not
important, her education is important, pay attention to that and do
well in school, and I always tell her eventually it will all fit into
place, hoping it will...I don’t want her to fall for someone that
doesn’t treat her well, that abuses her or doesn’t value her or treat
her as an equal.

What Belinda wants for herself, her daughter and other women is to
decide for themselves how to be sexy and glamorous, to be desirable, without
conforming to somebody else’s idea of that:
B: I want to be - obviously I want to be desirable, I want to look nice
and smell nice. But I don't want (advertising) to tell me how to do
it, and I don’t necessary want to look like this woman. I don’t think
people should be expected to be desirable or sensual. I like to be
independent and encourage that thinking in others around me, so I
don’t want, I wouldn’t like to think that advertising was trying to
make us all the same or tell us what to do, how to dress, how to be.

The formula of desirability offered by the Pure Wool ad fails to meet
Belinda’s secondary life theme of being inclusive because it only seems to speak to an unconnected individual without reference to family which is an integral part of her identity:

B: Again its not really a family thing, its a couple thing, like the first ad we looked at. I mean they’re not trying to appeal to a mother or a father even, so again its almost a selfish thing, indulge yourself, reveal yourself and wear this and be glamorous and sexy in wool. And at this point in my life I guess I’m more attracted to things that are geared to the family, because that’s what’s surrounding me, that’s on my mind all the time. So I would say its not one with family values.

The ad’s proclamation that “The rules no longer apply” also comes into conflict with Belinda’s secondary life theme of not being inclusive of others, and by promoting a focus only on the physical body neglects the growth and development that is the foundation of her primary life theme:

B: ‘The rules no longer apply’, which again is very selfish to me, reading that. I’m a person who likes rules, I guess and trying to be considerate of other people, and when I hear the rules no longer apply, I just don’t like that phrase actually. They’re saying how it used to be, never reveal the figure in the presence of the opposite sex, and now they’re saying its OK, we want you to be shapely and flaunt it. I don’t think we should flaunt it. I think very often there’s too much emphasis placed on the outside, on physical beauty, and physical attributes and we end up with very shallow relationships, because the relationships are based on physical attractions rather than a deeper spiritual relationship.

Bally

Belinda was disappointed that the ad sought to make a class appeal, relying upon an association with a label, rather than promoting an appeal to its quality as a distinguishing benefit:
B: I wonder if I did have a lot of money and I could go anywhere and buy whatever I wanted, I would think about it differently. *It would be nice to have something handcrafted. It's going to be a better shoe, it's going to be comfortable,* but the way its advertised here its more the name, you're buying Bally and getting a good feeling.

Being able to discern the better part of an issue is something that Belinda is trying to help her daughter understand, a concern that reveals the motivation of her primary life theme of being fulfilled. In this instance, it is the substantive difference of intrinsic quality versus the dubious symbolic value of a label:

B: I think because I have a teenager, I keep going back to that, you know there's a certain type of jean you wear, a certain label. Okay, and *even if you could buy the same style for twenty dollars you still have to go to this store and get this label and pay fifty dollars for a pair of jeans so that you can say that you're wearing these jeans.* And I don't know how to get it across to my only daughter. It doesn't matter to me anymore, I'm not interested in labels, I want to look nice but I don't need to spend an extra thirty dollars on something to look nice. I don't need that affirmation, I guess, that I'm cool.

Belinda admits that sometimes she might wish she were a little more glamorous, and ads such as these can serve as a prompt for her to "smarten up," but she has never been a trendsetter, is never going to look like a model, "but yeah, I do want to look good." Looking good on her own terms however:

B: Personally I have never been a trendsetter, not the height of fashion any way. I like to look in style for the period, but there are some people that like that. I mean there are some people that naturally do that well and I don't seem to emulate them I guess. *I want to do what's right for me, I want to be comfortable and look good in the way that I feel most comfortable, whether it's the height of fashion or not, I feel anyway as long as I look nice and feel nice that I'm ok. So it's not important to me to follow these people.*
Versace

The group of people in the Versace ad also seemed like trendsetters to Belinda, but she saw a distinction between the older couple and the younger members of the family group, feeling that “they actually don’t look like they fit in with the rest of the family.”

B: With the two older people in the picture they don’t look like they are just spending leisure time doing nothing, just playing and using up all of their money. For some reason I feel like they are, in quotes, hard workers. Some of the others seem vapid, like there’s nothing else there.

Belinda remarks that whereas the earlier ads “didn’t seem geared towards family people, now here we are with a family, but it still isn’t like my family.”

B: I look at this and then I think about my family and - you know what, these people for one thing they don’t look happy, it seems a very arty picture and the people I can’t think what word I need to describe this, they look aloof, they don’t seem like ordinary everyday people.

The emptiness of the composition, its removal from her own family where there is experience of work, achievement, and happiness leads Belinda to conclude that, certainly in the case of the young members of the family, that their job is simply to look good.

B: They’re buying expensive clothing and trendsetting, you know you’ve got earrings here and, even the little children have a certain look about them that makes you wonder what’s behind, you know is there anything there behind them, the faces. So it makes me in this case I think, sometimes I think I would like to have more money and be able to buy whatever I want, but I wouldn’t want to end up like this, because they don’t, well actually they filmed them
all without smiling, they took pictures where they’re all serious. And it kind of looks empty.
Q: What do you think they lack?
B: That’s a good question, I was going to say experience, real life experience you know, when you don’t have money things don’t come easily and sometimes you appreciate things more when you’ve had to work for them. So, yeah, real life, they’re living a different life.
“BELINDA”
A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence Of Religiosity On Belinda’s Life Themes

Characterizing Belinda’s religiosity is to show a growing conflict in the widening division between her personal religiosity and the institutional religiosity that has characterized much of Belinda’s life in her Church. Though Belinda’s personal religiosity still looks to her Church for some of its conceptual impetus, particularly in relation to her secondary life theme, her motivations are centered in her own goals of fulfillment, rather than conformation with church directives. Belinda was raised in an active LDS family environment where “the goal is that you grow up and you get married in the Temple and you live happily ever after.” Often in traditional LDS family practice, decision making is the responsibility of the husband and father, and this was the pattern Belinda observed in her family and expected to continue in her own marriage. Finding that her husband required more of a partnership in the decision-making process was at first unwelcome, “I wanted him to make decisions because that’s the way I had been raised and that’s the way my parents did it.” This is no longer the case however:

B: But now I like the equal footing that we have and I just want to be able to continue to progress and to grow so that we can always be equal. Because he is, he is growing and progressing.”

also:

B: I guess I’m pretty lucky in my marriage because my husband wants that too, he doesn’t want to have dominion over me. We have always been equal and he was the one at the beginning that kind of drew me out and said, you know its okay, you can have a say in this and you can make decisions, to the point where I wanted to and I didn’t at the beginning. I don’t think the church
encourages that at all...

Growing and progressing is the essence of Belinda’s primary life theme, and its pursuit brings Belinda into some conflict with areas of institutional religiosity that were previously unquestioned in her life. She is now looking to activities outside her home and family to help her grow. This is not to say that her family has become less important:
   B: I guess my number one priority is my husband, and then my family. So I highly value my own little family, and so a lot of what I do is revolving around them.

Taking time for herself is not easy for Belinda because “its hard for me to do, actually because I feel guilty...” and she locates the source of her guilt from her mother “and because I was raised in the church and had a lot to do with the church.” She also points to other women, and those who are homemakers in particular, who “actually make you feel more guilty, or they’re more critical of what you do than men are.”

Reviewing the opposition that Belinda feels from some within her Church is important in defining the nature of religiosity on her primary life theme. Belinda seems to be separating what she sees as the important principles of her religious belief from LDS cultural traditions:
   B: Another thing that I’ve been thinking a lot about recently is more and more I think just having good Christian beliefs is enough for people. We make a lot of fuss about being the only true church and I think there are a lot of good people in other churches that are living good lives. The main thing to me, and fortunately I am in this church and was raised in this church, but more and more the main thing to me is just that I believe in Christ, I believe in God and I live a good life.

This statement is consistent with Belinda’s representation of herself
through the religiosity survey questionnaire. The survey shows her to attend her church meetings on a weekly basis and regularly attends her other meetings. It also shows her to be more emphatic in areas that define her personal beliefs and commitments to a more personalized relationship with God. Though the church remains an important and integral part of her life and the life of her family, Belinda also states that

B: ...the church was my parent’s life and I’m finding that it’s not for me, actually. It’s an important part of it but its not my whole life.

She is also more questioning of some of its fundamental tenets. For example, from the survey questionnaire, Belinda is unsure about the proclaimed status of her church as being the only true church on the earth, and also whether the founding prophet, Joseph Smith, actually God the Father and Jesus Christ. Most of Belinda’s criticisms of her church show a conflict with its practices and directives that are in opposition to her primary life theme, for example, developing activities outside the home, or working:

B: Well, for example, as a working woman I’ve almost all of my married life been a working woman and although we don’t hear as much criticism at church as we used to fifteen years ago, you still get it, you know you get Relief Society lessons about staying at home and being with your family and that’s what the Lord wants you to do, and the Prophet is telling you this. And yet, I’m at the point of my life right now where we could get along without my income, but I enjoy working, I feel like I’m a better person, I feel happier when I’m at home because I’ve got something I’m doing during the day which I feel is fulfilling to me.

Belinda’s personal religiosity comes to the fore again in regard to this because she qualifies her love of her working life by admitting that it was something she discussed with her husband and also prayed about:

B: I don’t feel guilty about it any more because I feel I have the right to make decisions for my own life and my husband. I, you
know we discuss it, its something I’ve not taken lightly and I just think Oh I’m going to do this. It was a big decision to make, we talk to each other, pray about it and it feels right for me and it feels right for my family, and so I don’t feel guilty anymore.

Belinda resent’s what she sees as the church’s intrusiveness on areas of her life that she believes are her decision: B: And sometimes I think the Church gets into so many different little aspects of our lives that are not necessary, and we teach that ‘we teach them correct principles and let them govern themselves.” But the leaders don’t allow us to do that, and sometimes I resent them, because I think they really don’t allow us to.

Being able to come to her own conclusion and be responsible for her own behavior is illustrated in Belinda’s comments about her church’s directive not to watch R-rated movies: B: For me personally I like to be the one to choose the movie. I don’t stick to their directive, I don’t follow their directive. I never go and see a movie if I don’t know about it first, I’m not just blindly going to the movies. And so if its something that sounds interesting to me and appeals to me, I’ll go and see it even if its an R. I wouldn’t say that I’m desensitized to bad language or nudity. When I see it I think well, I guess I wish it wasn’t there, but it doesn’t make me want to walk out of the movie. So, I guess I feel I want to be able to make that choice myself.

To some extent Belinda is trying to promote a more questioning personal religiosity, both in her church and amongst members of her church who are colleagues at work. One of her Sunday responsibilities is as a teacher in a women’s religious meeting, Relief Society, that she feels has been really good for her confidence: B: ...I’m kind of a quiet, basically shy person, and I get nervous about doing that. But its been really good for me, to help me be more confident and know that I can do that, but also to be able to talk about some of the things that - I kind of slip things in I feel like
sometimes, and it's surprising the responses you get from the women in Relief Society, that it's good to know that some of them feel the same way, and some of them will get upset about it, you know, they'll want to stick to the lesson, but I will talk about working women and try to get across the point, not to change their minds necessarily, but just to get them thinking there's another side to this. I do this in my office as well, we have a lot of students, and I just sometimes feel they're so narrow minded, they don't see the whole world. Mormons are a very small percent of the population and what we try to do as a church is make everyone think the same as us and I don't agree with that. And so I sometimes will deliberately say something contrary to get a discussion going, to get them thinking about another side of the issue. An example of that is the gay issue. Last year I guess it was, the gay clubs in schools, which I'm not opposed to. I would have discussions with the people in my office, just trying to get them to think about the other side of it. Is it really a choice this person's making, could that really influence other children to become gay or lesbian. Like I say, I'm not trying to change anyone's mind and sometimes it's not that I believe that, its that I want them to be more open minded. I don't think the church encourages people to think for themselves or to be open minded. In fact it punishes people that do that.

Working for a church organization has now become more difficult because Belinda feels excluded from decision-making, and her continuance there is further complicated by Belinda's awakening to her sympathy with some feminist objectives:

B: It's interesting because I would not have described myself as a feminist, but I think I am. Not militant or anything and I guess the problem is that when people hear the word feminist they just think of the militant feminists out there. But I do agree with a lot of their messages, and the things they are trying to accomplish, which is difficult in the church because of the priesthood. Naturally, the men always are the leaders. I was thinking about that about my job, and started to talk about it and got side tracked, that very often, well mostly men are the managers, and when it comes down to a decision they always have the final say and you know I think I
have a lot to give to this, you know, I'm an experienced person, its very difficult because they will use the church and the priesthood to keep you in your place.

Restrictions of participation on the basis of traditional priesthood decision-making is a practice that Belinda is anxious does not inhibit her daughter's development:
B: ...and I have made an effort with my own daughter to let her know that she is a valuable person, that she can do anything that she wants, have any job she wants.

Belinda is concerned that her daughter has already begun to notice behaviors in church activities that differ from the teachings Belinda has given her in the home. Whereas Belinda and her husband have taught their daughter that she is not restricted to purely feminine roles, her daughter complains that whereas the boys got to play basketball the girls had to do craft activities. A recent confusion for her daughter of concern to Belinda resulted over her daughter learning that a church prophet had counselled its members to marry within their own race:
B: Because we have tried to teach, you know, you should love everybody no matter what color or what religion, what sexual preference even. We have been very liberal as far as that goes and so she...it seemed so strange to her that our church would encourage something like that, and she couldn't believe it was true. So she is in conflict already with some of the teachings.

It is Belinda's personal religiosity that most clearly influences her developing ideas about her own needs, those of her family and also her relationship to her church. Her desire to become more independent of prescribed patterns of thinking leads her to be more sensitive towards those directives that Belinda sees as imposing restrictions upon herself and her
daughter. Most of the restrictions that she struggles against are principally those that are gender based, involving decision making, being a working mother, developing hobbies and interests outside the home, and generally looking for recognition on the basis of merit rather than gender.
Influence Of Religiosity On Belinda’s Interpretation Of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

Belinda’s secondary life theme and its harmony with her institutional religiosity combine to form the basis of many of her comments about family and Belinda’s assertion that her family is her first priority in life. The relevance of all four ads seemed to be measured in its relevance to Belinda from the degree that she either recognized family values or their departure from values that Belinda felt were consistent with family, specifically her own. From the GMC Jimmy ad Belinda observes that “It looks like we’re talking about a couple and their pets, and so with the value system that I have, which is very family oriented, this seems more selfish.” Though Belinda’s primary life theme is concerned with being fulfilled, and she is looking to growth beyond her home environment to attain this, it is clearly not going to be at the expense of her family. Belinda sees the GMC Jimmy ad as “promoting more material things and individualism rather than family.” The development that Belinda is seeking through her primary life theme is not an either/or proposition for her:

B: ...I have a family, I have children and so for me my husband and my family come first, although I realize its important - at some point in my life I would like to go to school and maybe spend some more time developing hobbies, but at this point its just not appropriate for me I don’t think.

The Pure Wool ad also suggests a preoccupation with self that omits family and conflicts with her religiosity which leads Belinda to comment that: B: ...its not really a family thing, its a couple thing, like the first ad we looked at. I mean they’re not trying to appeal to a mother or a father even, so again its almost a selfish thing, indulge yourself, reveal yourself and wear this and be glamorous and sexy in wool. And at this point in my life I guess I’m more attracted to things that are geared to the family, because that’s surrounding me, that’s on my mind all the time. So I would say its not one with family values.”
The alienation from family values is one focus that determines the relevance of an Ad to Belinda’s own life. In the Bally shoe ad the alienation is further compounded by the out of State image the visual suggests to her, and conflicts with the institutional religiosity that characterizes much of LDS Utah society:

B: None of these pictures really represent the type of people that live around here. Look at these people, its more like California, this one gave me a California feeling, or New York, where the actual city or the whole state is more trendsetting, they live a different kind of a lifestyle than we do here in Utah.

Q: What makes the difference?
B: Well one difference is the Mormon values here in Utah, the emphasis on family. I think in Utah we are to some degree sheltered from outside trends.

Belinda’s search for correspondence of meaning with her own life and values, particularly family values, is further frustrated with the Versace ad because the family values she reads are so different from her own family values:

B: I think I must live a more conservative lifestyle. In the others I talked about families and how they didn’t seem to be geared towards family people and now here we are with a family but it still isn’t like my family...

The difference that troubles Belinda is that the family looks “vapid, like there’s nothing else there” and she ascribes this to their lack of real life experience. Her own experience suggests to her that “when you don’t have money things don’t come easily and sometimes you appreciate things more when you’ve had to work for them.”

Another theme that runs throughout the ads, and one that displays a
conflict between her primary life theme and her institutional religiosity focuses on Belinda’s growing resistance to conformity. Belinda believes that “Mormons are a very small percent of the Population and what we try to do as a Church is make everyone think the same as us and I don’t agree with that.” This idea emerges in the Versace ad:

B: ...another thing that I feel is good, that might be classless, is that they show a lot of individualism, and I think that’s a good thing. I don’t think we should all look the same... Sometimes in a family, or even in our culture, in our Church, we try to make people all the same and I resent that sometimes...

Another pleasing difference in the ad’s image for Belinda, and one that corresponds with Belinda’s personal religiosity, concerns the integration of people from different races. Belinda recounted that her daughter had been troubled with a report from her Church not to marry someone from a different race. Belinda describes this tenet of her personal religiosity:

B: Because we have tried to teach, you know, you should love everybody no matter what color or what religion, what sexual preference even. We have been very liberal as far as that goes...

The Bally shoe ad leads Belinda to think of trendsetters and the imperative of following fashionable trends. In contrast to this type of prescription Belinda would rather “...do what’s right for me, I want to be comfortable and look good in the way that I feel most comfortable, whether its the height of fashion or not, I feel anyway as long as I look nice and feel nice that I’m OK.” Belinda is also provoked by the Pure Wool ad and its appeal to be sexy or desirable under its terms, “but I don’t want them to tell me how to do it, and I don’t necessarily want to look like this woman... I wouldn’t like to think that advertising was trying to make us all the same or tell us what to do, how to dress, how to be.” The perceived independence of the woman in the
GMC Jimmy ad is a point of correspondence with herself “She looks like an independent woman, I feel that I’m pretty independent, and it looks like she has a family, we have that in common... I like it that she is so varied in her hobbies. You know, I think that’s a good thing in a person so that’s good.” The appeal of independence, particularly in a woman, elicits an observation from Belinda’s personal religiosity that is in conflict with her institutional religiosity that prefers women in the home:

B: I think women should be able to pursue a career or education and better themselves, we shouldn’t be stuck in the home. Well we shouldn’t not be able to have choices, I guess is what I’m saying.

With a teenage daughter at a vulnerable stage in the development of her self-identity, Belinda is concerned with images that suggest a woman’s worth is primarily her looks. Belinda’s institutional and personal religiosity coalesce to the degree that she believes that “as a society we place far too much emphasis on the outside and not what’s on the inside.” Inappropriate public displays of intimacy concern Belinda and because of her teenage daughter “I honestly don’t like her to see a lot of public displays of affection... I have a teenage who’s getting into that realm... It makes you think of the skin, of being more intimate and closer.” Belinda is concerned about the vulnerability of teenagers who are struggling to find themselves who “might glean the wrong values and messages from advertising.” Belinda does not believe the ad is “one with family values” and is concerned with teaching her daughter about appropriate timing for intimacy:

B: ...you know there’s a time and a place for intimacy, and when you see it... Its not full frontal or anything, but maybe we’re showing just a little bit too much in these ads. I don’t think its necessary to go that far.”
The emphasis on physique is something that Belinda feels undermines her objectives for her daughter's self confidence:

B: I think very often there's too much emphasis placed on the outside, on physical beauty, and physical attributes and we end up with very shallow relationships, because the relationships are based on physical attractions rather than a deeper spiritual relationship."
"CLaire"

An Explication of Claire’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

Claire is thirty-five years old, married and a mother of three children. Her work as a part-time nurse allows her to plan her working hours to be at home with her children during some part of the day. Her husband works as an engineer and together their joint salaries are in excess of $50,000 a year. Though working part-time, Claire is planning to return to school to acquire further nursing qualifications. Claire had invited me to meet her at her home. There was little evidence of children or their effects as I entered the house. Not only was my visit expected, but I was very quickly aware that it had been thoughtfully planned for. Claire’s demeanor throughout both our meetings, though warm and friendly, was measured. This had less to do with her willingness to be candid, but seemed to be more her confidence about giving thoughtful responses. For example, Claire’s response to my opening question, namely “How do you think your friends and those who know you well, would describe you?” suggests a desire to be candid in conflict with self-conscious doubt:

C: I don’t know. Friendly, maybe a little bit of a perfectionist, patient, I don’t know.

In describing herself, Claire confides that she is “a lot calmer on the outside than I am on the inside.”

C: The stresses in my life are maybe more my personal life, or my relationships with people, how people feel about me as an individual. My expectations of what people expect of me create stress in my life...I don’t think people expect as much of me as I think they do...

The need to please, to be acceptable to herself, her husband and her
community seems to occupy much of Claire’s thinking:
   Q: You mentioned that other things seem to bug other people, but not you...
   C: ...I’ll get really caught up in, well my house isn’t clean, and the corners are getting dusty, and I feel like it needs to be perfect all the time and its not, of course its not. But I get caught up in that. Just my household has to be really in order for me, and its an important thing for my husband too. He’s much more... I mean, the man I’m married too doesn’t roll his socks because it stretches the top, if that says anything about him. And so...he’s a lovely person, but I think I create a lot of stresses because I’m worried about pleasing him. So some of that I may hold in, instead of, oh fold your own socks the way you want to, you know what I mean, instead of making waves.

Claire attributes her anxiety to please to her home life, principally a father whom she describes as being strict and a little bit abuse “so that was my mechanism for survival, to please.”
   C: And most the time it doesn’t bother me, but there are times when life gets so busy that I’ll kind of have to let things go. And I don’t think he really cares as much I think he cares about if the house got vacuumed that day. He may comment, oh the house didn’t... And I’ll take it very personally and he meant nothing by it, you know. But I’m, well, if you don’t like it than vacuum it. And then I feel bad about that.

In response to a later question about impressions of equality between men and women in the society of her church, Claire described it as a partnership with men holding priesthood authority, and women having the power to create life.
   C: Its a total partnership. There’s a lot of concern in the church about unrighteous dominion. I don’t feel that in my home, I haven’t seen that a lot in my neck of the woods, but I don’t have a problem with this, I don’t feel like I’m any less powerful because I’m a woman.
At another point in the interview I returned to questions about pleasing authority by again asking Claire about her church:
Q: Do you find any conflicts in role expectations for you as an LDS woman and how you would really like to be?
C: No. I don’t. In fact I wish I could be more like they... I wish I could stay home with my children all the time. I wish I could be that mom... I didn’t realize how hard it would be to work and to be a mother, and didn’t realize what an important job that was too, I think. You just think, Oh what a hard job it is, what a hard job it is.”

Asked what her feelings were about the Prophet’s advice for women to stay at home with their children.
C: I guess for me, and I guess we all rationalize ourselves away, but I’ve always thought like I’ve had an ideal situation as a working mom, I couldn’t ask for a better situation.

The situation that Claire describes, that allows her to feel comfortable with her church’s direction appeared almost rehearsed:
C: We’ve never had to leave our children with a babysitter...grandma was always the babysitter, which is a better babysitter than mom I think, she loves as much or more than I do, and so I never had to struggle with the feeling that I was leaving my child with somebody who may not care about them as much as I do... And I love what I do, I love being a nurse...I still like taking care of people, and I love the people I work with, they’re good friends. That’s kind of my social out in some ways - If I wasn’t at work, though, I’d probably find something else.

Motherhood, or “being a good mom” is the value that Claire says she most strongly identifies with in her church:
C: Being LDS gives me some guidance and direction that women that aren’t LDS may not get, just the guidance about trying to be at home with your children as much as possible, the guidance to pay their tithing, to be financially prepared, to be spiritually prepared. I think the church tries to teach how to teach our children to be
well rounded, and to be educated spiritually, educationally and financially.

The impression that much of Claire’s worry for her children to be well rounded stems from what she describes limitations from her own non-LDS childhood is almost palpable. It emerges more clearly as she describes her desires for her sons and daughter. Though she wants “them all to know that they can accomplish anything they want to do”

  C: I want them all to know that the most important thing for them to do in this life is to marry a good person, have a family and that that’s a top priority for them.

Claire believes that from her early experiences she has “learned to be patient, to be tolerant” because as she sees it she “didn’t have much choice.” Claire remembers how she was misperceived at school:

  C: I didn’t do well in school as a child, I was put in remedial everything, I was considered a problem. And I knew I wasn’t but when you get that kind of feedback you start to wonder. About 5th grade I realized I could do it and about 6th grade my family lifestyle started to change too...”

Also:

  C: “My family wasn’t a strong LDS family when I was little and I felt those limitations and I felt bad about not being accepted or involved...”

The circumstances and influences of her parent’s lifestyle also contributed to Claire’s sense of estrangement from (LDS) social norms in her youth. Claire believes she is still affected by them; in her words “I don’t think they ever go away.” Consequently, providing her children with understanding about how to create the right impression and how to fit in is very important in Claire’s role as a mother.
C: “A priority for me is to help their little self esteem’s grow...I want them to learn as many lessons in life as they can, and work through them so that they grow from them instead of letting them conquer them, you know the problems we get in life. And then I’d like to be able to educate them all enough that they can grow and progress as much as they want to and they’re not limited by what I didn’t do as a parent.”

Also:

C: “when my children were very young I used to say to my husband, now honey don’t cuss because they’ll learn to cuss and that will limit them and what they can do. Because if they’re cussing in a home that is LDS and they don’t approve of that then the parent might limit that child from playing with them...And maybe that comes from the fact that my family wasn’t a strong LDS family when I was little and I felt those limitations and I felt bad about not being accepted or involved because of the community, and you know, primary and young women's, were activities that I saw the kids go to and do in your area. And not that they mean to exclude you, its just their culture. And so if you’re parents aren’t up to date on when those activities are and what’s going on then you discover you may not be included.”

As Claire continues to reflect, simply being up to date as LDS parents, though a necessary condition for social integration, is not sufficient in itself. Claire believes that children play an important role in helping to integrate their parents:

C: You know this neighborhood that I live in right now is the best one yet. Some of the others - It seems like when we were starting out and were a little less active in the church and in just kind of an apartment setting, that you don’t get - There isn’t even a community it doesn’t feel like. ...Children play a lot in how you get along in your neighborhood. I think kids tend to bond parents more than your social group or church or whatever. The children flipping back and forth from home to home make you communicate with you neighbor next door and you learn more about each other through your children. I think that was what the
barrier was, the road and being across the street on a little bit...
And just kind of alienated from the group. And kind of at a
different level....

A significant factor in the sense of alienation that has troubled Claire
since early childhood seems rooted in notions of class. She identifies her
present neighborhood as “upper middle class” and thinks that the notion of
class is more important to her than she would prefer:
C: I don’t know why that is, I think its just a society kind of thing. I
don’t know why we get caught up in that, why do we get caught up
in that? But we do, its bred into you from the time you’re very
young.

Once again the imperative of protecting her children from the exclusions
of her own childhood, seems to underlie it’s importance to Claire:
C: I’m comfortable here, I probably wouldn’t be comfortable any
higher up or any lower down. But how do we decide that’s where
we belong? I don’t know.
Q: What is it that you think would make you uncomfortable either
higher up and lower down?
C: I’d probably lose a value system and maybe that’s where it comes
from you know, the value system. I’d lose - The children my
children play with are good kids and I may not have that. I guess it
boils down to they have the same values I do. I mean that may be
really wrong for me to say my child may not have as good a friend
in a lower class, because they’re little kids, but they’re taught
different values in their home.
Q: What values for example?
C: Maybe that they wouldn’t be - I just maybe feel like there’d be a
higher chance of my children getting involved in drugs or stealing
or being deceitful in some ways.

Being an active LDS parent has helped Claire overcome many of the
social limitations she has experienced. However she also seems to conclude
that her happiness in her present neighborhood is related to its position within
a social scale:
C: Whether I feel the same way on the opposite scale, you know, a higher class, you know maybe the pressures from being in that situation. *Well maybe here I just feel like I have a sense of myself and that I can be true to myself* and I wouldn’t be able to be lower or higher.

This is contrasted with Claire’s experience in a lower-class neighborhood earlier in her marriage:
C: Yeah, nobody cared who we were or what we were. This is one example and maybe this is why I feel this way. They didn’t even care enough about us as people...

Claire then goes on to describe how she and her husband suspected a neighbor family that “lived in an apartment across the street, I don’t even know what nationality they were but they weren’t... I don’t know that that makes any difference...” were siphoning gasoline from their car, and how her husband bought a locking gas cap and then left out a can of gasoline that had been spiked with sugar:
C: ...the next day they couldn’t get their car going. My husband went out and helped them push it into the driveway and said, gosh, it sounds like you’ve got sugar in your gas, you know, because - And that’s (my husband), that’s his aggressive - Probably wasn’t right but that was a way to teach them a lesson. *I just thought like, yeah, exactly, nobody valued us as a person, nobody took the effort to come get to know us, and we meant nothing to them* except for that we were a kind of parking lot they could take gas from to drive their car. I didn’t know anybody, nobody ever took the effort...

Another factor in Claire’s sense of acceptance in her present neighborhood is its seeming acceptance of her husband’s straight-talking manner:
C: *But this neighborhood’s been real accepting of (my husband)* and - He’s a little bit on the rebellious side, so they’ve been
accepting of him as a person. He’s pretty outspoken, he says it like it is and if you don’t like it its no skin of his chin kind of person. But we’ve done well here and the people have been really nice and accepting. They seem to appreciate him more here than I have felt in other neighborhoods. I’m sure that has to do partly with our religion, and I think it has a little bit to do with the social economic part of it too. I don’t know if... I think the more education you have the more your world’s opened up maybe, and you’re more tolerant and less judgmental, and I feel maybe that’s what’s happened, people have been really kind to us here.

However, life is not entirely without its continuing conflicts for Claire and her husband. A near neighbor is a source of conflict for them and other neighbors over the construction of a large storage building that obstructs views. The situation has overtones of the disregard that upset Claire in her earlier, lower-class neighborhood:

C: we’ve been trying to handle it as tactfully as we can, but I’m not married to a very tactful husband and, oh really hard situation, trying to be - Struggling with being Christ-like but not being taken advantage of, how you protect your investment in your home and community but without stepping on anybody’s toes, its impossible.  
Q: What has been the response to your concerns from your neighbor?  
C: They’re just not nice people, they’re just... Its been a struggle. I went to try to talk to her to see if we could just come to some kind of a understanding of one another and she was so angry with me, that we would even feel like we had the right to say that building was ugly, that we even had the right to - ...That said to me that they didn’t care about what they did to me as their neighbor, they only cared about themselves. And when I went to approach her about it that clarified it, she just gave me an ear full for about an hour and I didn’t go over there to fight, I just wanted to talk and I explained that to her, but she certainly wasn’t Christian or Mormon in what she told me, so, yeah, that’s probably my biggest obstacle right now. Nobody’s going to win.

To summarize, Claire exhibits a sensitivity to feelings of being
misunderstood by others, and feeling vulnerable in her acceptability to others. To compensate for this Claire has a perfectionist approach to what she does, and frequently fails to meet her own standards. Being thought to be ‘remedial’ is a school experience that Claire is still fighting. Outward indicators therefore take on an added significance, and social circumstances involving neighborhoods and perceptions of class take on an added significance. Conformity to social norms, especially within the context of her church, becomes an indicator of success, and provides a sense of stability that compensates for Claire’s sometimes fragile self-confidence.

**Primary Life Theme**

Given the sensitivity that Claire has towards her personal and social identity a primary life theme exists in Being Comfortable with self versus Not Being Comfortable with self.

**Secondary Life Theme**

Recalling Claire’s early family experiences, the importance of being family centered versus not being family centered is similarly true. A focus that is especially pertinent to Claire’s family objectives is fitting her children to be full participants of church and social circles consistent with a middle class LDS identity. This objective might be terms as being included versus not being included.
"CLAIRES"

An Analysis of Claire's Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:

Being Comfortable versus Not Being Comfortable

Secondary Life Theme:

Being Included versus Not Being Included

Advertising is okay as long as it is kept in perspective. As far as Claire is concerned that perspective cannot include all that she wants to achieve because that would be impossible, but which is nevertheless what she thinks advertising is about. For Claire, it is the difference between wanting a ‘Better Homes & Garden’ house and settling for the reality of a comfortable home. Claire believes that advertising is about perfection, but a perfection that is the result of “a value system that is so incredibly confused.” In the case of advertising, Claire thinks the values are also false:

C: You know, I think that when we look at advertisements we’re supposed to be perfectly well kept, ideal weight, a Better Homes & Gardens home, one child, two child tops and out in the work force doing your thing.
Q: How do you feel about that?
I don’t know that it brings you great happiness. Maybe ten years I would probably would have said, yes I want to climb to the top of the ladder. I just think they’re false, and I think it brings an incredible amount of stress to try to keep a perfect body and a perfect home and a perfect family and a perfect job. Its impossible, there’s no way you can do that.

Claire has found herself shifting her allegiance from the ideals proposed by advertising which cause her stress, to a consideration of standards of reality
around her. It is a solution that accords well with Claire’s primary life theme:

For example:

C: I have an image of myself as I’d like to be but I know I’m kidding myself the older I get, but I can probably tone up a little bit. *We all have these ideals, what we used to be and would like to be again, but its impossible.*

Q: How important are looks to you?
C: The more I start to grow old I think I’ve started to look at older women and see how some grow old kind of gracefully, and I *think as long as you’re taking the time to stay well kept it doesn’t matter if you get wrinkles or you have an extra ten pounds or - You’ll still think that person’s attractive.*

By measuring her standards by the examples she finds within her community, Claire is also satisfying the imperative of her secondary life theme, reinforcing a behavior that more easily allows her to fit in. By choosing as more meaningful the standards expected of her peers, rather than those that are offered through advertising messages, Claire is exhibiting incidences of both her primary life theme her family centered secondary life theme. The need to feel comfortable in her social environment, and the reinforcement of peer approval as a proof of remaining acceptable:

C: *I have a lunch group with ladies every Tuesday and we probably influence each other on what we get,* and how the group gets influenced I don’t know, but we talk about you know the things we like, what we buy. My daughter’s into a certain kind of shoe, where did you get those shoes, I got them for a cheaper price here, you know, that kind of thing.

**Versace**

Claire did not immediately recognize what the ad was selling, and wondered what the ad was trying to tell her. While at first deciding that “it looks like this is a nice family” Claire’s interpretations about the nature of
their wealth and class quickly escalated into alienating comparisons. The ad’s image of wealthy people caused Claire to position herself in relation to her own interpretation of it, revealing disassociations with her primary life theme:

C: I wouldn’t be comfortable there, because I don’t feel like I’m that level. I’d like - I would like to be the kind of person that a person from this kind of class could come to my home and feel comfortable, but also that a person from a lower class could come to my home and feel comfortable. I feel like I’m somewhere in the middle.

On one level, the ad has nothing to offer Claire because she feels she is already living the dream she aspired to:

C: I’m just a mom in an upper class neighborhood and we shuttle kids to school and its what I dreamed about being, I just always thought I’d be a mom in a neighborhood with - then it was a station wagon when we dreamed as kids, but shuttle little boys back and forth to baseball practice, and that’s pretty much what I’ve become.

The prospect of having to mix with her social superiors is something that she avoids:

C: I may not go into a certain situation because I may not feel worthy. It may stop me doing things on the upper end, but the lower end I feel comfortable with...I never felt comfortable in the upper end and that might be because of the way I was raised, even though my dad did very well and ended up being very politically active and my mother is very much with the social scene at BYU, which is not real wealthy but its - you know, they did fine but I think they never really felt like that’s where they belong.

Claire believes that clothes play a role as indicators of class and believes that first impressions are formed from them. She sees the Versace clothes as being traditional, and within her ideal of the tradition of seriously wealthy families she was not able to see how the non-caucasian children fitted in, or to reconcile the inter-racial mix:
C: I try not to be judgmental, I try to get to know the person individually before I make a big judgement but I know because of the way that I was raised and I was raised in a totally caucasian environment that I have, you know, built in feelings that I don’t always recognize and I’ll make a first impression judgement that may not be flattering to me.

Claire believes that “wealthy families tend to be more aggressive about how they, who they marry.” Though the ad seemed to present a family-centered scene, the formality that Claire associates with great wealth leads her to see the ad in terms of acceptance on the basis of conformity. This is in opposition to her own family and the values they share. Claire’s further interpretive comments touched on her secondary life theme:

C: They tend to want to marry like people. Its expected of them. I feel like even really wealthy families still kind of match-make, if that makes any sense, trying to pick an appropriate mate for their family instead of maybe marrying for love.

Whereas Claire states that her family displays affection and “are able to express true feelings with each other” the Versace ad presents an unacceptable ethic of parenting to her, one that denies children acceptance should they break rigid social codes. This is another incidence of dissonance between her interpretation of the ad and her secondary life theme:

C: They’re pretty reserved, they’re not going to shout hooray for anything are they? I think they’ve been trained to not get too excited about - neither too excited nor too, you know, upset or sorrowful. They’re just kind of monotone. I wonder if they’re really happy with each other, do you know what I mean? They look kind of distant, it seems like to me they can’t - that they may not be able to express true feelings with each other because they’re not - Other than these two right here there’s not a lot of affection in this picture, if that makes sense...they aren’t able to express their feelings with one another like they should be able to, at least I think they should be able to...this family seems as if they’re just
expected to live without making mistakes.

**GMC Jimmy**

The social positioning of the GMC Jimmy ad provided Claire with an immediate identification with none of the puzzlement, discomfort or dissonance of the Versace ad that preceded it. It led Claire to exclaim “This looks like where we belong” and “This one I can relate to” and of the female model “She just feels like she’s my kind of person” and “I can relate to her” and “we’re similar in a lot of ways.” After reading the model’s to do list Claire thought that she was perhaps “a little fancier than I am” but the similarities, if not the details, decided Claire that the ad “sells that automobile for me.” However, after reading the description of who the model was supposed to be, the harmony that at first existed between the ad and Claire’s primary life theme began to disintegrate:

C: Oh, she makes her own jewellery. I didn’t see this, this didn’t jump out at me until now. *Her description. But obviously her clothing - she looks a little inflexible to me,* just the way she’s dressed and because she has a list that she’s going to be cropping off and I can relate to her, *but I feel like I have to be more flexible than she is.* *That picture to me makes me feel like she’s inflexible.* She’s too neat and tidy to be a mother of three or four children. *She’s on her way up, she’s going to get things done her way.*

Claire had earlier talked about looking for a new vehicle, and had narrowed the list down to five. Though the Jimmy is socially positioned as compatible with Claire’s self-confessed “upper middle class neighborhood” lifestyle, she needs something bigger for her needs. Of the model’s Jimmy she observes that “she’s only got room for five and a little luggage” and although Claire believes her final decision will be “a compromise between me and my husband and what our needs are and the best value for my money” she is not
impervious to choosing a vehicle that will assist her secondary life theme. For example:

C: *Suburban seems to be a big thing for this kind of neighborhood right now* where maybe in a different neighborhood it would be something else. *Suburban is a social status thing because of our environment, I mean we’re LDS families with lots of children and lots of family activities going on...*

Q: What is it about a Suburban?

C: Its large enough to carry a big family, I think you can put eight to ten kids in there, get everybody where they’re going. But they’re in there and they’re comfortable. *Its large enough that they’re comfortable, so I think - Its a pricey car, its not a cheap car and everybody knows that* (laughs).

**Bally**

The Bally shoe ad provoked an immediate dislike, with much of Claire’s response showing it to be in opposition to her primary life theme. Though Claire did not like the shoe, it was the picture used by the ad that had such a powerful interpretive meaning for her:

C: It feels like maybe a business party or some kind of an evening party that me and my husband wouldn’t want to go to *but you end up going to because you have to make an appearance.* And you never enjoy yourself like these two are, although they always make you think that if you go to a party like that you’re going to. *And I’ve never gone to a party like that and enjoyed myself yet, or felt comfortable there because everybody’s trying to put on airs.*

She further believes it to be the type of business party to be at “where your promotion might be kind of vulnerable” and with people who are “trying to be somebody that they’re probably not.” Claire thinks that someone would wear this shoe only if “you’re so worried about making a first impression.”
This might be an effort that Claire would attempt herself. In her life themes interview she admits to being subject to stresses over how other people feel about her, and their expectations of her, but Claire does not believe her husband would even consider this shoe - "If he came home with that on I'd wonder what was wrong with him." This is because Claire's husband, in contrast to herself, "is pretty outspoken, he says it like it is and if you don't like it its no skin off his chin kind of a person."

Claire concedes that the Bally ad and the status label it represents is something she would consider for her son:

C: The only time I buy a label is when I buy Levis for my son because its important to him, and there's a certain stage in life when you just don't get through it unscarred if you don't have the right kind of clothes, do you know what I mean? And then you get past that.

The empathy that emerges here invokes Claire's secondary life theme, and she is particularly anxious that as a mother she does all she can to help her children's self esteem grow. Part of this process is the recognition she has of what being accepted sometimes requires. She relates that her husband was teased when he was young for not having the right clothes, though Claire says she did not have this same experience. From her own life themes interview, though, Claire had a similar experience where she felt excluded because her family was not a strong LDS, and that she felt bad because of it.

**Pure Wool**

Just as Claire believes that one should reach a point where labels cease to be important, so she believes expressions of affection in public should not be expressed beyond a certain point. Claire's objection to the pure wool ad is that
she thinks “they are making a sexual appeal and maybe that’s why its not acceptable to me.” Because Claire is unable to gauge the duration of the kiss the couple in the picture share, she makes a distinction about what is acceptable:

C: Maybe there are children off playing and she’s the mom and reaches over and kisses him and that’s fine.

However:

C: Like, at Disney World we were standing in line and two young people in front of us couldn’t keep their hands off each other in the line and I thought, Oh this is just too much. A little flirting is fine, but they couldn’t keep their hands off each other and I’m thinking let us alone, its getting annoying, its distracting to me. And it makes you uncomfortable, or the people that are standing around, like we’re invading on a private moment.

The ad seems to provoke an anxiety for Claire because she hopes that she is “still attractive to my husband without being all decked out and overdressed.” She is also skeptical of the implies result, interpreting the ad as “...trying to give you the impression that wool’s going to take care of your romantic lifestyle.” The ad fails to relate to her because “I don’t think wool’s ever going to make my figure look like that, no matter what.” Claire claims that this approach amuses her, but her comments suggest underlying influences from her primary life theme:

C: ...its such a strong ad you look at it and you think the rules no longer apply, okay, so I don’t have to wear a T-shirt under my sweater any more. I get the point. I might would buy a wool sweater. I don’t care for the picture but it doesn’t offend me either. I kind of makes me chuckle, it amuses me.

Q: Why?

C: Because I just think, well she wears it in a way I’d never get away with.
Q: And if you could?
C: If I could I might, but I can’t, but I don’t think I could really feel confident doing that.

Though Claire believes the Pure Wool ad is making a sexual appeal, her need to please does not prevent her from rejecting advertising prescriptions to be desirable. Claire’s reasoning is that “as a woman I want to be desirable, and women have different roles, so that’s okay to me to be sensual. However, it seems as if Claire believes that this expression of a woman’s difference should be a strictly private provenance, for when it comes to advertising using sexual appeals for public consumption, then Claire states that “it’s not acceptable to me.” The add also is in conflict with what Claire believes is possible for her to attain in the face of unrealistic comparisons with advertising images. To accept advertising’s standards of a desirable woman, is a losing battle and one that Claire is attempting to resolve:
C: I just think they’re false, and I think it brings an incredible amount of stress to try to keep a perfect body... Its impossible, there’s no way you can do that... You’d sure like to, at 35, be as thin as you were when you were 18, have the same complexion. And it doesn’t happen, its unrealistic.

Claire resolves the stress to finding a standard with which she can be comfortable, as well as realistic, with the view that “as long as you’re taking the time to stay well kept it doesn’t matter if you get wrinkles or you have an extra ten pounds... All you need is to keep clean, brush your hair and put on a little makeup.
"CLAIRE"

A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence of Religiosity on Claire's Life Themes

Claire reveals that during her childhood her father was "very strict and a little bit abusive." She believes that her "mechanism for survival" was to try to please him. This early experience has had continuing repercussions on her relationships with other people:

C: The stresses in my life are maybe more my personal life, or my relationships with people, how people feel about me as an individual. My expectations of what people expect of me create stress in my life.

Claire has found that in bringing her life into harmony with her particular orthodoxy, being a committed LDS Church member, the impact of these stresses is considerably reduced. The Church as rescuer was demonstrated to Clair while she was still young. Her father's eventual involvement had an impact on his behavior towards the family as Claire recalls "...my dad became more interested in the Church and eventually went through the temple and so some of his behaviors changed too in the way that he treated us."

Claire has not always been as committed to her Church as she is today. However, there is a comparison to draw about the quality of her life in relation to the degree that she and her husband remain committed members of their Church. Claire remembers a time when "we still weren't terribly active at that point but I went to Church and the kids went to Church, but I still felt kind of alienated..." Claire attributes her sense of alienation to the quality of her then neighborhood, which was composed of a number of people who were not
members of her Church. Neighborhood has had an important effect on Claire’s life themes:

C: I think that has to do partly with our religion, and I think it has a little bit to do with the social economic part of it too. I don’t know if - I think the more education you have the more your world’s opened up maybe, and you’re more tolerant and less judgmental, and I feel maybe that’s what’s happened, people have been really kind to us here.”

It has nevertheless been necessary to maintain a certain level of both personal and institutional religiosity to accommodate Claire’s life themes. She is sensitive that her children are included in the society of her neighborhood’s children, and this has required some behavioral modifications:

C: You know I think we live in a society, as much as they probably try not to judge others, we do, we make a judgement. And even when my children were very young I used to say to my husband, now honey don’t cuss because they’ll learn to cuss and that will limit them and what they can do. Because if they’re cussing in a home that is LDS and they don’t approve of that then the parent might limit that child from playing with them.

The motivation to ensure her children, and by extension herself and her husband, are included in the society of the neighborhood, stems from an early experience of Claire’s own that has contributed to her primary life theme:

C: My family wasn’t a strong LDS family when I was little and I felt those limitations and I felt bad about not being accepted or involved because of the community...

Claire’s responses to the religiosity survey questionnaire show her belief and her commitment to be strongly aligned with LDS orthodoxy, and her attendance at Church meetings is as frequent as her nursing schedule allows. Claire’s religious behavior displays a willing conformity to the fundamental principles of Christianity. Today Claire’s religiosity goes a long way in quieting
some of the stresses brought about when she finds herself in conflict with her life themes:

C: Being LDS given me some guidance and direction that women that aren’t LDS may not get, just the guidance about trying to pay their tithing, to be financially prepared, to be spiritually prepared. I think the Church tries to teach how to teach our children to be well rounded, and to be educated spiritually, educationally and financially.

As comfortable and included as Claire now feels in her present situation, there are still some residual conflicts that are current in her life. Claire is still worried about pleasing, and in particular her husband. Though she sees her marriage as a partnership, it is nevertheless divided along the lines of institutional roles taught by her Church. When asked if she felt she had enough voice in the affairs of her Church, Claire said that she felt she did, and then went on to describe her marriage as “a partnership and men have priesthood power, yeah and great and that’s a good thing to have, but a woman has the power for creating life and it takes two to do that... Its a total partnership. There’s a lot of concern in the Church about unrighteous dominion. I don’t feel that in my home...I don’t feel like I’m any less powerful because I’m a woman.” The irony here is that on the issue of keeping an orderly household, while important to Claire “its an important thing for my husband too. He’s much more - I mean, the man I’m married to doesn’t roll his socks because it stretches the top, if that says anything about him. And so - he’s a lovely person, but I think I create a lot of stresses because I’m worried about pleasing him.” Claire’s vulnerability to pleasing other’s, to accommodate her life themes, is also evident in her life presently in a dispute with neighbors who are also members of her local LDS Church. These neighbors seem less
troubled about accommodating Claire’s concerns:
C: That said to me that they didn’t care about what they did to me as their neighbor, they only cared about themselves... I didn’t go over there to fight, I just wanted to talk and I explained that to her, but she certainly wasn’t Christian or Mormon in what she told me, so yeah, that’s probably my biggest obstacle right now. Nobody’s going to win.”

2 Influence Of Religiosity On Belinda’s Interpretation Of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

As well as questioning the values that advertising messages contain, Claire also finds those messages create stressful expectations that stand in opposition to her life themes.
C: I just think our value system is so incredible confused... I just think they’re false, and I think it brings an incredible amount of stress to try to keep a perfect body and a perfect home and a perfect family and a perfect job. Its impossible, there’s no way you can do that.

Claire’s way of dealing with the stress of so many expectations is to find a consensus amongst her LDS female peers. Not only does this strategy relieve Claire of the stress of choosing between so many expectations, it aligns itself with her life themes and with the cultural expectations of her religiosity:
C: I have a lunch group with ladies every Tuesday and we probably influence each other on what we get, and how the group gets influenced I don’t know, but we talk about you know...

Ironically, Claire had prefaced these comments by saying that she was no longer trendy “so I buy what I like and I don’t have to be in style any more like when I was a teenager.” When asked what had changed to bring this about Claire attributed the change to “my maturity level and not having to worry about it if I think somebody expects me to meet - I just meet what I expect
from me.” While this may be true of clothes that carry designer labels, it does not appear true of other purchase selections. For example, Claire is currently thinking of buying a new vehicle and her deliberations suggest “a balance between the kind of car that we want...” and a vehicle that is consistent with LDS family life. However, it is also important to factor in the expectations of the social status of Claire’s neighborhood:

C: Probably there is a social status too. Suburban seems to be a big thing for this kind of neighborhood right now where maybe in a different neighborhood it would be something else. Suburban is a social status thing because of our environment, I mean we’re LDS families with lots of children and lots of family activities going on... Its a pricey car, its not a cheap car and everybody knows that.

Expectations of her own environment serve as a comparative contrast when looking at advertising images. For example, in observing the clothes worn by the women in the Versace ad, Claire likes the clothes but “of course, because of my environment this wouldn’t do” as she points out a woman in a sleeveless dress. This is not an acceptable dress standard for an LDS woman. Nor are romantic images acceptable unless Claire can reasonable suspect some legitimacy in their relationship. The ad for Pure Wool is solved for Clair because “I guess to me its a married couple and so that’s maybe why it isn’t a problem, because they’re a little older.” She continues to make inferences that correspond with her own situation:

C: Maybe there are children off playing and she’s the mom and reaches over and kisses him and that’s fine.

Claire also states that “if its just a kiss that’s fine” but she is bothered by images that are immodest - “this one doesn’t bother me. Some of them do, because - she’s not immodest, but some of them have no clothes on.” Claire used a similar strategy with the Bally shoe ad to try to determine the nature of
the relationship of the man and woman in the visual.
C: I’m trying to decide if she’s a wife or a date or an escort. You can’t tell if she’s really enjoying herself or if she’s pretending.

Seeing family parallels and talking about them in relation to her own life and activities as an LDS mom determines Claire’s enthusiasm for an ad. The GMC Jimmy ad presented a female model with whom Claire found lifestyle similarities, and family tasks that they share, though without Claire revealing any manifest religiosity in her analysis. The Versace ad family reminded Claire of the composition of her own recent family gathering for the blessing of a baby.
C: ...it was very similar to this, we had two sets of grandparents, everybody was dressed probably as nice as these people are, and they all looked nice and we took family photos, and maybe somebody would look at our photos some day and say Oh that’s a nice home and a nice area and nice people and nicely dress - to think the same thing of our family...

Where the family didn’t correspond with Claire’s experience was the dissonance created by the inter-racial element, that at first caused her to remark that it was interesting and later she expanded on this in terms of her environment:
C: I try not to be judgmental, I try to get to know the person individually before I make a big judgement but I know because of the way that I was raised and I was raised in a totally caucasian environment that I have, you know, built in feelings that I don’t always recognize and I’ll make a first impression judgement that may not be flattering to me.

Though many of Claire’s comments about the ads did not frequently implicate her religious orthodoxy in any manifest way, her religiosity does reveal itself in the motivations of her life themes. To the extent that her life
themes guide her interpretation and identification of the ads' various meanings, the latent underpinnings of her religiosity emerges in her critical analyses and observations.
“ALAN”

An Explication of Alan’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

At Alan’s request, both interviews were conducted at his office where he works as a property co-ordinator. Alan is 43 years old, his wife works full-time as a nurse, and they have three children. Their combined income is in excess of $50,000 per year. Though not a native of Utah, Alan’s wife is, and he expects to remain in Utah for the foreseeable future. At the time of the interview, and unknown to the interviewer, Alan was in the process of being offered a job with a new employer, involving considerable marketing responsibility and a significant increase in salary. As well as working full-time, Alan’s wife is also taking additional pre-requisite classes in order to pursue a first degree. In this she has Alan’s full support, and the children are old enough that they do not require constant supervision and care.

Alan sees himself as “...more affected by what I can understand and glean about something rather than how it affects me initially, you know, or emotionally.” He qualifies this rational objectivity by stressing that while he is “...not emotionally stimulated...” that is “...not to say that I’m cold hearted, like with my own family...” In fact, he describes his family as somewhat demonstrative and very caring about each other’s well being.

Although Alan describes himself as having many conservative values, he is keen to point out that he is “not by any means locked into a mind set of values that would typically be understood as being conservative.” Alan qualifies his meaning by pointing to his passionate advocacy of civil rights.

A: I’ve always made it a practice to start everyone I meet at level ten. Some people start people at one and then you’ve got to prove yourself to them. I give everybody the benefit of the doubt and if at all possible try to maintain a ten. There will always be people who will disappoint you, but you have to live with that.
Referring to the influence that the 1960s civil rights movement had upon his thinking, Alan points to a front page clipping of the assassination of Robert Kennedy that he has framed on his office wall, and recalls that "the first book I ever read page to page or cover to cover was "Martin Luther King."

Q: Why do you think you have such a passion for civil rights?
A: I guess it affected me emotionally. I guess you could say I'm pretty black and white in my perception of the things I don't like. I just don't like injustice and don't want to be a person who wants to facilitate any injustice. I'd rather be one who is trying to equal the playing field, I guess.

Born and raised in New York, Alan draws a contrast between his earlier exposure to diversity of cultures and lifestyles and his observations of attitudes in Utah:

Q: How do you find these values fitting in here in Utah?
A: I find that some of the people who are born and raised in Utah are ignorant of other cultures and ways of life and value systems, and they're somewhat intolerant of other people's beliefs, rather than trying to learn about them and understand why they believe the way they believe, they just discount them and say they're wrong, and we're right, and they're not, because truth... I find that truth is in most cases and with most people the product of what they were taught and how they assess truth based on those values. Not to say they are right or wrong, that's how they've been taught, that's how they believe.

Alan states that there is "...what is called real truth and that's not always the same thing as what people believe is true." The significance of this to Alan is that it means "...you can't understand another man until you walk in his own moccasins, you have to walk his walk before you can judge him." Relating his feelings to LDS church doctrine, Alan believes that all humankind have "the same life potentials" and that everyone is free from predestined results.
A: We are all given the same rights, powers, and potential as any other person, because we’re here. And I do not believe there were fence sitters. Everybody has to make a choice and we all made a choice to be here.

Alan’s sensitivity to fair play for all in society is alert to advertising messages that he thinks seek to manufacture perceptions of difference. Having worked for a time in the advertising industry Alan has no illusions about what he thinks are their objectives: “I see a lot of advertising, what they’re trying to do is to appeal to certain classes of people, social, economic appeals.” Alan’s concern is that by pigeonholing markets advertising promotes notions of status and class. From his own advertising experience Alan describes having seen for himself advertising’s practice of encouraging social division when, in two campaigns for bread, he remembers one was designed for white people and the other was designed for black people.

A: I find the advertising medium to be very bigoted, socially they are appealing and patronizing a social statement that exists in our country.

Q: Which is?
A: That we distinguish between class and wealth, and millions of dollars are spent researching socio-economic class and what markets to go after. They’re not distinguishing or determining whether its right or wrong, just that’s where the money’s at.

Q: How would you describe your feelings about this on your decision to buy items portrayed in ads?
A: It comes to maturity I guess, but I’m not swayed so much by how it looks socially or economically. I’m not going to buy a Lexus or BMW or anything like that. Its a lot of money for transportation which is not...its luxury and I like to ride in nice cars like everybody else but to spend an exorbitant amount of money on it just to, say, keep up with the Joneses is not my cup of tea, and I do feel that people spend a lot of their conspicuous consumption, the games that people play to stay ahead of everybody else, either that or to keep up.
Whereas Alan sees himself as "...a thinking person - Like in advertisements I like to be informed" the fact of the matter is that he finds advertising manipulative in its devices and messages. As a result he sees acquiescence to advertising appeals as making appeals that are not only morally flawed, but encourage morally flawed behavior:

Q: How do you respond to ideal types represented by advertising images?
A: Measure up? I don't. As a matter of fact it turns me the other way. I guess I resent it. I don't like being manipulated, and that's what a lot of advertising is, its manipulation and I think that's most of what's going on around me. I'm not really swayed by...I'm not easily impressed. But when I am impressed its generally for genuine values...I think its a flaw in character to have to try to flaunt your wealth. That's the way I feel.

Nor does he relate to stereotypical male values "for men to be, to emphasize, machismo or you know superiority or masculinity, that's cheap and very shallow. Most of the emphasis that I see in advertising is very shallow. Rather than appealing to people's values they appeal to their most base instincts, and sex."

In rejecting advertising's popular prescriptions and definitions of success, he nevertheless believes that 'appearance' has become too important within his own local community. He refers to a saying or prophesy of Brigham Young's, that visitors to the Salt Lake valley would be unable to distinguish a Latter-day Saint from a black dog's leg, meaning "...Latter-day saints are not distinguished any more for anything as far as (modesty of) appearance, as far as I can tell, from anybody else." With the alignment of LDS appearance with mainstream culture, Alan believes true success should anyway be measured within the context of the home and that "...your own self-actualization in your
relationship with Christ...” should be paramount before anything else. Beyond
that, he thinks that “success is not a bad thing, its just what you do with it and
how much emphasis you place on it.”

A: I guess my biggest priority is to make sure that my family’s
successful in gaining a set of values will be long-lasting, and to
avoid the appearance of pretension, trying to be something they’re
not and I guess making sacrifices that I need to so that I can fulfil
that.

Standards play an important role in Alan’s life and his ideas about
equality, responsibility and the development of long-lasting values extend to
his family life, values that “will have the greatest consequences eternally in
long term effects rather than short term effects.” The practice of values and
their relationship to consequences involves Alan drawing lines in his life,
influenced by the teachings and directives of his church.

A: I know that something that I have adopted and that has been
said in church councils is not to patronize R-rated movies,
Hollywood. I draw lines in my life and we don’t see R-rated movies,
we haven’t seen one in years. I won’t do that or I can’t expect my
children not to do it if I’m doing it. I have to keep the same
standards I expect them to keep. Not, because I’m an adult and I
can do it and you can’t.

Q: You’ve mentioned R-rated moves. What about room for judging
artistic merit in such a wide spectrum of movies that carry an R-
rating?

A: No! I draw the line. Yeah, everybody says go see Schindler’s
List. Like advertising, advertising counts the dollar vote. The
dollar is a vote. Every dollar stands as a vote and I will not
patronize an industry that is in conflict with my own personal
values. Therefore...I have, in actually drawing a line its a
compromise, because there are PG13 movies which in my
estimation should be R-rated and unfortunately its hard to
decipher what is acceptable before you get there.
Obedience to directives is something that Alan believes is going to become a source of conflict and division within the church, "...because the church is not going to change its standards, so as the gap widens (the church) will become more adamant and we will probably become more criticized because of it."

Alan sees rules and lines of division in role priorities as playing a necessary role in allowing the church to function properly, "but it’s not a matter of class distinction within the church. There are differences in men and women. Anybody who says otherwise is ignorant." Alan believes the differences are important and necessary for the church to govern itself effectively:

A: ...I guess that’s partly why the church hierarchy, or church was set up the way it is because the mean are the ones who are expected to get the job done and unfortunately because of that they seem to miss some of the emotional issues that are involved in their decision making. I think that’s where the women kind of pick up the pieces...I think any good priesthood holder who would have a position in the church needs to have a wife to counsel him in his decision making.

Alan believes these differences in no way obstruct or interfere with equality in his marriage, his family life or his duties for his church, but acknowledges that as a general practice it is problematic:

A: I think that’s one of the big problems that we have, men taking the attitude that they have to make all the decisions and not have to counsel with their wives. That’s wrong.

These sentiments extend to Alan’s sense of social justice that finds no rationale for inequality in the labor market where there is parity of role.

A: As far as equality outside of the church and in advertising, or whenever a woman is in an occupation and has a position
equivalent with a man, she should be paid the same. Work is work, whether its a male or a female if they’re doing the job they should be paid and compensated equally. That’s justice.

In summary, Alan is unaffected by lifestyle prescriptions that do not touch upon values that he himself subscribes to. Defending the right for people to practice their own beliefs and values, he is also prepared to give the benefit of doubt to others to demonstrate their best qualities. Alan is not interested in prescribing his own values as superior, but is seemingly willing to make sacrifices in order to demonstrate his own sincerity about principles that he considers important. Displays of extravagance and vanity dismay him, preferring instead to promote bases of similarity rather than divisions through difference.

**Primary Life Theme**

Alan’s primary life theme reveals a tension between Being Just versus Being Unjust in both the personal and social dimensions of his life.

**Secondary Life Theme**

The influence of Alan’s primary life theme on his secondary life theme of being family centered is revealed in his intent to teach his family the importance of legitimate success based upon real values. His secondary life theme might therefore be expressed in the context of family as Being Value Based versus Not Being Value Based.
"ALAN"
An Analysis of Alan's Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:

Being Just versus Not Being Just

Secondary Life Theme:

Being Value Based versus Not Being Value Based

Alan's experience of advertising is not restricted to being a member of an audience. At an earlier stage in his working life Alan worked for an advertising agency and specifically in advertising market research. His conclusion about advertising practice seems to suggest that advertising sees itself as an amoral activity because "they're not distinguishing or determining whether its right or wrong, just that's where the money's at." Today Alan values advertising insofar as it meets his need for it as a utility:

A: Probably my motivation at looking at any ad is for specifications and information. If it doesn't tell me something, I don't usually look at it. I want to know what it is, the quality of it, its specifications, what it can do for me.

Though he concedes that image advertising may be "nice to look at" he feels that "it's an image they're trying to project, not an image I'm trying to project." As a result, the motivation for the purchase of luxury items can become suspect:

A: If you buy a Rolex you're buying it for one reason and that's to present an image. There are probably a lot of quartz watches out there that are more accurate than a Rolex. If you buy a Rolex you're buying it for one reason and that's to present an image to say I'm rich.
He believes that this type of advertising is focused on markets that are vulnerable to an emotional response with the intent to provoke impulse buying rather than an evalulative assessment of product difference:

A: Most of the emphasis that I see in advertising is very shallow. Rather than appealing to people values they appeal to their most base instincts, and sex.

Making appeals to base instincts has social implications that are particularly troubling to Alan. He illustrates how advertising facilitates social divisiveness by recounting a professional experience of his own:

A: I was in some advertising for (named company), and they had two different campaigns. There was one campaign for white bread meal toast ad and then there was a second ethnic ad campaign which was targeted to black people. So there was a separation of not just class distinction but race distinction and so I find the advertising medium to be very bigoted. **Socially they are appealing and patronizing an unacceptable social statement that exists in our country**

Q: Which is?

A: That we distinguish between class and wealth, and millions of dollars are spent researching socio-economic class and what markets to go after.

The medium of advertising, insofar as it persists in making appeals that, at least to Alan’s thinking, reinforce divisive social demographics, is in direct conflict with his primary life themes. This is best captured from the view he has of himself in relation to the society in which he lives, stated in his life themes interview:

A: I guess you could say I’m pretty black and white in my perception of the things I don’t like. **I just don’t like injustice and don’t want to be a person who wants to facilitate any injustice. I’d rather be one who is trying to equal the playing field, I guess.**
Versace

The Versace ad defeated Alan initially, causing him to exclaim that “what I don’t like about it is what are they advertising? Are they advertising those clothes or are they advertising - what are they advertising!??” He finds difficulty relating to anything at all within the ad - “it looks like a family except for (the asian youth)...I don’t know what they are trying to say...are all of their clothes black? It doesn’t inspire me to want to buy the clothes if that’s what their intent is.” He finds that in small type it has been photographed by Bruce Webber - “So? Who cares!?”

For someone whose declared intent in looking at an ad is for information and “not just what it looks like” there is nothing here that Alan can evaluate, in conflict with his primary life theme that depends upon objectivity. That the ad is supposed to look like a family is unconvincing to Alan:

A: They are supposed to look like a family, but it doesn’t look like a family because you’ve got a mixture of ethnicity, I guess and trying to tie - where does the African American come from, or if he is African American, and the Asian? Are they trying to say everybody’s a family or this a family or - this doesn’t pull together. No continuity.

In only having his impressions of the image to draw upon, he decides that maybe the ad is “trying to appeal to all walks of life.” He decides that “its upper class, wealthy, Just from the setting.” When asked if he felt the ad represents a picture of success, Alan’s primary life theme emerges in bold relief, drawing upon Alan’s social values:

A: No. It represents old money. Old money isn’t success. They hand it down. He’s (pointing to elderly man) probably the grandson of the original estate and these are his offspring, or family associations. Its old money which is not related to being successful.
Alan believes the advertisers are attempting to appeal to newly successful people who may feel insecure about the social tone of their new money. This is an appeal that is alien to Alan’s lifestyle objectives. It requires an adherence to a social code that Alan believes relies upon pretense:

Q: What do you think the creators of this ad had in mind?
A: If you don’t want to look like a nouveau riche you could wear their clothes and be part of the upper class or something.

Q: What do you think is the difference between nouveau riche and upper-class?
A: Well, some people are trying to escape the stereotypical yuppie, upwardly mobile, nouveau riche - those who have gained money quite rapidly and new money, and want to be part of this lifestyle. Maybe that’s what they’re trying to appeal to. I don’t know why people would want to be like that. I don’t. Some people just live by pretense I guess. In this add, they almost look like they’re all in uniform. Not very individualistic.

The comparison between the family values implicit in the Versace ad family and his own family necessarily brings the ad into conflict with Alan’s family-centered secondary life theme:

A: I guess I’d say I’m glad it’s not my family. I guess I don’t have a lot of respect for money that’s handed to people and I would think that old money would view - they’re conservative because they’re part of a social class and they’re locked into that lifestyle by society rather than by virtue and values they’ve developed due to life’s experience. They’re a family that have to maintain an appearance.

This model contrasts starkly with Alan’s desires for the outcome of his own family. As his life themes interview reveals, the family model Alan is striving to achieve required a significant sacrifice:

A: I guess my biggest priority is to make sure that my family’s successful in gaining a set of values will be long-lasting, and to avoid the appearance of pretension, trying to be something they’re not and I guess making sacrifices that I need to so that I can fulfil
that. I had to make a decision seven or eight years ago whether to say in the corporate world and spend all my time on the road and seeking after the brass ring, gold ring actually, or which was more important to me, my family and my own personal fulfillment, so I left that world and here I am.

GMC Jimmy

Alan greeted this ad enthusiastically, exclaiming “Oh, here we go! There’s information here” and “Its well organized...I think it states its purpose. Its a utility vehicle, something to get things done in economically, and that’s the purpose of that type of vehicle.” Alan identified with the product, remarking “I would not be opposed to owning a Jimmy because I like a four-wheel drive, I have a four-wheel drive, and the economy of it - its a smaller version of what I’ve got.” Alan sees the advertisers attempting to align the vehicle with the arrival of success:

A: This is a payoff for hard work and saying I’ve arrived and that type of thing after say, pursuing a masters in clinical psychology, she’s in the mode of upwardly mobile, maybe, still climbing.

People’s need to make material announcements of this type are not consistent with Alan’s secondary life theme. What Alan sees as “conspicuous consumption” has “an appearance of pretention” that he is striving to teach his family to avoid:

A: It comes down to maturity I guess, but I’m not swayed so much by how things look socially or economically. I’m not going to buy a Lexus or BMW or anything like that. Its a lot of money for transportation which is not - its luxury and I like to ride in nice cars like everybody else but to spend an exorbitant amount of money on it just to say Keep up with the Joneses is not my cup of tea, and I do feel that people spend a lot of their conspicuous consumption, the games that people play to stay ahead of everybody else or either that or keep up.

123
The model in the ad has associations of suburbia for Alan, and he interprets that it "is more addressed to a suburban housewife." He sees the female model in the ad as "just a suburban housewife, maybe a doctors wife or something like that." The woman's descriptive profile suggests to Alan that the ad is also targeted to "a professional clientele, particularly female, that are independent, intelligent and more nouveau riche." The profile also suggests to him pretensions to wealth and class. His objection to the consequences of this type of divisive posture is strictly in line with his primary life theme:

Q: Do you relate to that depiction of lifestyle?
A: Not really. I'm not an equestrian. I guess there would be some little more pretension there. And some people are trying to say all the time, I've arrived, I've got lots of money, I'm upper class, that type of thing. That doesn't appeal to me because I dislike being made to feel like I'm not wealthy and therefore even if I had money, I wouldn't want to make others feel uncomfortable when they came to my home or make them feel like, I don't know - Some people kind of get off on flaunting their money and looking rich and that. I think that has a tendency to cause resentment among other people, and ostracizes them, maybe a little snobbish I guess.

Pure Wool

Alan felt that the pure wool ad was making no statement other than "what you see is what you get." He observed that "its not distracting by looking at some beautiful model's face or his face, they're pretty much - not hidden, but they're not the main focus of attention." The activity of the models drew merely an amused observation that "they're out on a spring day, lying on the grass and doing things that you would normally be wearing cotton for."

However, when asked a leading question by the interviewer, Alan's sense of fair play disputed the question's interpretation:
Q: What do you think about the couple making out?  
A: Oh, I don’t know that they’re making out, they’re not lip-locked and you know - *its actually very innocent, its not selling sex, they’re selling lifestyle, they’re selling life itself. You know, this is an event in a day in life. Its not groping, its a kiss.*  
Q: Why do you think they would use that image in this ad?  
A: I think they’re trying to say is that when you’re wearing this type of product you can enjoy life as it is and the clothing is not going to be in the way of you carrying out a day to day activity type of thing.

This rebuttal of the unfavorable interpretation implied by the question is consistent with Alan’s primary life theme, and can be further understood in light of his approach to judging others, as discussed by Alan in his primary life themes interview:  
A: I’ve always made it a practice to start everyone I meet at level ten. Some people start people at one and then you’ve got to prove yourself to me. *I give everybody the benefit of the doubt and if at all possible try to maintain a ten.*

**Bally**

On the basis of taste alone, Alan thinks he “probably wouldn’t give it a second thought because the shoe doesn’t appeal to me.” He associates the shoe with a “young urban professional” without seeing any appeal to class within the ad. In fact, for Alan the uniformity of formal dress means that “you can’t tell what their class distinction is...” The tactics of the ads layout puzzle him. He finds it hard to reconcile his interpretation of the ad and the way the graphics have been used:  
A: What’s interesting is that it’s cut off from in the picture - I don’t know what their purpose is in that. It doesn’t show him or anyone else in the picture wearing it.

Because the shoe is shown separately from its accompanying image of a
man and woman at a formal dance, Alan thinks the advertisers are “trying to say you’ll stand out if you wear it.” Alan also interprets the use of black and white photos in advertising to point to memories of past events. In this ad he sees the couple’s wedding. He is also unclear about “what type of person would wear that shoe.” This is again typical of the influence of Alan’s primary life theme. Unless he is forced to draw uncomplimentary conclusions, and in the absence of any proof otherwise, he is willing to give the ad, and the image it uses, the benefit of the doubt.
“ALAN”

A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence Of Religiosity On Alan’s Life Themes

Alan’s religious life is dominated by his particular orthodoxy, a steadfast commitment to the Christian message as it is taught by his church and his willing, uncompromising even, adherence to his Church’s directives. As Alan expresses it, his approach is “to draw lines in my life” and these lines represent boundaries beyond which he will not go. The effect of Alan’s commitment to particularly orthodoxy is revealed in the way in which he characterizes his approach to civil rights:

A: I’ve always been very actively involved with, say civil rights and I believe everybody should be given the same opportunity, regardless of race, creed, color, gender etc.”

When asked which values emphasized by his Church most clearly speak to him, Alan’s response illuminated the source of his interest in civil rights and the impetus for his allegiance to, and support of, their advancement:

A: That every man on the earth who has come here, was placed here, has the same life potentials as any other man. There was no pre-ordained or predestined results for any individual person. We are all given the same rights, powers, and potential as any other person, because we’re here. And I do not believe there were fence sitters. Everybody has to make a choice and we all made a choice to be here.

Alan’s defense of equal rights, in spite of gender, also appears to have its roots firmly embedded in his religious ontology. His primary life theme dictates that:

A: ...a woman who is in an occupation and has a position equivalent with a man should be paid the same. Work is work, whether its a
male or a female if they’re doing the job they should be paid and compensated equally. That’s justice.

His sympathy for the justice of equal rewards seems to stem from his understanding of the co-equality that should exist in relationships between men and women. Talking of the marriage partnership, Alan clarifies his understanding of how this should be in terms of his religiosity:

A: There has to be someone that has to openly make the decisions but from the time of Adam, Adam and Eve, they had to counsel each other and make the decision together now that they messed up, and what choice and what path they would take. I think that’s one of the big problems that we have, men taking the attitude that they have to make all the decisions and not have to counsel with their wives. That’s wrong.

Alan believes he cannot ask anything of his family that he is not willing to do or be himself. This is consistent with Alan’s life themes and illustrates his compliance with LDS particular orthodoxy. Alan has talked of drawing lines in his life in order to bring his life into accord with his religious allegiances. One of the lines that Alan draws in his personal and family life is motivated by his obedience to his Church’s directive not to watch R-rated movies:

A: I know that something that I have adopted and that has been said in church councils is not to patronize R-rated movies, period. I draw lines in my life and we don’t see R-rated movies, we haven’t seen one in years. I won’t do that or I can’t expect my children not to do it if I’m doing it. I have to keep the same standards I expect them to keep. Not, because I’m an adult and I can do it and you can’t.

There is no room for exception and considerations about individual R-rated movies being judged on other merits, for example artistic merits, is given short shrift by Alan. This is another one of Alan’s lines, and he is not entirely
sure that it goes far enough, “because there are PG-13 movies which in my estimation should be R-rated and unfortunately its hard to decipher what is acceptable before you get there.” Alan and his wife have walked out of movies that have been unacceptable to them as PG-13s, and he predicts that he will end up having to draw the line at PG. R-rated movies is an important issue of religiosity which is more than obedience to a Church directive. Alan seems to believe the movie industry, and the advertising industry, are weapons under the influence of Satan. The attempt to compromise is to let the Adversary (Satan) “win with society”

Alan puts his money where his mouth is and exclaims that “every dollar stands as a vote and I will not patronize an industry that is in conflict with my own personal values. Alan’s strong commitment is reinforced by his belief in the integrity of his Church’s directives. Though he notices changes in standards about what is acceptable in society from television and advertising, recalling that much of what goes unquestioned was once considered soft porn, “it not like it hasn’t gone unnoticed by the Church, and its standards haven’t changed compared to everybody else’s. His admiration of his Church’s uncompromising values is sufficient for Alan to declare his continuing commitment to their directives because “…the Church has never asked me to do anything that has caused me harm or detriment, so when they tell me to do something I do it.”

Alan’s primary life theme of Being Just and his family centered life theme of Being Value Based coalesce in what he describes as his biggest priority:
A: I guess my biggest priority is to make sure that my family’s successful in gaining a set of values will be long-lasting, and to avoid the appearance of pretension, trying to be something they’re not and I guess making sacrifices that I need to so that I can fulfil that.
The success of this endeavor with his family project is for Alan the measure of his own success as a man, a husband and a father. It is a standard of success that is prescribed by his Church and one for which he has been willing to make significant sacrifices:

A: I think the church is more emphasizing is that the greatest success you can achieve is in your own home and that if you place your values first within your own home and your own self-actualization in your relationship with Christ, that should be paramount before anything else.

In order to achieve this Alan was willing to leave a well-paid career because he felt it kept him away from his home too much. As he saw it, it was a choice between whether his own personal fulfillment was more important than his fulfillment with his family. He chose his family based on “those things that will have the greatest consequences eternally in long term effects rather than short term effects.” Alan’s rationale for sacrificing his well-paid and fulfilling job at that time was in accordance with a doctrine taught by his Church, namely that family units are an are eternal units that continue beyond death. Alan’s religiosity and the family priority of Being Value Based that informs his secondary life theme, simply means that for him the better choice is to “build up your treasure in heaven and not on earth and the rest of it will be provided for you.” Alan has no religious argument with success, only the degree of emphasis that he sees placed on it. For example, Alan rejects the idea of spending exorbitant amounts of money on a luxury car simply to “keep up with the Joneses.” Alan thinks such behavior is not merely a matter of maturity, but also that “its a flaw in character to have to try to flaunt your wealth.” Advertising is implicated in reinforcing this flaw because Alan believes advertising is about distinguishing between class and wealth where “millions of
dollars are spent researching socio-economic class and what markets to go after.” This conflicts with Alan’s life themes because “they’re not distinguishing or determining whether its right or wrong, just that’s where the money’s at.” When considering advertising in relation to himself, and its prescriptive messages, Alan resents being manipulated:

A: I guess I resent it. I don’t like being manipulated, and that’s what a lot of advertising is, its manipulation and I think that’s most of what’s going on around me. I’m not really swayed by - I’m not easily impressed. But when I am impressed its generally for genuine values.

Just as with movies, Alan believes advertising counts the dollar vote. He resists and resents appeals asking him to “measure up” and believes that “rather than appealing to people’s values they appeal to their most base instincts, and sex.”

2 Influence Of Religiosity On Alan’s Interpretation Of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

Alan’s stated preference for advertising is to serve an informative function. However, he believes most advertising is “more focused on a market that they feel is more vulnerable to an emotional response” which fails with Alan because his intent is “to qualify it rather than if its pretty, so what?” Alan sees himself as a “thinking person” and not emotionally stimulated. He qualifies this statement in regard to his family:

A: ..but not to say that I’m cold hearted, like with my own family, its very important to me to communicate in all aspects of family. I guess you would say that our family is somewhat demonstrative, very caring about each other and our well-being. We have very close family ties, from my parents and to my own children.
This description of himself and his family relationships is in stark contrast to what Alan sees in the Versace ad family group, which he terms "bleak." Whereas Alan has stated that his own objective for his family in accordance with the teachings of his Church, is to gain "a set of values that will be long-lasting, and to avoid the appearance of pretension, trying to be something they’re not..." he sees the Versace ad attempting to appeal to nouveau riche money that would like to be a part of old world money society:  
A: I don’t know why people would want to be like that. I don’t. Some people just live by pretense I guess. In this ad, they almost look like they’re all in uniform. Not very individualistic."

Pretense of this sort runs counter to Alan’s secondary life theme it is a picture of success that he repudiates in favor of his Church’s proclamation that the greatest success is to be found in the home. Alan is looking to establish eternal values within his family; he observes of old money family values that “they’re part of a social class and they’re locked into that lifestyle by society rather than by virtue and values they’ve developed due to life’s experience.” The lifestyle in the GMC Jimmy ad also suggests values of pretense and nouveau riche to Alan. He elaborates on the ad’s depiction of lifestyle:  
A: And some people are trying to say all the time, I’ve arrived, I’ve got lots of money, I’m upper class, that type of thing. That doesn’t appeal to me because I dislike being made to feel like I’m not wealthy and therefore even if I had money, I wouldn’t want to make others feel uncomfortable when they came to my home or make them feel like, I don’t know - Some people kind of get off on flaunting their money and looking rich and that. I think that has a tendency to cause resentment among other people, and ostracizes them, maybe a little snobbish I guess.

Alan’s attitude as expressed here has its source in his advocacy of civil rights. Ostracism on the basis of wealth and class is socially divisive. In
harmony with his primary life theme, Alan states that he would “rather be one who is trying to equal the playing field, I guess.” This is in turn consistent with his religiosity, “that every man on the earth who has come here, was placed here, has the same life potential as any other man... We are all given the same rights, powers and potential as any other person, because we’re here.” The GMC Jimmy ad suggests lifestyle values that Alan interprets to be in conflict with basic human principles that for him are enshrined as a gift of God. Interestingly, Alan’s interpretation of the ad for Pure Wool was benign in that he thought “its not trying t say if you wear these clothes you will look like them. That’s the way it is - what you see is what you get.” All that Alan sees is “an effective statement about wool being comfortable” and an attempt to dispel some myths about wool. His reading of the man and the woman is that “its actually very innocent, its not selling sex, they’re selling lifestyle, they’re selling life itself.” Something of Alan’s personal religiosity, that he give’s people the benefit of the doubt, may account for this interpretation, or his sensitivity to some of the negative aspects of religiosity that he observes as endemic amongst people in Utah:

A: Well, Utah typically was very isolated and as a result of that it has been somewhat ignorant of the values of other people, other cultures. I find that some of the people who are born and raised in Utah are ignorant of other cultures and ways of life and value systems, and they’re somewhat intolerant of other people’s beliefs.

Certainly all the other participants failed to offer such an innocent rendering of the intent of the image, but Alan is the only participant who is not Utah raised. Similarly with the Bally shoe ad, the image suggest no impropriety in Alan’s interpretation. In fact, the couple in the picture suggested an occasion of marriage to him. The shoe did not appeal to him, but
for Alan this was a matter of taste only.

Alan’s “benefit of the doubt”, “level playing field” personal religiosity strives for fairness. Unless an ad is manifestly overt in challenging Alan’s life themes and religious values, then Alan reads the ad as he has stated, namely a pragmatic qualification of the merits of the product. Beyond that, ascribing motivations without firm evidence violates his sense of justice and may be said to be inconsistent with another tenet of his personal religiosity:

A: I believe very strongly that you can’t understand another man until you walk in his own moccasins, you have to walk his walk before you can judge him.
"BOYD"

An Explication of Boyd’s Primary and Secondary Life Themes

Boyd is 33 years old, married and works for a large computer software company. His wife is a Registered Nurse and works part-time. They have two preschool boys, a mortgage and a joint income in excess of £50,000 a year. Both interviews with Boyd took place in the family room in the basement area of his home, while his wife fixed dinner with the children upstairs. On several occasions during the life theme interview, Boyd’s eldest little boy found his way downstairs, seemingly curious to understand why today his father’s normal routine after coming home from work didn’t include him. The child found several permission seeking pretexts to interrupt the interview to gain his father’s attention. There was no sign from Boyd that he found the interruptions in any way annoying or distracting, patiently fielded his son’s queries by directing the child to its mother upstairs, and easily picked up the thread of his last thought. This measured behavioral response parallels Boyd’s image of himself as being, “...more laid back, not a lot of things make me upset, pretty easy going, and generally overall fairly nice...” Though Boyd described himself as not “one of those people that has lots of lists, or has lots of goals” he admits he will “just do the things that need to be done and go ahead just because I want to get it done.” He claims that “what a lot of my goals would want to be” he has already achieved - “to own a home, to graduate from college...” While concerned to maintain a status quo in providing for his family and living within his means, he also recognizes “the nicer things motivate you to work harder, so if I can’t afford it now, I work a little harder...” But beyond a certain point Boyd believes that material acquisition is personally and socially harmful. He is cognizant of material pleasures, but they are less an end in themselves and should rather be viewed as a balance with needs rather than
wants, with means rather than desires, and with priorities rather than aspirations. His comments along these lines appeared throughout the meeting, for example:

B: Everybody would probably love the opportunity to live in a million dollar home, but a one hundred thousand dollar home still provides your needs for you.

...stay out of debt, live within your means, that’s another thing that can really hurt society, credit card debt, live today and we’ll pay that off tomorrow.

...if the income that your husband makes is enough for you to buy a comfortable house and to provide, then do that, but if to buy a luxury house you have to work too then your priorities are messed up.

Many of the women I work with have children, they go to day care all day, for some of them I think its a bit of a necessity, others its not, its just their lifestyle, and what they have. And I think that’s bad for society.

Boyd has firm opinions and views about social issues and values that he identifies as being both necessary and important for himself and his family. For example he believes his own moral and social health is dependant upon strong values of family and social responsibility:

B: ...family is important, kind of having a faith or a belief in something. When people just live one day at a time I think it almost hurts society, they don’t really have any responsibility to anybody. I think it just really builds on the moral value thing that you’ll just kind of decay, you know, if you don’t have that strong will or morals in your life. In business practice for those kind of people its more of an I thing.

Also:

B: That’s maybe another value, something that I think about often
and talk about often, finances. I mean those kind of values go back to my church background, stay out of debt, live within your means, that’s another thing that can really hurt society, credit card debt, live today and we’ll pay that off tomorrow.

Though forthright about his own views and values, Boyd was not interested in promoting them in any partisan way:

B: I don’t know if I really feel passionate about anything. Nothing really makes me mad, you know a topic or anything. I think that rather than get mad about things I find humor in things. When some people a topic really sets them off, like “that upsets me, you’re attacking this belief I have” and to me I just take that more as humor.

For Boyd, his beliefs are less important as issues of right or wrong than they are measures against which he defines his ideas about his own personal success and happiness. This became apparent later during the interview when Boyd again returned to ideas of financial management and responsibility:

B: And that’s something that my wife and I decided not to do. We don’t go into debt, we don’t own a credit card. Whatever you see here we paid cash for it. There’s almost a certain satisfaction and we still have money to go to the movies this weekend if we want to. But there’s a trade off, I think, for everything. Most people who have a lot of possessions earned it, they worked a lot of hours, they chose the kind of job that took them away, travel and things which pay more, but all things come with a price, its just how much you want to pay.

The idea that choice is virtually always a trade off against something else is an important part in understanding Boyd’s ontology. When he considers his peers who are materially better off, Boyd approached it from the viewpoint of understanding success as a price one is willing to pay:

B: Certainly I think we all have peers who have more than us, but the older you get the more you realize everything that we get comes from some sort of sacrifice... So I think if you’re looking at
what other people have you have to think that its because of the price they paid, and they’re still paying on it too. If I truly wanted that I probably could afford it, if I want to pay for it the next forty years, you know?

Again, while responding to the view that perhaps women need to work in order to remain stimulated, Boyd returned to the idea that something somewhere has to give as a necessary consequence:

B: I think for some women that is probably true. But if they try to put that on society as a whole you can’t do that. It totally depends upon what each individual woman’s goals or aspirations, definitions of success are. I think success comes because something has to give some place, and yeah so I have a successful career but my home life is suffering, then that’s what suffers. But if my home life is great then my financial life suffers a little bit. There is a trade off for everything.

Boyd looks to factors beyond material acquisition as central to his happiness. He states that his long range aspiration is “not to let life get me down, (to) keep it enjoyable for me to every day get up and go to work.” “Not to let life get me down” is a theme that emerged in different ways during the course of the meeting, in thoughts about sports, work, family, friends and church. For example:

Q: What motivates you and gives you a sense of growth and progression?
B: For me its sports. I love sports, I love golf, snow skiing in the winter, water skiing and golf in the summer, those kind of things keep me happy and rejuvenated...

It is also a theme that further defines his idea of the nature of success:
B: I think success in your personal life is just having friends and being happy with yourself and your life. So that you’re not always wanting more or wishing ... looking at others and saying I wish I had that. I guess we all know people that are always unhappy. Success in your personal life is just being happy or satisfied with
where you are at."

His church is also a source of rejuvenation:
B: “I think church falls into that too, if you go to church in the right frame of mind, it can be rejuvenating with friendships, the spiritual part of it kind of stuff.”

Church is an important influence in the values that Boyd discussed, and is a source for many of the conclusions that he draws. Financial management values for example, “those kind of values go back to my church background, stay out of debt, live within your means...” Boyd believes that “there are blessings for just following directions” and this belief applied to other directives from his church that emerged throughout the interview. Faith in the directives he receives from the church is central to his willingness to be obedient to counsels such as avoiding ‘R’ rated movies, and accepting changes in the way his church finances local ‘wards’ or parishes - “It’s not what everyone can understand but its a matter of faith to live these small principles.”

In matters where specific directives have not been given, and while admitting to being fairly conservative, Boyd finds that the rules of the church nevertheless “gives us lots of latitude.”
B: I don’t feel its a real limiting kind of thing in our lives, that there’s all these rules that you live by. All the rules are good for us, but I still think there’s lots of opportunity to be individual and do your own thing.

Being given “lots of latitude” and “lots of opportunity to be individual and do your own thing.” becomes contextualized when considering Boyd’s response to a question about unwelcome outside influences:
Q: Do you protect your family from unwelcome outside influences in any way?
B: Well, I don’t think that you can... but if you’re open and can talk about them, ask why, and I don’t agree with that or that’s right or why we do what we do, compared to what others do, and what we believe, why we think this way is better than others. That’s how I handle those things. We can be sheltered to a small extent but you can shelter too much. You need the opportunity to figure it out for yourself.

Though Boyd considers himself to be conservative, he is not reluctant to enjoy the things he earns, the family he is raising and the hobbies and activities he pursues. However, extravagance is not a personal trait evident in his lifestyle or in his thinking, preferring instead to conserve his energies for those things he has chosen to be part of his life. This is perhaps illustrated in his comments about his friends.

B: I have three or four good friends that I’ve had since high school, that I’m still good friends with... *I think I can make friends easy, but I don’t have lots of new friends that I’ve met in the past year or two say, that I spend a lot of time with, because I continue with these older friendships that I have.*

This conservatism is expressed in the correlation that Boyd sees between money and being more busy that inherently accompanies financial success.

B: I think that, and this is a big generalization for sure, *but the more money people have the busier they tend to be.* They go to more functions, dinners, balls, the kind of things these advertisements had in them, they have more toys, boats, trailers, campers which take them away more, generally busier.

In summary Boyd sees himself as having moved beyond aspirations associated with a moneyed lifestyle and would rather “... be home, eat dinner, watch a little bit of TV.” Far from being a lifestyle aspiration, he believes he has “... seen that battle I think when I was single and had a fairly good job.” His attitude to differences of lifestyle and values could be described as live and let
live, yet this does not mean that Boyd has not thought about conflicting ideals and values. Their validity is to be proven in their ability to compete with the values and lifestyle proscribed by his church. Remaining content within social and economic parameters that he has chosen as sufficient for himself and his family is how Boyd believes he will most likely be happy.

**Primary Life Theme**

A primary life theme for Boyd that is identifiable as consistent in his thoughts and ideas, could be described as a balance between Being Prudent versus Not Being Prudent.

**Secondary Life Theme**

Being family centeredness versus Not being family centered is expressed in knowing how to draw boundaries beyond which personal expression, contentment and happiness becomes diluted and unsustainable, hence a family centered balance between being sustainable versus not being sustainable.
"BOYD"
An Analysis of Boyd's Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:
*Being Prudent versus Not Being Prudent*

Secondary Life Theme:
*Being Sustainable versus Not Being Sustainable*

Boyd describes two specific attitudes in how he uses advertising. At one level of purchase he is primarily objective in his attitude, and looks to advertising to inform him about features and specifications - "I think ads play a bigger part in bigger dollar purchases like a car, or big electronic kind of stuff." On another level, his attitude is subjective and idiosyncratic, and he looks to ad to show him how a product looks "because I don’t go to the store and I don’t go to the malls a lot, so its from seeing what’s popular." Boyd relates an incident that illustrates an example of when a brand name can only go so far and appearance becomes the critical factor:

B: ...like I bought a personal stereo just last week for my wife, you know kind of looking at price, there were three or four in the same price range. *I ended up buying the one that was not the name brand because I liked the way that it looked better.* You know, I wonder well is it as durable maybe, but I bought it anyway.

However, within their sphere, both approaches look to a rational evaluation of a product’s utility, either how it compares or how it looks. Beyond this, Boyd questions how effective advertising can really hope to be, and in doing so begins to reveal his primary life theme:

B: I think in some ways its kind of a waste of money, especially more on TV ads where I see things like the Superbowl, *they spend millions of dollars for an ad and I wonder if they really recoup*
that. If a company like Coke quit advertising for a year would they really lose that much market share or would they just make that much money back by not spending the advertising dollars.

Pure Wool

The use of a black and white photo and the obscuring pose of the ad’s models means that the ad falls foul of Boyd’s particular use for it:

B: ...you can’t really get a look because its in black and white you can’t tell colors or how it looks because they’re lying down too, you don’t get a really good look at the whole thing.

Beyond that, Boyd remains unconvinced of the ad’s message that wool can be worn next to the skin. Boyd evaluates the ad’s claim against something he thinks is more sure, stating that “whenever I wear a sweater I always wear a shirt under it because I prefer that look, and wool has the reputation of being itchy.”

Boyd believes the ad also clearly speaks to young professionals, observing from “the way that they wear their hair, that they’re middle to upper income, maybe single...” The copy the ad uses also provokes an interesting observation, and one that is consistent with Boyd’s primary life theme:

B: I think what they’re trying to say is people who have time to go out into the park and have fun wear wool. If you wear wool you don’t have to worry about getting on the ground. And just where its talking about the rules I think a lower income don’t really have dress code rules. You buy whatever you can afford. Those that have money can do whatever they want and be in style kind of.

GMC Jimmy

As a high value purchase, the Jimmy ad goes some way to meeting Boyd’s
need for the ad to provide some of the information he looks for:  
B: I like it. More because its in color, you can see the car. If I was really interested in buying a Jimmy I would probably also like to see more information and see more of those kind of things to compare it. If I was looking through a magazine I would definitely stop and look at this.

However, he can find no identification with the socio-economic status that the ad attempts to attach to the vehicle and is cynical of the values he reads from the lifestyle profile:
B: I don’t identify with her, she has a cat, a horse, she likes biking, skiing and working out, all of those fit that upper end yuppie kind of lifestyle, no kids, ...I think that’s a lifestyle that a lot of people like to have, those that don’t have would like to have, but its kind of a selfish lifestyle, she’s biking, skiing, working out, she has a husband and a cat. If it were a younger lady then okay or maybe newly married, yeah, but she looks 40, so she chose not to have a family, and have a more selfish lifestyle.

The depicted lifestyle, that Boyd defines as “yuppie” is inconsistent with both Boyd’s primary and secondary life themes. Such a lifestyle stands in opposition to Boyd’s idea of being successful which, in comments from his lifestyle interview, means “being able to provide the basic necessities of life...that some of the daily struggles are not constantly on my mind...” This view of success trades on “being happy with yourself and your life, so that you’re not always wanting more or wishing - looking at others and saying I wish I had that.” Boyd has no illusions about what he sees as the ad’s strategy in appealing to people who define success in terms of their income or possessions, and who are therefore needy of material success measures:  
B: What these ads mostly try to do though a lot of it is to try to get people to ride on the bubble, to try to get them to bump up.  
Q: To ride on the bubble?  
B: Well, if you said that you kind of have a break at an income of
$50,000, those above that have all the fancy stuff and those below it don’t, they’re getting at those that are $45,000, $47,000, to bring them up to the next level with this advertisement...Obviously they’re trying to make Jimmy more appealing to people aspiring to a higher end market image.

Boyd observes that “people that have more money generally want people to know that they have more money” and parallel with this observation is one from his life themes interview that “the more money people have the busier they tend to be.” Taken together, they add up to the lifestyle that Boyd interprets from the GMC Jimmy ad. Messages that promote the idea of success as an issue of material gain run counter to Boyd’s own ideas. The time Boyd has chosen to spend at home and devote to his family would not be sustainable if he were to concentrate on financial or material success. Boyd’s philosophy reveals that the lifestyle message of the ad is in opposition to Boyd’s secondary life theme:

B: *I think success comes because something has to give some place,* and yeah I have a successful career but my home life is suffering, then that’s what suffers. But if my home life is great then my financial life suffers a little bit. *There is a trade off for everything.* It’s what you want to do.

**Bally**

Whilst Boyd’s first impression of the shoe was that it was ugly and “I would never wear that just because its ugly” he also concedes that the shoe may be on the trend and that “it may be the kind of shoe I’ll be wearing in two years because I’ve seen enough people wearing it for it to grow on me and I’ll start to like it.” Until that happens, though, Boyd associates the shoe with a European style that he does not like, and he does not want “to be the first person out there with that style.” Though the Bally shoe is a designer label
product, and associates itself with a European style cachet, Boyd finds he
cannot use the ad because it doesn’t show the model wearing the shoe. Boyd
cannot see how it would look.

B: You know when you read the copy and they talk about hand
crafted workmanship, styling, yeah I look for those type of things,
but I would probably look more at the picture if I thought he had
those shoes on.

Boyd does not believe the ad is speaking to him because “these are the
kind of ads that you’d see in an upper end magazine, not kind of Good
Housekeeping or something like that I wouldn’t think.” Though Boyd believes
the ad is targeting someone in a higher socio-economic group, one that he
describes as “upper class” he does not let that deter him from making his own
assessment of the product:

B: It is certainly speaking to a higher economic class, but when I see
an ad for something that maybe I like, like a very nice suit, or a tie
that costs $200 or something, if I like that tie I’ll stop and look at it.
And clothes are something that I would spend money on. But even
so, I could get a magazine like GQ and a lot of things that I see in
there I wouldn’t wear.

Boyd’s justification for spending money on clothes arises out of his
assessment of the role they play, both for himself and other people:

B: I think the reason that the reason that I spend more money on
clothes is the look it gives you. It certainly makes you feel good if
you wear nicer clothes. Its the first thing people see and people do
judge you on what you wear. Like when I go to work and girls wear
that 70s look I think are you wearing that because you think you
look nice or just because its the style.

As much as Boyd likes clothes and enjoys shopping for things that appeal
to his tastes, a designer label item of clothing must demonstrate both value
and say something more in terms of its look and a regular item of clothing in order to meet his criteria. The distinction he describes is indicative of his primary life theme:

Q: How do you feel about buying designer labels?
B: I kind of have mixed feelings, it depends on what it is. Some things I think there’s better value and if you spend more money you get what you pay for, especially clothing. But not everything, like Levis, you can spend a $100 on a pair of Levis but I never would. Or like a tie you can spend $5 on a tie or $100. I would be more likely to spend $100 on a tie than on a pair of pants

Q: Why is that?
B: I think it’s the look. Levis are not dressy wear for work, you wear them to lay around in the house. They don’t say anything special. You buy them for comfort and if you spend $100 dollar for a pair versus $20 you get nothing more out of them. I suppose you can use that argument about a tie, but you can wear it with a nice dress shirt and a suit, its a focal point. It’s just one of those quirks about me I guess that I would spend more money on a tie than on a pair of Levis.

Buying designer products and clothes because they demonstrate quality and add confidence because they look well is a rationale that is consistent with Boyd’s primary life theme - it is time, money and effort well spent. This is not the rationale that Boyd interprets from the meaning of the Bally ad:

B: ...I think a lot of people wear these things just because its the name value, it costs a lot of money to buy these and that’s all you can say about them. When I go to places where I see higher end people wear that, I think I would never wear that, even if I had the money they had, I would still not wear that.

Not only is it not a purchase rationale that Boyd cannot relate to, it is an advertising appeal that he finds dishonest in its expression, and which lacks any correspondence with his own life themes:

B: ...the ad with the shoe (is) much more upper class, stuffed shirt, more formal in everything they do. Fake, somewhat. The ad for
the shoe, the dance, kind of a fake thing. I don't go out dancing in a tuxedo and all fancied up. Is that a lifestyle that I am longing for? No. I would rather wear my levis and golf shirt and just go out and golf and those kind of activities rather than all formal and dressed up.

Q: What does fake mean to you?

B: Well, the whole thing, you put on your fancy shoes, your suit, and look happy and all is well and its probably not.

Versace

Not being familiar with the name Versace, Boyd had at first thought it was “an advertisement for a photo studio that took family portraits.” The Versace ad fails on two levels for Boyd. It has no copy and therefore no informative content, and its black and white format means that “I can’t see anything I like except for basic styles.” The image used by the Versace ad also presents a lifestyle depiction that Boyd describes as fake. He interprets the message to say “if I buy this I will come across as being very wealthy.” While Boyd has a keen appreciation for the power of good clothes to create an impression, he is looking for a result that is more professionally substantive than being mistaken for being wealthy. Comments made during his life themes interview reveal his attitude:

B: I think if you look successful, you act successful. A lot of times what you wear determines on how you feel. If the boss has a tie on today watch out, because dress evokes a lot of different emotions in people...But I think people should be judged not on that but on their capability in the workplace, don't judge me because I'm a woman but judge me on what I do. But that's not how they advertise it in magazines. Being desirable has a huge effect, but personality plays into that a lot too. But how you dress can also affect your personality as well. It can affect your chances for advancement. You get noticed, you look more professional. Put that together with a good personality and good social skills then you have a very winning combination.
In his pragmatic, utilitarian approach to selecting good clothes, his primary life theme emerges by showing that Boyd primarily regards them as a professional tool that can enhance performance and self-confidence. He is not choosing them to appear wealthy or make a statement about social status. Indeed, the Versace ad was puzzling to him:

B: Just looking at the ad it was difficult to know what they were advertising. Its definitely supposed to appeal to a higher lifestyle. *I look at ads very quickly, some people get in them but if I don't understand it or the picture doesn't appeal to me I will just ignore it.* Because of the size of this ad too, its a centerfold, I might look at it and then I’d move on.

Without any real information about the clothes and photography that does not allow him to see their look clearly, under normal circumstances Boyd would move on. Within the context of the interview, Boyd was asked to remain with the ad to reveal what he might glean from its various elements. He concludes that he thinks the intent of the ad is "some kind of shock feature...because they try to make this look like a family album, they have all these mixtures of different kinds of people and race and hairstyles." He laments that a lot of advertising adopts this tactic, at the expense of the product:

B: It doesn’t work for me at all, I’d look at it and say, what are they advertising here? They wanted to say hey its okay for you know white girls to have black babies, men to wear earrings or hey our clothes look nice. That’s what I think a lot of advertisers do, what advertising’s gone to now, *they don’t advertise their product any more, but more off the wall the better the ad is supposed to be now. They’ve gotten away from advertising a product.* Just about everybody, well not everybody, but a lot them have gone after a shock feature or something. Maybe they think that will draw the attention and people will say oh I’m shocked.

Q: Are you shocked?
B: No.

It is not an advertising tactic that holds any appeal for Boyd, or indeed makes any sense to him, and in this instance the interpretive meaning he derives from the ad’s family group image makes a social comment that challenges his own ideas about family-centeredness:

B: Its like they’ve run out of ideas to advertise their clothing so they’ve got the white girl holding the black baby, the guy with two earrings, kind of a punk hairdo look, and this guy with a new age look.

Q: What would you change in this ad?

B: I would probably take out the girl holding the black baby

Q: Because of shock value or something else?

B: Well not that its shock value more socially unacceptable to me. You know even if she had her husband with her, they kind of leave it to say to interpret she’s had a baby out of wedlock and its black and there’s no father with her. You know that happens more and more and is more and more socially acceptable but in my life its not acceptable, not because I think I’m racist just that it’s easier. You think of this child growing up and what children have to go through, and it works to no one’s advantage. Not that I don’t mind what other people do so much for myself. I wouldn’t feel bad if I saw them in the mall together, but I wouldn’t want it in my family, I wouldn’t want to be associated with it.
“BOYD”

A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence Of Religiosity On Boyd’s Life Themes

Boyd’s life revolves around what he calls his “stronger values” of family and a faith or belief in something. Boyd believes that without strong morals in his life “I’ll just kind of decay.” His family and his faith keep Boyd focused on responsibility beyond simply indulging himself:

B: When people just live one day at a time I think it almost hurts society, they don’t really have any responsibility to anybody.

Consistent with his life themes, living one day at a time for Boyd means not adequately taking responsibility for behavioral consequences, for example responsible financial values:

B: And that’s something that my wife and I decided not to do. We don’t go into debt, we don’t own a credit card. Whatever you see here we paid cash for it. There’s almost a certain satisfaction and we still have money to go to the movies this weekend if we want to.

Boyd credits his financial values to his Church background. His Church has taught him to “stay out of debt, live within your means...” This does not mean that he forgoes acquiring nice things. Instead of compromising his standards by resorting to a credit card, “the nicer things motivate you to work harder, so if I can’t afford it now then I work a little harder, those kind of things.” Being able to live within your means is a criteria of success that Boyd identifies with:

B: Basic success for me is just being able to provide the basic necessities of life. Everybody would probably love the opportunity to live in a million dollar home, but a one hundred thousand dollar home still provides your needs for you.
In its application, Boyd lives his religiosity in an accepting and uncomplicated manner. He looks to his Church for direction and appears to have developed a religiosity and life themes that are mutually reciprocal. Claiming that he is conservative by nature, he accepts that simply following directions is not what everyone can understand. He finds that the standards asked for by his Church are principles of faith to live by, and that “there are blessings for just following directions.” He does not experience any conflict in accepting teaching and direction from his Church, nor any restriction in expressing his lifestyle, and claims that his Church is a source of rejuvenation in his life:

B: I still think that the church gives us lots of latitude. I don’t feel its a real limiting kind of thing in our lives, that there’s all these rules that you live by. All the rules are good for us, but I still think there’s lots of opportunity to be individual and do your own thing.

The emphasis on family life is a key component of Boyd’s religiosity. When he looks to some of his peers who may be materially better off Boyd sees not a material advantage but for him an unacceptable sacrifice, “you have to think that its because of the price they paid and they’re still paying on it too”. The price usually means “...the kind of job that took them away.” Boyd represents it as a trade off:

B: I think success comes because something has to give some place, and yeah I have a successful career but my home life is suffering, then that’s what suffers. But if my home life is great then my financial life suffers a little bit.

In choosing to prioritize his family life, Boyd seeks “to just have my kids be happy and successful, whereas so many people are so unhappy and just in all kinds of trouble and stuff. But I don’t think you can just hope that.” He is therefore doubtful of those who sacrifice spending time with their families.
Making reference to his Church’s directive that the preferred place for mothers is at home with their children, Boyd qualifies what he believes is the intent of the directive:

B: They don’t say women can’t work, but if you can be at home with your children then do so. Its that same thing, if the income that your husband makes is enough for you to buy a comfortable house and to provide, then do that, but if to buy a luxury house you have to work too then your priorities are messed up. But if it takes both of you to live in just a comfortable house then I think that’s okay, to provide basic essentials. But if you’re working to pay for the boat and the cabin, then that’s what my personal interpretation of what they’re meaning.

It takes both Boyd and his wife working part time to provide a comfortable house and basic family essentials without incurring debt. Choosing a lifestyle that is dependent upon credit card debt or a mother working solely for non-essential lifestyle luxuries is behavior that Boyd believes hurts society. It is also in opposition to his idea of personal success:

B: I think success in your personal life is just having friends and being happy with yourself and your life. So that you’re not always wanting more or wishing - looking at others and saying I wish I had that. I guess we all know people that are always unhappy. Success in your personal life is just being happy or satisfied with where you are at.

2 Influence Of Religiosity On Boyd’s Interpretation Of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

Advertising that promotes a lifestyle of social sophistication is of little substantive interest to Boyd. He describes it as “kind of a fake thing... You put on your fancy shoes, your suit, and look happy and all is well and its probably not.” Instead Boyd has found happiness with a more family-centered lifestyle
consistent with his LDS religiosity, and is comfortable to “…just come home from work and be home, eat dinner, watch a little bit of TV.” His preferred entertainment is to “…wear my levis and golf shirt and just go out and golf and those kind of activities rather than all formal and dressed up.” Consequently, when Boyd comes across an ad for a luxury item, he may pause because “they’re usually taken in glamorous places” and to “see what’s different about it.” As for example, the difference between “a Rolex watch versus one you pay $25 for.” However, he would never buy a Rolex because it would be fake behavior:

B: Its really more upper class, at least for me. If I bought one it would be for pride, not that it keeps better time or anything, but its pride to show by wearing this people see me with it on, what’s their opinion.

This is behavior that for Boyd lacks integrity by succumbing to the motivation of pride, and is something that for Boyd is fake. All four ads that Boyd considered he felt did not relate to him, either his values or his lifestyle. While discussing the Versace ad Boyd observed that “they always try to make - if I buy this I will come across as being very wealthy.” The objection that Boyd has with this approach corresponds with his reasons for not buying a Rolex watch:

B: Basically its pride to distinguish yourself from others, and the way its makes you feel, that’s why you buy it.

Boyd also fails to identify with the male depicted in the Bally shoe ad for similar reasons:

B: He’s out there having a blast and from that I would say more upper class as well, and that’s what they’re advertising, they’re not reaching out to me. I don’t think I’m their target market with this ad at all.
Finding the product in this instance to be ugly, Boyd is suspicious of anyone’s motive to buy it or wear it, finally concluding that “...a lot of people wear these things just because its the name value...”

The couple in the Pure Wool ad are considered to be “kind of yuppie” and “definitely a middle upper class.” Nor does Boyd identify with the tone of the GMC Jimmy ad. Boyd interprets the female model as being part of “that upper end yuppie kind of lifestyle...” Though his religiosity leads him to avoid public displays of pride in his own life, he recognizes the pragmatic imperatives faced by the advertisers, that “if you don’t have a market that you’re going after, there are real definite breaks and most of them are economic.” Boyd observes a lifestyle vulnerability associated with pride, that “people that have more money generally want people to know that they have more money...”

LDS Church members are regularly admonished by their leaders to beware of pride, that it jeopardizes a true LDS lifestyle. Boyd’s response to the religiosity survey questionnaire reveals a strong alignment with orthodox Christian and LDS beliefs and his religious behavior shows a particularly strong indication that Boyd lives his religion and is mindful of the poor. A Pretension to class is inconsistent both with his religiosity and his life themes.

The lack of family values and public morality also emerged in discussing the GMC Jimmy and the Versace ads. The lifestyle portrayed by the advertisers of the Jimmy ad is “a lifestyle that a lot of people like to have, those that don’t have would like to have, but its kind of a selfish lifestyle.” Of the female model he interprets her as “looks forty so she chose not to have a family, more selfish. It is a lifestyle that is inconsistent with his secondary life theme, it is foreign to the pattern prescribed by his religiosity, it is also bad for society, and therefore unsustainable. A similar syllogism is suggested in the
Versace ad. Boyd has stated that he particularly identifies with "family values, morality values" but observes that "our society's morality or morals are definitely, you know, gone and maybe that's the root of a lot of problems. He sees this in the construction of the family group portrayed by the Versace advertisers. Boyd identifies a "shock value" tactic in the use of "all these mixtures of different kinds of people and race, hairstyles" and in particular "the white girl holding the black baby, the guy with two earrings, kind of a punk hairdo look, and this guy with a new age look..." The message that he reads from this is that "they wanted to say hey its okay for you know white girls to have black babies, men to wear earrings..." The shock value is not the basis of Boyd's objection to the ad:

B: Well not that its shock value, more socially unacceptable to me. You know even if she had her husband with her, they kind of leave it to say to interpret she's had a baby out of wedlock and its black and there's no father with you. You know that happens more and more and is more and more socially acceptable but in my life its not socially acceptable, not because I think I'm racist just that it's easier - you think of this child growing up and what children have to go through... I wouldn't feel bad if I saw them in the mall together, but I wouldn't want it in my family, I wouldn't want to be associated with it.

Again, from Boyd's own religious point of view, and one that is culturally defined in caucasian Utah, it is a selfish act to inflict inter-racial challenges upon a child. It is a lifestyle that is inconsistent with his secondary life theme, namely sustainable behavior, it is foreign to the pattern of morality prescribed by the standards and practices of his Church, and the sum of all of these is out of step with morality as understood by his religiosity and therefore is bad for society.
"CLIVE"

An Explication of Clive's Primary and Secondary Life Themes

Of all the participants in the study, Clive is the most senior at 56 years old. He is married with four children, three in college and a fourth in senior high, Clive is a physician and has his own specialized medical surgery. His wife works full time in the surgery as the office manager and together their incomes exceed $50,000. Both our meetings took place in Clive’s office in the surgery before the day’s appointments began. When others have occasion to describe him as sarcastic, Clive views himself as realistic. For Clive this means not seeing life as merely a dress rehearsal. He referred to a study of the lives and outcomes of a number of Harvard graduates begun in the 1930s and still underway, though some of its participants are now dying off. In spite of some of the best minds and potential of their times, not all succeed. For Clive this means that:

C: ...you have to make the right decisions about career, about marriage, about how you spend your time, about how you spend your money, about how important money is, and those things are... You can’t go back twenty years later and say well, I wish I had done this differently. There are things I wish I had done a little differently, but when I think about them in relationship to my situation in my life, and how I was raised and so forth, there’s not a whole lot that I would change dramatically.

Using his wealth to acquire material possessions has been important to Clive insofar as it has allowed him and his family to do things and travel. He doesn’t see himself as having “material things just for material things sake.” That he uses his wealth in a responsible and restrained manner is indicated by his rationale that he has:

C: ...gotten to the point where, you know, if I were a really big spender, I mean I like airplanes, I have an airplane, I have a boat,
but I don’t own a jet. *If I were a really big spender I would lust after a Gulf Stream 5 at $25 million...*

Conspicuous wealth in terms of possessions and snooty behavior is distasteful to Clive and in fact indicates a lack of substance, both in terms of real wealth and character. Flaunting wealth is a giveaway of one or both of these. “I picture myself as being not snooty, I don’t dress terribly well, I dress to be comfortable.” These signifiers are important to Clive as they are common to “folks who really do have quite a bit materially, but yet they don’t flaunt it, they don’t show it off and they don’t make an issue of it.”

*C:...And those folks I enjoy, they are usually folks of a fair amount of substance who have thought about issues and can discuss things with in a serious way and they won’t get bent out of shape...*

As opposed to:

*C:...a certain segment who are really not very well off, less well off than I am actually, who have this veneer, and they need to try to impress you with what they own and where they’ve been and so forth, and you can recognize those folks and I dislike them immensely...are very superficial and if you try to discuss things of substance, why they either don’t know about it or have no opinions - they’re just not the kind of folks I enjoy being around.*

Clive feels that he has enough now to live life comfortably that he feels less and less need to acquire very much more. The driving need to prove himself through material acquisition underwent a transformation several years earlier. The impetus for much of Clive’s professional and material achievement, the wealth he has worked hard to accumulate, stems from the relationship he had with his father while growing up, “Primarily to show my dad that I was not a son of a bitch, a useless son of a bitch.” He recounts his father saying to him that “…if I didn’t like the way he did things or the things I
was required to do, there was the door, I could leave...” Only in the last few years has Clive discovered a possible reason for what he describes as a very poor relationship with his father:

C: my mother-in-law was doing some genealogy work and my mother became very upset because I was born at probably seven and a half months, and I’d never stopped to figure it out, you know, I didn’t know. So apparently my parents were... She was pregnant before they got married and this was back in 1939, and that is something that is still in the church considered something you obviously should not do. And back then, it was much more frowned on. So once I found that out I tried to analyze my father’s feelings about me in relation to how that may have influenced them...I pictured him as figuring that I was this little, literally, bastard, who had essentially ruined his life and he was not close to me, is not close to me.

However, in the last few years Clive believes he’s changed from being driven simply “to succeed for that particular reason, to show him that I was not worthless has changed...” to being “fairly hard driven, get on with things, enjoy life as much as I can.”

C: And, at this point in time I now work two days a week in the clinic and I’m attempting to write, I’m attempting to do some other things that I just want to do just because of wanting to do it. I feel secure enough now that whatever comes I can live and exist and keep food on the table, I’ve put money enough away to help my kids through college. I’ve become less liberal with them, as well as providing for them.

The equation of hard work and material proofs has now given way to hard work and his need to do something which is of benefit to the world. Clive believes that “as you take the long view you should try to make your life so that when you do die the world is a better place because you’ve lived than it was without you.” Clive views the activities involved in generating personal
wealth in terms of his profession's Hippocratic oath:

C: ...When I was in medical school there was a saying, First do no harm, I think whatever you do you should not harm other individuals. We were involved with an investment person about ten years ago when we lost a huge amount of money and it put me back about five years, and spoiled my plans for when I could back off and do other things that I wanted to do. This individual was fairly high in the church and I think what he did was amoral, and did harm other people. Certainly it harmed me. So I think that one should not harm other individuals through the process of making the world a better place or working hard.

Though less liberal with his children, Clive's attitude to his church membership has become markedly liberal since the days when he

C: ...viewed the church as being the vehicle by which a person would gain happiness in the world, *that if you didn't do the things the church required* that you could look forward to unhappiness, both here and in the hereafter.

Clive charts the beginning of his change of attitude from the time of his mission, during which he discovered "...hundreds of very good human beings who had no association with the church, but whose values were similar in scope..." As a result, Clive has come to believe religion in general is what is important, rather than as a particular institution or belief system to be followed for the purposes of an exclusive salvation:

C: ...I think people need religion, the human being as a creature needs some sort of organization to help them through the vicissitudes of life, the ups and downs, the uncertainties, so forth. And thus I think the church is a good organization to do that. *I don't think that one has to be a Mormon to make it into Heaven*, whether or not that's the Celestial kingdom or whatever.

Consequently, though Clive continues to be aligned with his church, it is more for secular concerns than for spiritual guidance because "its important to
stay a part of the Mormon church because without that you become rather cut off from the community...I feel comfortable in that, and that’s largely because of the way I was brought up.” However, it is not an easy association for someone suspicious of behaviors and motivations “carried out purely for religious purposes.” He takes issue with a number of directives issued by Church leaders to the membership. The greatest conflict Clive has with these is “the need that I should obey the brethren just because they say” and points, for example, to what he sees as the practice of “having meetings just for meetings sake...just because the brethren say we should have a meeting.” Not only is this not enough reason, by itself he thinks it is dangerous and uses for illustration “the crusades and various other people doing heinous things for religious purposes” and concludes that “there’s nothing scarier than the zealot who thinks he’s doing something because God told him to.” The program in his church known as Home Teaching, where male priesthood holders visit an assigned number of people and families on a monthly basis is a case in point for Clive.

C: I think they ought to make it optional, that if you want to be a Home Teacher that should optional, if you want to be Home Taught that should be optional. That each month it shouldn’t have to be that you have to give these numbers up and you know and blah blah blah. Its a big waste of time. Some people need it and therefore it should be done, it shouldn’t be abandoned as a program but it ought to be modified.

To prove his point he carried out his own local survey to justify his antagonism to the dictates of the program. For Clive the program suggests an example of “religious dogmatism” that something must be done for no other justification than that the Brethren have asked for it to be done. An address given in a recent Church General Conference also serves to illustrate Clive’s
alienation from Church directives:

C: There was one other talk that I heard that was a hellfire and brimstone, that if you don’t do this and don’t go through the temple, and don’t do these ordinances, blah, blah, blah, why you’ll end up regretting it, etc etc. And it irritates me, and I shut it off.

This talk is compared by Clive to another given by Church President, Gordon B. Hinckley, in the same Conference which he feels more comfortable with:

*But President Hinckley talks about recognizing the rights of others to be different than us, the pluralism that exists in society.* And I think the church has sort of been forced into that because of, number one, the growth here in Utah and, number two, the growth of the church throughout the world...

This contrast is seen by Clive as evidence not only of a more practical view superseding “a fire and brimstone talk from the pulpit” but also, that the Church accommodates his own expression of pluralism. Rather than seeing himself at odds with the church, Clive thinks the church does change with the times. He cites as evidence an article from the magazine “Dialogue”, which describes itself as a journal of Mormon thought, though is not sponsored or acknowledged by the Church. The article describes changes of emphasis in the messages of Patriarchal blessings, a one time official church blessing available to all male and female members of the church in good standing that denominates lineage and personal guidance. From the time of Joseph Smith’s martyrdom when members were blessed to take part in redeeming the prophet's blood, from the beginning of the century until about 1960, promises of seeing the second coming of the Lord, and since 1965 the admonition to live a good life. Clive believes that as the Millennium draws closer “the church doesn’t want to look flaky.” Though Clive feels estranged by calls to obedience
to, as he sees it, dogmatism, and Temple ordinances, he nevertheless feels able to participate in its less denominational activities:

C: So I think the church is a pragmatic organization and changes its doctrine as time goes on. Does that diminish its validity to me? No, not really, in fact it probably increases it. I think as they go along and as the church does become much more multi-cultural around the world that many of these other proscriptions will have to be changed for it to really succeed.

As far as looking to the Church alone as an authority by which to measure his life and beliefs, Clive explains that “as I’ve gotten older my dependence upon a particular source of knowledge has been lessened, thus when it comes from church I look at it and say, interesting, but as far as really influencing my life it doesn’t to a large degree.” Yet in spite of this assertion, many of Clive’s family aspirations are defined in terms of his activity and his family’s activity in it within the community in which he lives.

Q: Does the church play any role in the aspirations you may have for your family?

C: Well, as I see families, any family, whether or not its a catholic family and a jewish family or a mormon, whatever, any marriage where there are different religions it makes it more difficult. And so in that sense I hope that my children marry within the Mormon church, because Mormonism is much more than a religion, its an ethic. Getting away from Mormonism is like trying to get away from Judaism. Its always there, how you were raised, your belief system and so forth...And so I think since it is a good organization I think the positives in it much more outweigh the negatives in it. I would like them to participate in it, so my aspirations are that as a family we can stay in it. How active they are, its up to them, how many meetings they go to. As far as the good part of it, the family values, the honesty, I would ask them to espouse those things, but as far as feeling that a person has really achieved if they turn out to be a Bishop or Stake President, that means absolutely zip to me. In fact, I would be a little bit worried about it because it seems when you get into those leadership positions its because you’ve
been a yes man and been almost too much robot like.

In summary, Clive has established a successful medical practice and has enjoyed considerable material benefit. In much of his professional life, Clive has been required to develop and justify a professional autonomy that has had to meet the responsibility of the Hippocratic oath, namely "do no harm." Whereas he is comfortable in directing his patients and those that support his professional life, he is much less comfortable accepting some of the non-negotiable absolutes that emit from his church, namely directives from the Brethren and certain covenant obligations. Indeed, the idea that such things are required is a source of suspicion to Clive. These are signs of zealotry that Clive disowns in favor of pluralism and pragmatism that is in line with his own thinking and experiences. Although he holds a Temple Recommend (clearance to enter LDS Temples), Clive laughs as he comments that that is "probably because I have a very liberal Bishop." Yet he recognizes that people have a need for religion in general, himself included. In spite of elements that are incompatible with his own thinking, he believes his church is probably better than many others. Clive is content to participate for reasons of community and family unity more than for spiritual edification or religious doctrine.
Primary Life Theme

In his desire to be realistic, a tendency that he admits others call sarcastic, the implications in many of his observations of his environment and those within it is to be discriminating. Clive therefore displays a primary life theme that could be expressed as a tension between Being Justified versus Not Being Justified.

Secondary Life Theme

Though no less concerned with being family centered versus not being family centered, in common with the other participants of the study, yet the emphasis for Clive is that the family need participate in LDS church activities only to a degree that satisfies a social and communal norm, producing a tension between Being Involved and Not Being Involved in the LDS Church.
"CLIVE"

An Analysis of Boyd’s Use of Life Themes

Primary Life Theme:

Being Justified versus Not Being Justified

Secondary Life Theme:

Being Involved versus Not Being Involved

Clive believes that advertising “reflects the feelings of society at the time” but cites the Calvin Klein ads “for young people who look like heroin addicts” and “Joe Camel...and the glamorous image of young people when they smoke” as a dangerous extremes. Clive has seen the worst medical effects of drug abuse, and will not buy Calvin Klein products for himself or anybody else “because somebody who panders to that kind of image, who promotes that its something desirable, that’s reprehensible.” Our image is something that Clive thinks we have feelings about at every age, but about which young people are particularly vulnerable. This causes him to have some sympathy with advertising controls:

C: I tend not to want the government to meddle in things but when it comes to things like cigarettes and the dangers of alcohol, I think there probably ought to be some rules and regulations

But by the time a person reaches fifty or sixty years of age Clive believes most of the extreme dangers of advertising diminish. He states that advertisements now only interest him if “they have a significant visual effect” or if they provide information about comfortable travel destinations that he would be interested to visit.
Wool

At first Clive did not understand the intent of the ad because he failed to read one segment of the copy that provided the sense for the remaining copy. The led Clive to conclude that “it seems like their message and the picture doesn’t coincide.” As he continued to look at the ad he then made the connection “Oh, I see what they’re doing. As you look at this you see the rules don’t any longer apply, so apparently this is the old code, this is the new code, and they’re applying the new code.” Failing at first to make sense of the ad caused Clive some sensitivity. He states a little later:

C: Maybe I was a little think in not connecting the old message compared to the new down there.

However Clive seemed uncomfortable to let it go at that, and was able to implicate a deficiency in the ad as responsible for his earlier misunderstanding:

C: Well, I guess I would try to make the association between this and this a little more obvious (old and new rules copy). If you look at an ad and you’re going through a magazine you’ll obviously look at the picture. I didn’t initially make the association, and so if you’re trying to say this is the old dress code and this is the new dress code and you should wear wool because the new dress code applies, this has to be associated with that a little more prominently.

From his lifestyle interview, Clive reveals that he sees himself as being “fairly judgmental at times and want things to be done my way, want them to be done now, want to get on with life.” In describing the models in the ads photo as “yuppies” Clive identifies with the yuppie ethic:

C: They look like yuppies
Q: Why?
C: Well, they are both young, they are both well dressed, well
groomed, they have the time to lay out on the lawn and frolic and not be in the office working so I assume that they have some disposable income that they can spend the time doing this.

Q: How do you feel about yuppie values?
C: I was a yuppie at one time, I don’t particularly apologize for that, I think yuppiedom gets them some things done, it spurs people on to invent Microsoft and so forth.

Working hard and having disposable income is a relationship at the core of Clive’s understanding of a worthwhile life. It is one expression of his primary life theme. Clive believes that the values that most defines him is hard work - “Its important that somebody get up each day and do something which is of benefit to the world.” He thinks material possessions are important because “it allows you to do things in life which if you didn’t have those material things you couldn’t do.” Clive’s endorsement of the ad’s yuppie image as getting things done is in stark contrast to the pattern of unfinished projects he has seen in his father’s life:

C: ...if you go over to my dad’s house he has at last count 29 vehicles around his house in various states of disrepair, cars, trucks, tractors, generators, etc etc. It is trashy, its junky. Every piece of property he has ever had has turned out that way, the house has turned into that. Its a source of constant friction between him and me and between my mother and him.

Bally

Clive also applies the yuppie interpretation to the Bally shoe ad, but is less convinced about the purity of the work ethic to the people he sees represented. The style of the shoe suggests to Clive someone “who has found that image often more than substance seems to play well, and would want to make a statement in his foot wear.”

C: You will see it on maybe someone who’s a stockbroker or the really yuppie folks, and I guess if you have a spectrum of
yupiedom, I didn't object to yupiedom, but this getting near the end of the spectrum that I would not feel comfortable with.

The reason for Clive's discomfort is that at this end of the spectrum the value of hard work is compromised by an image of stylish behavior that he finds unconvincing and suspect:

C: Again if I were, and I use the term sarcastically, back from a mission, *I find that a lot of missionaries once they have been out and they've experienced the fairly superficial exposure to life that they have on a mission, come back and do those sort of things. As opposed to someone who has spent two years in the Peace Corps. I don't think that's a Peace Corps volunteer shoe.*

The attempt to appear to be something when the reality does not support the image runs counter to Clive's primary life theme, their image of substance and achievement is not justified by the reality of what they have and who they are. Comments from Clive's life themes interview clarify the conflict his interpretation of the ad induces with his primary life theme:

C: As I've gotten so that I rub shoulders with people who are more and more well off, *I find that there's a certain segment who are really not very well off, less well off than I am actually, who have this veneer, and they need to try to impress you with what they own and where they've been and so forth, and you can recognize those folks and I dislike them immensely...So I picture myself from being fairly different from most of the people in the advertisements...*

**Versace**

The versace ad presents an image of success and wealth that immediately conflicts with the way in which Clive perceives himself. Clive is suspicious of display and behavior and attitude that substitutes substance for image. He finds the image of the family group unwholesome and considers them to be
people who’ve had a lot of problems, and they’ve had a lot of problems because they figure that style is much more important than substance.” In the same way that Clive has stated that he would not buy Calvin Klein because it promotes lifestyle images that are repellent to him, Clive also draws the same conclusions about Versace:

C: So if its for fashion, and this is a line of clothing, I would not buy Versace, because I wouldn’t want to be associated with these people.

The family group reminds him of the Kennedy’s and of being “high class,” “snooty” and “uppity,” - “the kind of thing I try to spend my life not doing is getting into this in your face, snooty kind of role.” It is an image that Clive says “turns him off” and is “unreal.” The group has associations with “decadence” and superficial people whom he tries to avoid including in his life.

In his life themes interview Clive discusses how he recognized that if he had aimed to become “a really big spender” and “lust after a Gulf Stream 5 at $25 million” it would have exacted a cost to his ethics and his family:

C: ...I think to achieve that I would have to become - I would have to compromise some of my ethical values, and spend less time with my family...

Clive thinks that something more is required to be successful and that material gains are not the only measure of a successful life. Being able to point to an achievement that leaves some improvement is moving towards the substance that Clive seeks as an expression of his own personal success:

C: Its important that somebody get up each day and do something which is of benefit to the world. I think that as you take the long view you should try to make your life so that when you do die the world is a better place because you’ve lived than it was without you. And that could be a very simple thing, from having raised
good plants each year and given them to folks to creating a multi-national organization that employs thousands or hundreds of thousands of people. I mean, a big spectrum. But I think that you should try to make the world a better place when you finally leave it than it was before you came.

Being able to reconcile how wealth is achieved is very important to Clive, and the Versace ad prompts negative associations and experiences for him. His interpretation of their kind of material success also threatens a guiding principle of his profession that Clive also applies to his business dealings - the hippocratic oath to do no harm:

C: They appeal to more of the negative aspects of getting ahead, I think, than the two previous ads.
Q: Which are?
C: The lack of ethic, the get ahead no matter what, that being thin and your hair spiked and earrings and - I’ve had problems with folks who look like that.

Clive elaborates his interpretation further by projecting the story of the advertisement:

C: ...once they get through here they’re going to jump into their Ferraris and Porches and go back to screwing the people of the world and generally messing up the rest of our lives.

Clive describes an experience from his life themes interview that goes some way to explain his aversion to his interpretation of the Versace image of success:

C: We were involved with an investment person about ten years ago when we lost a huge amount of money and it put me back about five years, and spoiled my plans for when I could back off and do other things that I wanted to do. This individual was fairly high in the church and I think what he did was amoral, and did harm other people. Certainly it harmed me. So I think that one should not harm other individuals through the process of making the world a better place or working hard.
GMC Jimmy

Clive describes the Jimmy ad a “more of a homey, a western kind of thing, the saddle's there” which together with the fact that the product is a vehicle and not a shoe he feels more able to relate to. The To Do list is something he identifies doing in his own life, and finds the ad “better than the others, its not as artsy as the others because its color and plain spoken.” He finds the female model more acceptable because “she looks like she would appeal more to the homey values that I would identify with.” Clive explains “homey values” as “the opposite of the Versace ad” which he elaborates as: C: Homey values are things that you’re trying to nurture family and home and get these things done as opposed to stand around and look like you’re in withdrawal.

Clive referred again to this ad in his lifestyles interview and explained further why this ad in particular appealed to him:
C: And the lady with the car, she was fairly wholesome and was not provocatively dressed, she had her list of things to do which goes along with my idea that you get up and work and make the world a better place.

The ad speaks to Clive's primary life theme in that it presents an image that justifies a purpose and intent beyond superficiality. The ethic of work and activity to purposes beyond self are meanings that Clive interprets from the “homey values” he sees in the ad's composition.
"CLIVE"
A Two-Part Analysis of the Influence of Religiosity

1 Influence Of Religiosity On Clive's Life Themes

The construction and expression of Clive's religiosity is markedly different from that of the other participants. He is at odds in many areas with his commitment to his institutional religiosity, as well as his belief in a particular orthodoxy - in this case his membership in the LDS church, which is much more limited. That he is more sympathetic with general principles of Christianity and less partisan in his religious allegiance is a process that began with his proselyting mission as a young man for the LDS Church:

C: My change of heart actually changed while I was on my mission, it was my first time really outside of Utah and I saw hundreds of very good human beings who had no association with the church, but whose values were similar in scope, and so I think religion in general, I think people need religion, the human being as a creature needs some sort of organization to help them through the vicissitudes of life, the ups and downs, the uncertainties, so forth. And thus I think the church is a good organization to do that. I don't think that one has to be a Mormon to make it into Heaven, whether or not that's the Celestial kingdom or whatever.

This justification of his departure from a strictly particular religiosity is evidenced clearly in Clive's survey questionnaire responses. Though believing in God, he denies the existence of Satan. Whereas he is only unsure that the Bible is the word of God, he disagrees that the Book of Mormon, the keystone of the LDS Church, is the word of God. Surprisingly, perhaps, he does believe the founding prophet of the LDS Church did see God, and he also believes the president of the LDS Church today is a prophet of God. Clive's religious behavior shows a commitment to live a Christian life, but he disagrees that he
loves God with all his heart or, indeed, that he is willing to do whatever the Lord wants him to do. Perhaps one explanation for this seemingly contradictory and incompatible religiosity is that what the survey identifies as Christian behavior is for Clive humanist principles of living that are less concerned with attributing divine authorship. Though Clive believes that people need religion, he qualifies this by remarking that “the human being as a creature needs some sort of organization to help them through the vicissitudes of life, the ups and down, the uncertainties, and so forth. Clive’s attitude seems to be that the LDS church can provide the necessary organizational help, with or without the religious doctrine.

With this much more liberal approach to the expression of his religiosity, Clive remarks that his “dependence upon a particular source of knowledge has been lessened...” This is because he believes that once one starts to align oneself too closely to a particular religion it can easily become “a very negative thing” leading to “people doing heinous things for religious purposes...” Clive gives an example of particularistic religiosity from an LDS conference talk that he believes supports this tendency:

C: There was one other talk that I heard that was a hellfire and brimstone, that if you don’t do this and don’t go through the temple, and don’t do these ordinances, blah, blah, blah, why you’ll end up regretting it, etc etc. And it irritates me, and I shut it off.

However, when Clive contrasts this talk with one given by the Church President, that in this instance happens to be in keeping with his own views, it may be possible to understand why Clive believes this man to be a Prophet:

C: But President Hinckley talks about recognizing the rights of others to be different than us, the pluralism that exists in society.

This begins to approach a reason that is perhaps the key to
understanding Clive’s religiosity, and goes some way to understanding the driving force of religiosity behind Clive’s life themes. When asked by the researcher whether there are any Church values that present him with conflicts in lifestyle, he reveals “the need that I should obey the brethren just because they say, is probably the greatest conflict.” Clive believes people would say of him that he “can be fairly judgmental at times and want things to be done my way, want them to be done now, want to get on with life.” His reluctance to submit his religious life to the direction of others may have had its root from an experience that he relates from his childhood and that has become a potent memory:

C: When I was about eight, why I remember my Dad telling me that if I didn’t like the way he did things or was required to do, there was the door, I could leave...

It may not be surprising that religious prescriptions that appear to Clive as paternalistic and uncompromising meet with a suspicious and hostile reception. Challenging religious authority, in particular directives that ask for compliance, has become a tenet of Clive’s own religiosity. Compliance is only granted when the directive meets criteria already determined by Clive. For example, his response to his Church’s directive about not watching R-rated movies:

C: I think the one about R-rated movies is silly. Schindler’s List was an R-rated movie and I think the message of Schindler’s List should be passed on to each generation I think there are many R-rated movies which are excellent, movies with tremendous messages, and I think to make a blanket statement and have people you know robot like follow that is silly.

The allusion to behavior that is “robot like” is something that implicates the relationship of Clive's religiosity and his family centered life theme that
revolves around being involved in Church versus not being involved in Church. He is happy to be involved himself, on his own terms as illustrated, and is also happy for his family to be involved based on the pragmatic justification that “its important to stay a part of the Mormon Church because without that you become rather cut off from the community.” This pragmatism extends to the marriages he hopes for his children because “any marriage where there are different religions it makes it more difficult.” His justification continues with the rationale that “Mormonism is much more than a religion, its an ethic” and Clive sums it up with a slightly fatalistic conclusion:

C: Getting away from Mormonism is like trying to get away from Judaism. Its always there, how you were raised, your belief system and so forth. And it takes literally generations to change that, because you have your children and they’re baptized and then they’re married in the Church and then their children are blessed in the Church and then they’re married in the Church and their grandchildren and it goes on and on and on and on.

The compensation for Clive is that he thinks “the positives in it much more outweigh the negatives in it.” However, he is cautionary. Though he would like his children to continue to participate in the Church, and even aspires that his family will remain in the Church, he is cautious about the level of their activity in the Church:

C: How active they are, its up to the, how many meetings they go to. As far as the good part of it, the family values, the honesty, I would ask them to espouse those things, but as far as feeing that a person has really achieved if they turn out to be a Bishop or Stake President, that means absolutely zip to me. In fact, I would be a little bit worried about it because it seems when you get into those leadership positions its because you’ve been a yes man and been almost too much robot like.”
2 Influence of Religiosity on Clive’s Interpretation of Four Ads Depicting Lifestyle Values

Alignment with a particular manifesto of religiosity or dependence upon one source of information are behaviors that give Clive cause to be suspicious. These behaviors are contrary to Clive’s own more liberal thinking religiosity and his endorsement of pluralism and the rights of others. Pluralism is not what he sees in most of these ads, and is critical of the narrow social appeal. Clive remarks “I don’t like snooty ads” In the Bally ad, for example, he finds a negative example from his LDS background. The shoe reminds him of “some young missionary type who has been, ex-missionary type, who has found that image often more than substance seems to play well, and would want to make a statement in his foot wear.” His criticism focuses further on the narrow mindset that stands in contrast to his own more inclusive religiosity:

C: I find that a lot of missionaries once they have been out and they’ve experienced the fairly superficial exposure to life that they have on a mission, come back and do those sort of things. As opposed to someone who has spent two years in the Peace Corps. I don’t think that’s a Peace Corps volunteer shoe.

Clive sees the same superficiality continued in the Versace ad with “people who’ve had a lot of problems, and they’ve had a lot of problems because they figure that style is much more important than substance.” The Versace visual reminds him of the Kennedy’s and associations with being “snooty, uppity, troubled, superficial, not the kind of things that I want to associate with.” With Clive’s aversion to religious zealotry robot-like conformity he sees the social image portrayed by the Versace ad as “too stratified” and that “once you’re born or adopted or however you get into this sort of group that you’re stuck there and you can’t get out of it, and I think
that’s a little too rigid.” This observation is remarkably similar to his comments about getting away from Mormonism, and the associations it has with paternalistic and non-compromising religious authority. Whereas Clive thinks the positives of Mormonism outweigh the negatives, he has a marked aversion to class alignment, commenting that “it’s the kind of thing I try to spend my life not doing is getting into this in your face, snooty kind of role.” In contrast are the values that he sees in the GMC Jimmy ad which he describes as “homey” which involve “trying to nurture family and home and get these things done as opposed to stand around and look like you’re in withdrawal (Versace ad).” Getting things done is a work ethic that is central to LDS religiosity and is a characteristic of being a yuppie that Clive identifies with, in the ad for Pure Wool for example:

C: They look like yuppies... I was a yuppie at one time. I don't particularly apologize for that, I think yuppiedom gets them some things done, it spurs people on to invent Microsoft and so forth.

Clive also identifies yuppie values in the Bally shoe ad, but here the manifestation is “getting near the end of the spectrum that I would not feel comfortable with.” The difference is that the fruits of yuppie hard work have begun to take upon an expression of lifestyle that is superficial and which start’s to become what Clive’s religiosity would describe as robot-like in its conformity. Just as Clive sees strict religious conformity as leading to “people doing heinous things for religion” he also sees submitting to class appeals as dangerous behavior. Clive sees in the Versace ad an “appeal to more of the negative aspects of getting ahead” than he did in the Pure Wool and Bally shoe ads. In spite of his efforts to avoid people who subscribe to class prescriptions, he does come into contact with wealthy people. Clive comments that he has noticed a veneer that afflicts some who pretend to being more than they have
a right to. Clive finds he can easily recognize these people, “and I dislike them immensely, and I find the folks who really do have quite a bit materially, but yet they don’t flaunt it, they don’t show it off and they don’t make an issue of it.” Preoccupations with class suggest to Clive a superficial and robot like conformity, that is the antithesis of his self-styled religiosity.

Clive has an untroubled acceptance of advertising appeals that might otherwise be expected to create dissonance amongst other members of an LDS audience. For example, the ad for Pure Wool prompts this observation:

C: I assume one of the things that since you’re thinking of an LDS market, why these people are amorous and maybe they are on the verge of having sex and so forth. I don’t know that that’s something that particularly crosses my mind and it doesn’t bother me that they are in that pose.

Clive returns to his liberal impartiality again within the same ad:
C: ...again she's in modern day dress, is fairly scantily clad, the neckline is low. You can make out the outline of her breasts there, so it assumes that her morals are not puritanical, but again that doesn’t particularly bother me.

Clive’s liberal religiosity makes a final appearance in his comments about the inter-racial component of the Versace ad, and the speculation from the ad that perhaps the black baby was born out of wedlock:
C: He looks oriental rather than black - I don’t know, that doesn’t bother me particularly if people want to do that as long as they’re - I don’t see the black father so I assume that she had him out of wedlock and was trying to do the right thing by raising him and that, again, is a sort of politically correct thing now. It doesn’t bother me one way or the other.
Table 1: Synopsis of Primary and Secondary Life Themes

Six Active* LDS Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Life Theme</th>
<th>Secondary Life Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Andrea</strong></td>
<td>Being Realistic v. Not Being Realistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belinda</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claire</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Comfortable v. Not Being Comfortable</td>
<td>Being Valued Based v. Not Being Value Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alan</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Just v. Not Being Just</td>
<td>Being Sustainable v. Not Being Sustainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boyd</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Prudent v. Not Being Prudent</td>
<td>Being Involved in Church v. Not Being Involved in Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clive</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Justified v. Not Being Justified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* "Active" versus "Less Active" are commonly applied LDS terms to indicate the degree to which an LDS Church member participates in Church religious life.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass media</th>
<th>Rules Based</th>
<th>Indv. Interp.</th>
<th>Life Theme</th>
<th>Religiosity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPANT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belinda</strong> R-rated movies</td>
<td>I like to be the</td>
<td>Being Fulfilled</td>
<td>We teach them correct principles and let them govern themselves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alan</strong> R-rated movies</td>
<td>No! I draw the line</td>
<td>Being Just</td>
<td>Church’s... standards haven’t changed compared to everyone else’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boyd</strong> R-rated movies</td>
<td>There are blessings for just following directions</td>
<td>Being Prudent</td>
<td>...Its a matter of faith to live these principals...All the rules are good for us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clive</strong> R-rated movies</td>
<td>I think the (directive) about R-rated movies is silly</td>
<td>Being justified</td>
<td>I think to make a blanket statement and have people you know robot like follow that is silly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The following discussion seeks to compare and contrast similarities and differences from the findings of the study, with a view to answering some of the underlying questions and assumptions of the research project.

Without exception, each of the six LDS participants found values from the study advertisements in conflict with personal values derived from their religious associations. However, trying to find a consensus on a particular value from any one of the four ads is much less obvious. For example, five of the participants found an advertising appeal to sexual desire implied from the image used in the ad for Pure Wool. Except Alan. Alan not only affirmed that the ad was not selling sex, but that it was, in fact, selling life itself. Yet the concerns expressed about the conflicts that each person identified in relation to this appeal varied considerably. Andrea thought it acceptable to talk (i.e. in narrative) about being desirable but not to show it because of young viewers. Belinda disliked the public display of affection because she is sensitive to her teenage daughter’s growing awareness of intimate behavior. Claire simply found the sexual appeal unacceptable to her. Boyd was led to comment on the tactic of advertisers to throw in sex because its the accent of the day. And Clive believed that the couple are on the verge of sex but that it doesn’t bother him.

Similarly, identifying agreement to the nature of conflict within a single ad, but this time with values specifically derived from religious associations, is not a simple consensus. For example, from the Bally shoe ad, Andrea makes reference to immodest clothes; Belinda, that it has little reference to Mormon family values; Claire, on trying to establish the legitimacy of the woman’s
relationship to her dance partner; Boyd, that succumbing to name value is indicative of pride; Clive that they look like they have had a few drinks (LDS are teetotal). Alan, again the exception, is simply stymied to know what type of person would wear that shoe.

Thus far, it is possible to demonstrate that there is conflict with lifestyle values, and that conflict with advertising values can be associated with values that are religiously derived. More importantly, what begins to emerge is an indication of the complexity and variety of interpretation about the nature of values conflict.

Whereas the research project has thus far privileged the individual participant in developing a picture of the emergence and construction of meaning, it is now helpful to illustrate the diversity of conflict with values derived from religious associations, in context with each of the four advertisements.

Conflict with Values Derived from Religious Associations

Pure Wool

The ad challenged values of immodesty in dress, inappropriate behavior, and sexuality. Andrea and Belinda both challenged the honesty of the ad, Andrea remarking that the ad implied that “if your wear this you’re gonna have this” and Claire the impression “that wool’s going to take care of your romantic lifestyle.” Belinda objected that “its not really a family thing” and a cororally comment that “its almost a selfish thing, indulge yourself.” Boyd pointed out that “if you look close she doesn’t have a ring on” and Clive that because she was scantily clad and we could see the outline of her breasts that her “morals are not puritantical.” Both Boyd and Clive were much less troubled by the image than the women. Boyd observed that “the picture doesn’t reveal any more than what you see in everyday life” and Clive that “that’s the kind of
life we are led to desire.”

**Bally Shoe**

Andrea found conflict with the immodest clothes worn by the women. Belinda that you buy it only to conspicuous about your wealth, that the picture does not “represent the type of people who live around here,” that the picture is inconsistent with “the Mormon values on family” but they are probably decent people because “we’re not seeing drinks or anything.” The ad reminded Claire of a business party at which you are required to make an appearance and the dishonest tactic of “trying to be somebody that they’re probably not.” Boyd believes that “a lot of people wear these things just because its name value” and for Boyd this is associated with the negative value of pride. Clive believed the shoe would be worn by the “type who has found that image often more than substance seems to play well” and that “these two people look like they’ve just had a few drinks and they’re loosened up and its less appealing.”

**GMC Jimmy**

Belinda sees the ad as “promoting more material things and individualism rather than family” and observes that “with the value system that I have, which is very family oriented, this seems more selfish. Claire’s conflict arises over her observation that the female model is “too neat and tidy to be a mother of four or five children” and that Claire has “to be more flexible than she is” as a result. Alan questions the motive of the ads appeal tactic, that positions the vehicle as a success symbol “this is a payoff for hard work and saying I’ve arrived” and is associated with “conspicuous consumption” which Alan believes is “flaunting wealth” “causes resentment” and “ostracizes people.” Boyd sees the ad appealing to “a higher end market” and the associated lifestyle depicted by the model as being “upper end yuppie kind of
lifestyle, with no kids” which he generally believes to be a “kind of a selfish lifestyle” and in the case of the model “she looks 40 and chose not to have a family, so more selfish.” Clive in contrast sees the ad as being “more homey” with “homey values” that nurture family and home, and “getting things done.”

**Versace Couture**

The Versace ad, of all the ads, probably could be said to cause the most dissonance and difficulty amongst the participants, excepting Andrea for whom the clothes, the location and lifestyle simply led her to regret the shortcomings in her own materially challenged lifestyle. Belinda found reason to doubt their happiness and felt as well as looking “aloof” they also “seem vapid, like there’s nothing there.” She attributes this to the impression that “these people don’t look like they’ve had to work hard” and as a result cannot understand its value, because you “appreciate things more when you have had to work for them.” Belinda thinks she “wouldn’t want to end up like this.” Claire also found reason to wonder if they were happy with each other, and thought they “may not be able to express true feelings with each other.” This is in contrast to her own family value where “mine is and we do display that” and whereas “this family seems they’re expected to live without mistakes” Claire’s own value is that there is “no mistake that can’t be fixed with children.” Claire commented on the sleeveless dress as not being appropriate “because of my environment” and questioned the reality of inter-racial family members in a wealthy family, commenting that she was raised in “a totally caucasian environment.” Alan rejected the family as an image of success because “it represents old money and old money isn’t success” and their existence is determined by expectations of society “rather than by virtue and values they’ve developed due to life’s experience.” Alan sees the Versace family as having to “maintain an appearance” and “live by pretense.” The ad
represents the aspiration of new money people who want to be part of this lifestyle, but Alan wonders “why people would want to be like that; I don’t.” Boyd dislikes what he believes is the shock value tactic of saying “hey, its okay for you know white girls to have black babies” when a white girl having a black baby is “socially unacceptable to me.” Having “a baby out of wedlock” is something Boyd says he “wouldn’t want it in my family” and “wouldn’t want to be associated with it.” This, the earrings in some of the men and the hairstyles, Boyd interprets as either indicating prideful behavior, a deliberate ploy to shock or simple family or social rebellion, that “basically its pride to distinguish yourself from others.” Clive doesn’t believe they look like a real family, and dislikes the similarity with the Kennedy family. Clive associates “decadence with these people” and “the lack of ethic, the get ahead no matter what.” The unhealthy values he identifies suggest to him that they “look like people who have a lot of problems because they figure style is much more important than substance.”

These excerpts from participant comments on the four advertisements suggest initial attempts by the participants to correlate the ad with both their lifestyle and values, by looking to the ads’ elements of narrative, image, and positioning techniques as much as to the featured product itself. The merits of the product seem often subsumed to considerations of these elements, and product merits can be significantly diluted if set in a conflicting environment.

 Whilst the elements of the ads, their positioning strategies and supporting images are predominantly in line with aspirational consumerism in the United States, the interpretations of the fittingness of these aspirational values do not resonate with sufficient harmony with many values held to be important by the participants. In fact, there are many instances where there is little real argument with the product. For example, Pure Wool meets Andrea’s
taste for elegance, a natural fibre; Belinda thinks of it in terms of winter warmth; Claire says she might well buy a wool sweater and wonders if it could make her figure look like that; Alan is reminded of a similar sweater he once owned with fond memories; Boyd wants to see more of the sweater so he can better judge its look; and for Clive the fact that the product is wool is lost completely in other distracting elements that make up the ad. Bally was appreciated for quality of leather and manufacture, if not always for taste in style; Jimmy as a useful utility vehicle with safety and LDS lifestyle merits; Versace clothes were more appreciated by the women, while the men found the ad’s artistic representation less than helpful in allowing a fuller evaluation. Clearly there are personal and religious considerations that influence the negotiation of meaning, but rather than a uniformity of interpretation, meaning seems influenced by strategies of interpretation that relate more to individual sensitivities to religiously grounded values than by direct appeal. Manifest examples of direct appeals to Church teachings do appear, but the more usual pattern suggests this to be an unnecessary expression in lives that have been grounded in LDS doctrines and values. The level of sophistication and education of the participants, coupled with a natural lifelong integration of LDS lifestyles and values, renders expectations of overt religious appeals to be somewhat naive. This may be evidenced in the case of Andrea, whose comments more often invoke references to Church teachings, and who has had a less grounded commitment to an LDS lifestyle. Though Andrea has recommitted her life to standards and values consistent with LDS Church expectations and teachings, their expression in her life do not share the same longevity or depth of understanding. Even Clive, in his liberal standoff, acknowledges the potency of his lifelong association with LDS social conformity.
The Influence of Religiosity on Life Themes

Primary Life Themes

Perhaps a useful approach in attempting to begin to gauge the influence of religiosity on life themes is to recall an emerging trend identified by Stout (1996) in the nature of LDS Church authority guidelines in response to media fare. Stout has observed that LDS Church talks and publishing show an increasing rules-based, didactic approach towards media, rather than encouraging individual interpretation and analysis.

It has already been demonstrated by Cornwall et al (1986) that religiosity is multi-dimensional in nature. However, to simplify for purposes of a general illustration of the influence of religiosity on Life Themes, religiosity is here divided along the lines of the above dichotomy (see Table 2). A narrow analysis utilising a single variable, mass media, serves this purpose. For example: a primary life theme for Belinda has been suggested as Being Fulfilled versus Not Being Fulfilled. Her religiosity might be supposed to align more naturally with an individual interpretation and analysis of media fare rather than a rules based compliance. In response to her Church’s directive to avoid R-rated movies Belinda comments:

B: For me personally I like to be the one to choose the movie. I don’t stick to their directive, I don’t follow their directive... And so if its something that sounds interesting to me and appeals to me, I’ll go and see it even if its an R... So I guess I feel I want to be able to make that choice myself.

Belinda makes plain where she feels the responsibility for the exercise of her religious behavior lies, as well as her qualification in being competent to make the decision for herself:

B: ...I believe in Christ, I believe in God and I live a good life. And
so sometimes the directives and the policies and the counsels are peripheral, I guess... I think the Church gets into so many different little aspects of our lives that are not necessary and we teach that “we teach them correct principles and let them govern themselves.” But the leaders don’t allow us to do that, and sometimes I resent them, because I think they really don’t allow us to.

Examples from other participants also suggest that the expression of their religiosity is influenced by their life theme. The following schemata, though greatly over-simplified, uses a mass media offering as the mediating variable, and Stout’s rules based versus individual interpretation dichotomy as segmenting variables, to illustrate the influence of religiosity on life themes in respect to a mass media offering. Two participants, Andrea and Claire, are not included as the issue of R-rated movies did not surface during their life world interviews. However, a considertion of their life themes, an examination of their expressions of religiosity, and a consideration of their religiosity survey questionnaire lead this researcher to predict with some confidence that both Andrea and Claire would align under the rules based variable.

Though the primary life theme religiosity schemata by no means provides conclusive evidence that religiosity always has an influence on life themes, a correlation between them seems likely.

Secondary Life Themes

The influence of religiosity on the participants’ shared secondary life seems in practice to be more of a reciprocal relationship between the life theme and that part of religiosity that most nearly speaks to the life theme. Though all participants share a commitment to family centeredness that represents a priority over other religious and existential concerns, family centeredness is characterized by the participant in relation to the area of existential concern that is unique to them.
For example, Andrea wants to give her daughter a strong testimony (of the Gospel and of the Church) and to see her grow. Yet the success of her family objective is rooted in the realism that characterizes her family centered secondary life theme, and leads her to admit that she would “love to get married and have my kids sealed to me (an LDS temple ordinance) and give them a good life.”

Belinda is looking for an expression of her personal religiosity that is less partisan in its expression and more Christ-centered. Her family centeredness is characterized by her desire for her family to be inclusive of others, and that part of her religiosity that speaks to this theme emerges in a family project of sharing some of their excess with others, not simply through her Church’s own distribution structures. Teaching her daughter to love everyone to the extent that racial differences are not sufficient reasons to object to her daughter marrying a non-caucasian is also indicative.

Claire is deeply affected by the fact that while she was growing up her LDS parents were not active or involved in Church, leading her to feel unaccepted in her LDS community. Her family centeredness revolves around the growth of her children’s self esteems, which requires them to feel included in the world of their peers. Her religiosity works to this objective as Claire continues active in Church and up to date on what’s going on, and spending a lot of time at ball-games and other functions with her children.

Alan has demonstrated his willingness to make career sacrifices in order to fulfill his family-centered objectives. He accepts as a guideing principle his Church’s oft-repeated maxim that no other success can compensate for failure in the home. To ensure against this Alan is seeking build his family-centeredness on being value based. His religiosity defines the values he is seeking for his family foundation as values that have eternal consequences,
that avoid worldly pretense.

Boyd finds spiritual rejuvenation from his Church and in line with his family centered secondary life theme doubts that the moral health of society can be sustained without belief and commitment to values. Boyd’s values find their source in his religiosity, his commitment to imbuing his family life with values of religious belief, social responsibility and financial prudence derived from his Church background.

Clive finds that the only “real lasting (LDS) value that resonates for me is the importance of family and the importance of maintaining a family relationship...” Clive’s unorthodox religiosity finds many points of departure from his LDS background and membership, but on the question of family centeredness his secondary life theme positively endorses a continual involvement in the Church. Clive's thinks it is a good organization with many core values that are consistent and reinforce his own religiosity, but especially from a social and community perspective he is anxious that his children marry within the Church and remain and active part of it.

Both life themes and religiosity are existential matters to human individuality and to say conclusively to what degree religiosity influences life themes or, conversely, whether life themes influence religiosity is beyond the scope of this study. The issue may not even be as simple as either/or and the researcher is left to ponder whether a far more complex relationship of recipriocity might be nearer the mark.

**Religiosity as a Defining Characteristic of an Interpretive Community**

A criteria proposed by Jensen (1995) to determine the existence of an interpretive community comprises three investigative questions, and goes
beyond a consideration of interpretive strategies linked only to texts. He believes it necessary to also account for institutions and social practices in any analysis to determine a case for an interpretive community. Jensen’s questions may be posed as:

1. Discourses and genres: Are there relevant strategies of interpretation?
2. Institutions: Do institutions provide a context for interpretation?
3. Practices: Are there socially meaningful activities that provide a framework for interpretation and routines of media use?

**Advertising Interpretive Strategies**

The findings of this research project suggest that the study participants have developed reasonably stable life themes that serve them in evaluating both the meaning, proximity and relevance of an advertising message to their own life world. As much as this may be said to be an interpretive strategy, it seems likely that it is one that could be demonstrated as shared by the nation as a whole. However, to the degree that it has been possible to show the influence of religiosity in the interpretation of advertising, there are identifiable segmenting characteristics that reveal conflict suggestive of a religious community espousing Christian values. For example, the lifestyle values interpreted from the ads elicited conflicts involving sex, immodesty of dress, inconsiderate behavior, superficial relationships, materialism, selfishness, pride, vanity, etc. Proximity to Christian lifestyle values becomes an interpretive strategy in assessing the claims and appeals of advertising depicting lifestyle values as a context for a particular product.

Though these are necessary conflicts suggestive of an LDS Christian community too, they are not of themselves sufficient LDS identifiers. However, though particular religiosity might contextualize some of these conflicts within
an LDS doctrinal framework, it is not a framework that is relevant for advertising interpretive strategies used by LDS people.

**Institutional Context**

1 Advertising

To the participants of the study, advertising offered itself as an institution to think with in proposing lifestyle frameworks in which to understand and evaluate four products - pure wool, a shoe, a motor vehicle, and haute couture. On the basis of its positioning strategies it was unanimously rejected. Andrea does not trust advertisements. Belinda thinks it is manipulative and that it should not be used for role models or to determine values. Claire sees advertising as part of society’s value system that is confused. Alan, that it is bigoted, shallow and appeals only to people’s base instincts. Boyd believes advertising’s strategy is to create discontent with what we have, and that instead of focusing on the product they appeal more and more to shock value. Finally, Clive that it is a reflection of society that can be carried to extremes and creates unrealistic expectations.

Interestingly, the merits of the products showcased were separately evaluated in general terms by each of the participants, based upon personal preferences and experiences, and these evaluations seem to anticipate Mick & Buhl’s (1992) additional “Life Projects” concept, an analytical concept not utilized for the purposes of this study.

Participant comments suggest that lifestyle advertising is frequently seen as alien or “other” to a Christian or LDS community life world. Advertising as untruthful or at least untrustworthy is common amongst participant thinking. Andrea, that “they’re jut gonna type up on the good and you find out the rest later.” Belinda states that she usually “asks other people around me” for an
opinion on what she wishes to purchase” because she thinks “sometimes it can mislead.” Claire looks for opinion leaders amongst her ladies’ lunch group to compare value for money, endorsement and satisfaction. Alan credits advertising’s motivation with simply looking to where the money is at, markets that are vulnerable to an emotional response, and are not “determining whether its right or wrong.” Boyd sees lifestyle ads in particular as saying that “if I buy this I will come across as being very wealthy” and Clive that “one of the things about advertising is that it does exploit our feelings and it does that in every age” but that the danger is with young people.

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the study participants have recourse to its active influence in regulating their lives and perceptions of society and social and political structures. Jensen argues that institutions other than mass media institutions must be considered if they contribute to bringing about an interpretive community.

2 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

With lifestyle values that are increasingly out of step with values portrayed by advertising to society as a whole, it may well be the case that an LDS community becomes sensitized to those differences. Stout’s (1992) chronicle of LDS Church leadership attitudes towards mass media and, of immediate interest for this study, criticism of advertising for promoting hedonistic values and enticing Church members to unnecessary purchases, may well have contributed to participants’ skepticism and distrust of advertising.

It has already been noted that manifest examples of direct appeals to Church teachings are more often implicit rather than explicit as one might expect from established LDS members. Evidence of Church influence as an institution to think with was examined earlier within the two-part analysis of
the influence of religiosity on life themes and in participant interpretations of the four ads. The variety of religiosity and the diversity of its application by different individuals suggests that LDS Church messages, much like mass media messages, become disseminated and interpreted in numerous ways. Such mass media theories of dissemination such as opinion leaders, gatekeepers, two step flow, uses and justifications etc point to a variety of groupings within an LDS community. We have already used one simplistic dichotomy in dividing between those LDS Church members who observe a rules-based approach and those who reserve interpretation as a personal provenance. From our participants, it is not hard to imagine that each may seek out those within the larger LDS community with similar applications of LDS thinking and lifestyle behaviors. Both Alan and Clive, for example, are both lifelong members of the Church, and are active LDS members today, and both uphold LDS Christian principles of integrity, honesty, hard work and family. Both hold LDS temple recommends (a measure of worthiness). Yet it stretches credulity to imagine they would both greet Church directives with the same attitude, or implement them in their lives with the same priority. That mass media organizations are accepted as institutions to think with, even though a multiplicity of interpretations result from the thinking, seems a fair anology for allowing the institution of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as an institution to think with also.

3 Socially Meaningful Practices as a Framework for Media Use

Participants’ use of advertising shows a variety of attitudes and approaches. Andrea is defensive towards and distrustful of advertising; Belinda recognizes advertising as necessary to get “products out to people” but when she sees an item of interest in a magazine, she will then seek further opinion from amongst people she knows before proceeding with her purchase.
Claire believes advertising has little impact on her purchase choices and, like Belinda, seeks opinion and recommendation from amongst her social circle. Alan declares that his motivation to look at any ad "is for specifications and information. If it doesn't tell me something, I don't usually look at it." His search for detail is to allow him to qualify the ad. Boyd primarily uses magazine advertising for information about clothes and style. With smaller purchase items he is less interested in information than he is in looks. He reads ads quickly and if he does not quickly understand an ad he will not spend time trying to work it out. Clive's interest in ads will depend upon "what I am in the market to do at the time that I look at the ad." Unless an ad has a significant visual effect, he believes he will not pay it much attention.

Advertising use amongst the study participants does not seem to suggest a common routine. It is within a framework of interpretation that a general strategy begins to emerge, when participants are confronted with lifestyle images and values that offer an opposing way of being. This is not to say that a defensive attitude emerges necessarily. Clive, for example, declares himself unbothered by a sexy image (Pure Wool ad) or an illegitimate baby (Versace ad). The significance lies in the fact that Clive recognizes that the ad stands in opposition to the teachings of his Church and the standards of his community. Personal attitudes are subsumed in practice to a sensitivity towards the expectations of a shared community of peers, LDS peers. Whatever the degree of offense or indifference towards an ad, a shared strategy of reading makes reference to a community that is brought into existence by common consent and acceptance, albeit grudgingly in some cases perhaps, that the Church and its teachings remain the objective standard by which media offerings are understood. An active LDS community continuously and perpetually reinforces itself.
CONCLUSION

Mick & Buhl (1992) cite research that accumulates criteria for judging interpretive inquiry (see also Denzin 1983; Kvale 1983; Thompson et al. 1990). These criteria serve

i the nature and extent of insights on how a phenomenon, e.g. advertising, religiosity, is given meaning in a person’s life;

ii the consistency of researchers’ interpretations with the aims of the inquiry;

iii support for the interpretations by reference to informants’ commentary;

iv the extent to which the researchers understand the persons at the conclusion of the study better than the persons understood themselves; and

v the degree to which the inquiry has contributed to the researchers’ knowledge of themselves.

This research project set out to explore religiosity as an influencing factor in a meaning based study of advertising. Findings suggest religiosity does play an important role in guiding interpretation and contributing to meaning construction - in this study, from magazine advertising that positions products within lifestyle frameworks. However, findings also suggest that the degree of influence varies from person to person. By determining life themes for each participant, it was possible to understand more clearly under what circumstances conflicts might arise, and to anticipate the strength of conflict by reference to the life theme. The phenomena of religiosity has shown itself to be multi-dimensional, and its emergence in meaning construction is more often implicit rather than explicit.

IMPLICATIONS

The move away from treating audience as a homogenous mass to
recognizing the imperative of targeting messages to clearly defined segments of population, requires in-depth understanding of the way in which target groups are most often likely to interpret messages and define meaning.

That religiosity is invoked by prompting comparisons seems likely. This exploratory study indicates that aligning a product with messages containing values that promote lifestyle conflict is not serving the best interests of the product, nor its intended market. When elusive and valuable attention is secured, if only briefly, it should not be to underscore differences between lifestyle and values derived from religiosity.

**FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS**

A critical dimension that is not included within the scope of this study is gender. Does gender play a role in the expression of religiosity. Certainly there does seem to be a difference the way in which the ads were interpreted by the male and female participants. The incidence of inference appears to be more evident amongst the women.

Scholarly literature does support gendered differences in reading styles. As Stern (1989) notes, however, the emphasis has been to discover new aspects of texts and readers rather than to provide social science data. Similar sex-role reading orientations have been identified in consumer research, where these gender differences have been termed agentic and communal. Differences in male/female sex-role orientations was found to affect the bases on which advertising appeals are judged (Meyers-Levy, 1989; Hirschman, 1991).

Studies of *gendered* reading styles relevant to consumers and to ads is limited, but those studies that have been undertaken (Stern & Holbrook, 1994) bridge the gap between behavioral research in the psychology of reading and
critical studies of literature. As such, they represent an empirically oriented branch of literary criticism with the potential for contributing to empirical consumer research (Stern, 1993).

From a feminist perspective advertising as one "technology of gender" also becomes "an institution to think with" about gender. Wilson (1978) has already suggested from census evidence that religion is the single most dominant determinant of roles for women. It is therefore vital that gender become a "segmenting variable" as suggested by Stern (1993) in exploring the impact of contradictory lifestyle roles and images for LDS women and men.
“ANDREA”

WOOL

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THIS AD?

Well, it doesn’t - its a picture but it doesn’t look like its selling clothes though, to me. Its selling sex, but...

WHATS THE AD TRYING TO SAY?

If you look at the picture and just read the advertisement, it just says wool’s wearable now but if you were to just look at the picture you wouldn’t think that it was - it looks like maybe if you wear their clothing or something - I don’t know (laughs). It doesn’t look like its really selling clothes, you know what I mean. Yeah, I think nowadays a lot of advertisements is pushing a lot of - I think its pushing sex a lot.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT APPROACH?

Well I, you know I think its kind of offensive but it doesn’t really - I mean you can look at it or not look at it or whatever but I think there’s little kids and ok society puts so much on sex and immodesty and all these different kinds of things, but I think the real problem I have with it is the harmful message it gives the younger viewers who see it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN MESSAGE?

Oh, I guess if you wear the clothes the opposite sex will find you attractive, basically. Number one I don’t think its appropriate to think that’s the most important message, but its the way they sell things nowadays.

TO WHOM DO YOU THINK THE AD IS SPEAKING?

It doesn’t specify male or female.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS?

Just that they’re both attractive.
HOW DOES THE AD MAKE YOU FEEL?

A little envious I guess, she’s skinny and I’m not in that situation where I can be like that with someone, or that - there’s no one in my life at the moment and I’m in a different situation, you know, when you have kids, you know what I mean?

DO YOU THINK THE AD IS SUCCESSFUL IN ADVERTISING WOOL?

I don’t think that’s the first thing that comes to mind when you look at the picture, but what the man and the woman are doing basically. I think it would be just as effective, it would make more sense just to have like the product and talk about the way it was woven or whatever. Its not just selling the wool, its an approach that is more offensive to me. If I like the product then its the product that will sell itself not, you know, the way they are. I think that advertising as a whole they don’t really use a whole lot of good values any more. I think its all oriented to you know if you wear this you’re gonna have this and so if you wear this you can be this. I think its all pretty risque now and more oriented to sex than anything. I don’t think this picture sells a wool sweater.

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDENTIFICATION WITH ANY PARTS OF THE AD?

The outdoors, I like the outdoors (laughs). It looks like its up in the mountains or something and I enjoy that (how do you feel about clothing generally?) I love wool because of the way it feels, its thick and warm, and the ad’s not really to do with it being a natural fibre, which is what I really like I guess with my taste - I like elegance rather than cheap stuff, you know, like grunge style with the cropped tops and platform heels.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADVERTISING GENERALLY?

I think that there are a lot of clever people in the business and you know they definitely have to find a niche for what belongs where and find out how to approach different things. You know when we walk through the grocery store and if I want to be pretty or I want to be sexy I should look like this. I really hate the way they get the really skinny, beautiful not the run of the mill average kind of person, not everyone looks like that so don’t...a news thing on 20/20 or Primetime or something it was about this girl who had had umpteen
face lifts and different things so she could look like Barbie. I don’t...I’m pregnant now but I usually don’t look like this, I mean I usually take really good care of myself and I’m usually in a size 6 I mean I’m not this big, horribly obese person. I still think that its stupid to have the best of the top, the ideal to model this...especially with women...try ing to look a certain way and you know actually be themselves and advertising should just be for advertising the product and maybe not glamorize the sex or anything else. I love creativity and I think there are lots of different creative ways to advertise for something you know I love, like, those car ads for Nissan where the birds are trying to dive bomb the cars and stuff, you know that’s creative and it’s funny and it doesn’t advertise for anything inappropriate - to be honest, this kind of stuff I mean look at the picture and not read the - you wouldn’t think they were selling clothes, you know, and especially some of those perfume ads.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT APPEALS TO BE DESIRABLE?

I don’t think that’s wrong I think everyone wants to be desirable and attractive. I don't think there’s anything wrong with saying if you wear a product you will be desirable or you will be attractive, but not showing being desirable - maybe I’m just being over senstive (embarrassed laugh).

BALLY SHOE

TELL ME YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THIS AD

I like to read maybe how its made or how it gives you a feel for the product and not just a picture and I like how how maybe over half is a picture of just the shoe and how its made and where its from and how long somethings been around and maybe a little bit on...

WHO IS THE AD SPEAKING TO?

Uhh, men and to try this shoe and experience you know the pleasure of wearing it

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE RELEVANCE OF THE PICTURE IS TO THE AD?

I think they’re just having fun, it doesn’t really - maybe that wearing the Bally shoe will give you a fun feeling or I don’t know. Probably because there’s one guy and two girls - isn’t that every man’s dream (laughs)?
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

They look like they’re dancing or at a party or something. They all look happy. They all look maybe upper class, successful. I picture them maybe at a nice hotel or - I’ve never analysed things like this before.

HOW DOES THE AD MAKE YOU FEEL?

Looking at everyone smile, its more of an upbeat happy kind of feeling where everyone you know kind of thing.

IS THE AD RELEVANT TO YOU AT ALL?

Maybe it would be if I had a husband to buy shoes for but I don’t really relate to it at all because there’s really no one in our house who could wear them.

DO YOU THINK THE AD APPEALS TO ANY VALUES?

I don’t want to sound like an old prude but you know they look like they’re having fun and - I would like to - I don’t know. I wouldn’t wear that or let my little kid wear such immodest clothes but dressed a bit more modestly. Gosh, I sound like my mother (laughs).

WHO DO YOU THINK WOULD WEAR THIS PRODUCT?

I think successful businessmen, anyone with maybe a little bit of style or class and education. I don’t know what price they run but it looks like a very nice product. Maybe not so much your average - especially not round here in Orem, in this little community, maybe it wouldn’t go over so much because its more expensive or, you know what I mean, people round here go to “Payless” but my step dad or my neighbor’s husband or even an old boyfriend would wear it, someone who would go out of their way to look the part, because they can carry it off, if you know what I mean.

WHY NOT ROUND HERE?

Well, I think because in general a lot of the people around here are more just large family, smaller income and not so much worried about the fashion end of things, just the more down to earth, everyday, get food on the table, but where
there are some successful business men around here who make more money and have the ability to afford it or - and then they’ll start worrying about looking the more successful part or dressing the part. In general a lot of the people around here don’t even worry.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE AD YOU IDENTIFY WITH?

I love leather and they were made in Switzerland and I would love to go there. A lot of the European products are, I don’t know, they look better, they feel better, I guess there’s a little bit of prestige. I’ve loved leather always, leather and suede.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MEN WHO WEAR PRODUCTS LIKE THIS?

I’ve known a few men and I’m more attracted to men who are more classy, sophisticated, cleaner, and who dress better, maybe they seem more mysterious. They just look better, you know when men dress nicer then generally they’re successful and they’ve got some self-confidence and the way they carry themselves is better. That’s not to say that I don’t like people who are just down to earth and focused on life and not being complicated.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DISLIKE ABOUT THIS AD?

No. I Don’t trust advertisements, I really don’t.

GMC JIMMY

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THIS AD

I like it. I like how it talks about - It gives the amenities of the car and what it can do and It just shoes right here what its good for - any person with any kind of hobbies. She does - like a rider, she’s outdoorsy, she looks intelligent. It shows that no matter what you do that this car would be for you because it has lots of space it can carry things you can take it up into the mountains, it looks nice, its comfortable. Yeah, I like it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN MESSAGE OF THE AD?

Well, I think its interesting that they have a woman standing by the car instead
of a man showing that it’s woman friendly, showing that you can use it for many different things, obviously if its got a lot of space you can haul stuff around. It maybe has enough power that you can pull horses, four wheel drive you can take it up the mountains. Just basically, its not just for men it can be for women too and that there’s lots of different uses and its comfortable.

WHO DO YOU THINK THE AD IS SPEAKING TO?

Probably the upper class, maybe not just your general run of the mill lower class kind of people. There’s a riding hat, so may for professional jockey’s or someone in an equestian club and you see these skis and the way she’s dressed and maybe the wording they’ve used in the add and you think maybe take it up to Aspen or Vale, the richer...

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE AD’s APPEAL TO CLASS?

You know I think everyone wants to be classy, to reach out of their little circle of life or what they’re doing. Everyone wants to improve their own means, I don’t know, I have a friend that says “champagne taste and a beer budget” I really like it, my sister has one of these, and I’d feel safer in a four wheel drive during the winter time. Someday I’ll be able to afford it, you look at it and think oh, someday! I think its good that people try and move up or whatever. If you never stop reaching some day you’ll get there and I think its good so long as you can afford it, but then, I don’t know.

DOES THE AD HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

Yeah, because I like the outdoor way of life, I live close to the mountains and I like to ski and I love horses. Yeah, it would be relevant to me, and my family, but price wise, no it’s not possible.

DO YOU THINK THE AD APPEALS TO ANY VALUES?

I guess just the dependability.

DO YOU TRUST THE AD?

No, they’re always gonna make it better than it really is to get the sale and they’re not gonna tell you about - there are areas they’re not gonna tell you about, they’re just gonna hype up on the good and you find out the rest later.
VERSACE

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THIS AD

Because its in black and white it looks really artsy and it looks - I like this picture because all the people look like they’re from Europe and very different.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN MESSAGE OF THE AD?

That the clothes are for all ages maybe, it looks like a family picture, maybe the grandparents, and you know they’ve been around longer and they know the value of hard work, and then the more sophisticated - it looks like nice clothing - they’ve got a nice big home in the background that looks as if its been around for years and years and years and lots of money, old money. Maybe its referring to quality and how the family may be well to do. If it is a family, I really like that they’re not racist because there’re different races in the family.

DO YOU FIND ANY IDENTIFICATION WITH THIS AD?

I’m stuck here in Utah, not in England. There’s really no identification, really except for it would be nice to be able to, it makes me wish I were a part of it, to have the nice clothes, to have this as a house, a summer home perhaps.

DO YOU THINK THE AD APPEALS TO ANY VALUES?

If its a family portrait, because we’re LDS, you know, everything you have in life can be lost or stolen or broken.
“ANDREA”

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

TELL ME ABOUT ABOUT YOUR LIFE AND THIS COMMUNITY THAT YOU LIVE IN

Let me start with this neighborhood. I think a lot of the families here care about providing for their families, both economically and spiritually. There’s a great deal of warmth here and a very strong ward. People here teach their kids societal lessons, getting them prepared to go out and face the world, I guess. A lot the parents around teach the value of schoolwork, and go to church on Sundays. I think the focus of at least this neighborhood is good values and the family.

I’m a single parent and I’m pregnant and I haven’t - people haven’t treated me any different, so I don’t know if there is a code of acceptability. I think people here have a genuine love and concern for each other and just wanna help. I might be just stuck in the night, but I’ve found in the situation I’m in, I’ve found there’s just a lot of concern and a lot people wanting to help.

TELL ME ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE PERSONALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU

Well, there are three things in my life that I am focused on right now and that is my family, and the church, and school.

TELL ME ABOUT HOW YOU WANT TO RAISE YOUR FAMILY

I want to be a good mom to teach my daughter, and this little one, (pointing to her pregnancy) to teach her all about - to teach her educationally and to give her a strong testimony and to help her have a really strong faith, and to be kind a patient and nurturing to help her grow in anyway that she cares to. And I’d love to get married and have my kids sealed to me and give them a good life.

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR DAUGHTER FEELS ABOUT FITTING IN WITH OTHER CHILDREN IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

I don’t know if fitting is is really that important. I didn’t really fit in a whole lot in High School or elementary. I think a lot of the girls were really jealous and really made things hard and I never did fit in, but I’m really grateful for
that experience, I think its made me stronger. I think as long as you can be yourself and stand up for what you believe in.

HOW DID YOU RECONCILE THAT IN AN LDS COMMUNITY?

Well kids are cruel and just basically realized that a lot of it was self-internalized and I thought that there’s really something wrong with me but then I realized there’s not and just because someone acts a certain way towards me is not my problem, its theirs. Unless I’ve been rude or do you know what I mean? But when there’s no cause for it I just came to realize that some people are just going to be like that and there’s nothing you can do about it. I think all kids tease a little bit, maybe not to the extent that I did, but Devan’s very outgoing and clever, she’s not shy, she makes friends really well. One thing I didn’t have growing up was a lot of self confidence and I really try to instill that in her. She’s got a lot and I think it’ll just grow as she gets older and I think that she’ll realize that hey just because they’re that way is their problem and I’m OK. But yeah, I’m sure she’ll have a little bit of it, everyone does.

We have some really good friends who used to live next door to us and lived there for about three years and they are pretty comfortable and they just don’t act the part. They are very giving and are very generous and help a lot of people. But one time I overheard their kids saying something about someone being poor. It kind of upset me a little bit because I don’t think parents should talk about other people’s status in front of their children. I don’t know if they ever did, but I certainly wouldn’t in front my children because I would want them to treat those people any differently. I have’t seen it around here, I really haven’t. We live in a relatively just moderate area and I don’t see that at all in our ward.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PARENTS.

I have the best family in whole world, I really do. My parents got divorced when I was in 8th grade. My dad hasn’t really been there a whole lot but he’s coming around, he’s trying hard. My mom has been the best example to all of us just because she raised us all by herself and she’s always worked very hard and is very clean and neat and does the best for all of us. She’s set a really good example. There’s four girls and we’ve all been best friends growing up, hanging out, doing whatever. My mom’s tremendous, she loves her grandkids and spends a lot of time with them which really helps.
DITTO CHURCH:

I think its people's way of life, its what they believe in and how they live and it controls their life. (Is that a good thing, that it control's your life?) I think its a good thing, I really do. I think not in the negative way at all, I think you have a value system and you live up to it. I think anything that inspires you to live better than what you are, whether that's LDS or ... as long as you are always trying to acquire better and be better people, be kinder and more Christ-like.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO BE A CHRIST-LIKE WOMAN IN YOUR CHURCH?

When you think about being a woman you think about being a wife and a mother and having kids.. (and if not?) Just being the best you can be, whether you're male or female if you're single and don't have kids you're still (laughs). You know we have a lot of single women in our ward and they're all in school and they're all trying to better themselves and progress and whether you're married or have kids I think they're the same spiritual goals. You may not have to worry about someone else's spirituality and spiritual growth but you still have your own.

DO YOU FIND ANY CONFLICTS IN EXPECTATIONS TO BE A CERTAIN TYPE OF WOMAN?

I don't. I really don't. I guess if there were I'd be hyper-sensitive because I'm a single mom and I've felt nothing but warmth and people wanting to help. I think the church and the gospel are here for one reason and that's to help everyone to make it to the celestial kingdom and the programs and different things are set up to help you get there.

DO YOU FIND ANY LIMITATIONS OF EXPRESSION AND INDEPENDENCE IN THE CHURCH?

I have never seen it and I've never felt that way and I think if anything in this church women are kind of on a pedestal and they're revered. Men are supposed to care for them, take care of them. The general authorities are always talking about how important women are. I grew up with a single parent and I'm a single parent and I've never experienced that. I was married for while, but my husband never - I'm sure there are some men who think they are
stronger and smarter but when I was married it was a partnership, it was 50/50 and he had the priesthood and that was handy for giving blessings and having the spirit preside in the home and those different kinds of things, but I think that a woman’s opinions are just as important regardless.

TELL ME ABOUT SCHOOL

School is so that I can afford my family. Yeah, basically the only thing we take with us after this life is education and nothing is more unattractive than an ignorant person. Education is very important to me, number one, I have a real thirst for learning in a lot of different areas, not just nursing and a lot of it is so that we can have a nicer life. (what’s a nice life?) Not living on welfare, not living from paycheck to paycheck, being able to afford nice clothes, I don’t need a lot, just to be able to live better. As soon as I finish my RN I think I’ll do some homestudy courses when the children are a little bit older and then go back to school. I’d like to be a nurse practitioner which will be a little more convenient when both my children are in school.

ONE OF YOUR STATED REASONS FOR BEING IN SCHOOL WAS TO AFFORD NICE THINGS. WHEN WE LOOKED AT THE ADS AT OUR LAST MEETING, SOME OF THE PRODUCTS WERE EXPENSIVE. HOW DID IT MAKE YOU FEEL NOT TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD THEM?

Sometimes I get frustrated. I try not to notice them. I don’t go out shopping a whole lot. It is frustrating, and its hard and its not fun having to live on so little. I’m just so grateful to live in a nice house, to have a car, my daughter’s healthy, she’s beautiful, she’s dressed nice and to have food in the fridge. Those are really just all that I need. It would be nice to have those other things, I’m sure we will but when I start getting depressed felling I can’t afford this or I can’t afford that, I just think, well I have a lot. A lot of people will judge how good of a person you are by how successful you are or by the things you have. (how do you respond to that?) I think its pretty shallow, you know I think number one (unintelligible)

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO FIT IN HERE?

I wouldn’t have lots of crazy parties, do anything illegal round here, I wouldn’t shop in Sundays. (What about dress?) You know, that’s really changing a lot. From more conservative to more really following fashion trends, doing what you want basically. To fit into an LDS community, though, dress modestly. If
you don’t really care about that then ... (What does modest mean?) Don’t wear really short, short skirts, or halter tops or probably nothing more four inches above the knee because when you sit down it rides all the way up. Technically, short sleeves, nothing like thin straps or - I don’t know (laughs). Like, you know, the ad for wool sweaters, nothing that puts you in that sort of situation. The church tells you that you don’t want someone who wants you just for the way you look. It’s who you are that’s important. And being modest in your dress, and since I’ve become pregnant I can see how my attitudes and the way I dress affects my attitude and the way I act, and my thoughts and ideas and...

HOW MIGHT CHURCH LEADERS RESPOND TO ASPIRATIONS OF CLASS?

I don’t think they really do, I haven’t heard anything, except for maybe you know help the poor type stuff and give to help other people. But they don’t come down on being upper class or acquiring things, I guess as long as you are being honest and paying your bills and paying your tithing. They would say the world puts too much emphasis on how much you have or what you have or what you do, that kind of makes up who you are or how good you are or how bad you are, and of course that’s nonsense.

I dated a guy who went out of his way to tell me all his suits were Armani, and all of his tennis shoes had to be Nike. (do you remember telling me that you like men in sophisticated clothes?) I do, there’s a sense of class, a sense of status. Well, I’m comparing two men that I knew who were completely different. One of them was like that, dressed nice, took care of himself and liked nice things and were all important, but then you know... He had three closets full of clothes. The other wore starched white shirts, shorts and no shoes. (And if you had more money to dispose of on clothes, where would you shop?). I would still shop where I normally shop which is “Express” in the mall, they have nice quality, I like the styles. I would sell my Saturn and I would get a Nissan because its a great car and looks nice, its reliable, and not really expensive. But I’d stay in a house like this (her mother’s house).
“BELINDA”

GMC JIMMY

WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

My first thought on reading this one is that this woman is nothing like me, you know, an equestrian. To me they are talking to a different class of people, actually (what class?) Someone with lots of money, not just the regular mom type person which is what I guess I think I am, even though I’m a working woman. I don’t think its talking to working women, probably a more educated woman, yeah because she’s pursuing her Masters. So, I guess it turns me off a little bit, just because its things that I’m not really into. You know, you’ve got the saddle here, skis and...but even if I were interested in that vehicle, its just putting it in a different class from me. That’s how I feel about that ad.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT AN APPEAL TO CLASS?

I didn’t think we did that anymore. I thought we were all supposed to be more equal. I’m not sure..Are these American ads? (yes) they are? So its annoying to me I guess, because I don’t want to feel that I’m in a lesser class than anyone else. Not offensive, it doesn’t make me really angry. To me they’ve really narrowed in to a certain type of person. (How do you feel about that type of person?) Its so far away from what I am I think. It depends just what type of magazine this would be in as well, but I would think they would want to advertise to a wider range. Of course, with this kind of vehicle, I mean its in the higher price range anyway so they’re not...they are going for a different lifestyle, different class. (Do you find the woman depicted in any way threatening?) I don’t think so. I mean I know people like this and I think because I’m a working woman and out every day and not at home everyday I’m used to meeting all different kinds of people. I don’t usually feel threatened by people. Its just interesting...you know, the To Do list at the top of the page. Its a good idea for an ad but its just you know “call the hunt club.” It just seems so far removed from my life.

WHAT’S YOUR LIFE COMPARED TO THE DEPICTION IN THE AD?

Well, I obviously have a To Do list as well, you know, I have to help my kids with their homework, go to the store. I notice here that instead of grocery store it says farmers market. You know I go to the movies, here we’ve got
theater tickets, pick up art work, so I'm a busy woman as well but not in the same way as she is.

**DOES THE AD HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?**

Just that she is an outgoing woman, I think. She looks like an independent woman, I feel that I'm pretty independent, and it looks like she has a family, we have that in common. But her activities fall within a class that is far removed from me, and probably most people that I associate with.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD?**

Well, actually I like it that she is so varied in her hobbies. You know, I think that's a good thing in a person so that's good. I guess its implying that if you buy this vehicle its going to help you all these things done, and I think any vehicle can do that. I mean, you could do that with any car. I don't think its a clever ad, you know some ads you look at and you think oh that's so clever, it really appeals to you. This one doesn't do anything for me, it doesn't make me want to go look at that car.

**IF THERE ANYTHING YOU DISLIKE, FIND OFFENSIVE?**

No, not really. I wouldn't say that I feel that strongly about it I guess.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WOMAN IN THE AD?**

A well-educated woman, probably very independent, very talented, lots of hobbies, well-off, well-dressed, beautiful.

**WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISING USING IN THE AD?**

That's a difficult one. I guess they're not promoting family values. It looks like we're talking about a couple and their pets, and so with the value system that I have, which is very family oriented, this seems more selfish. I would say its promoting more material things and individualism rather than family. It doesn't upset me, I guess its just another thing that removes it from my own life.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT INDIVIDUALISM THROUGH THE PURSUIT OF**
MATERIAL GOODS?

You know, I have a family. I have children and so for me my husband and my family come first, although I realize its important... at some point in my life I would like to go to school and maybe spend some more time developing hobbies, but at this point its just not appropriate for me I don’t think. And so, I don’t know if I would go so far as to say I resent this person, I’m not jealous of that person and I don’t resent her. But even when my children are grown I think I will be living that kind of lifestyle. I don’t think there’s anything wrong, I think women should be able to pursue a career or education and better themselves, we shouldn’t be stuck in the home, well we shouldn’t not be able to have choices, I guess is what I’m saying. Obviously this woman has some choices, and the money to make them.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THIS AD HAD IN MIND?

Now that I don’t know. I guess because it is an expensive vehicle they are trying to zero in on a certain market, a busy woman, independent and rich I guess. They’re trying to appeal to that woman. I think they’re telling us if you buy one of these you’ll be like her.

IN WHAT WAYS IN YOUR OWN LIFE DO YOU USE ADVERTISEMENTS?

Very often I’ll see something in a magazine and want to find out more about it. I don’t think I look at it and think Oh I want to be like that, it will just pique my interest I guess. Usually what I do if I’m interested in purchasing something new is ask other people around me. Of course if I’m looking for a vehicle I go out to dealerships and look. We do get magazines in the house and I see a lot of TV ads, and sometimes TV ads will influence me to buy one product over another.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR AND FEEL IS IMPORTANT TO YOU IN AN AD?

You know what I really like is a clever, catchy ad, you know there are some that are very clever with words and they’ll catch your attention and make you think as you read it, or that have an unusual picture on it, that’s what draws my attention and actually makes me consider it. And this one, I think if I had been flicking through a magazine that I wouldn’t have stopped and read this ad, whereas this one (wool ad), I probably would have read just to find out what it is about because of the picture.
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS FOR LUXURY ITEMS?

I guess I don’t pay much attention because I’m not in that league, I mean I’m not going to be purchasing a Rolex watch so I would probably just turn the page and not actually read it, unless it was very tacky.

IF YOU CAN’T AFFORD THE ITEMS YOU SEE ADVERTISED HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL?

I don’t know that I feel that strongly about it, actually. I just think, oh well, perhaps in another lifetime. It doesn’t upset me and I don’t resent the fact that... I mean obviously there are people who have money and they can do whatever they want. I guess I’ve never thought about that, I don’t think I feel that strongly about it.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT ADVERTISING GENERALLY?

I think its necessary. I think some of it is very manipulative. I think some people take it more seriously than I do. I think sometimes it can mislead, but I think its a way to get your products out to people. Its a necessary thing. I think some people might look at a picture of a pretty girl and think oh I can be like that if I do what she’s doing or have what she has or color my hair like she did. I may have felt that way when I was younger, but then you realize it doesn’t work.

WOOL

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD

I wonder what these two people are doing kissing and what its got to do with wool (laughs). Then I read it and I think they’re trying to appeal, maybe wools just sound stuffy and old and only old grannys wear wool, and they’re just trying to appeal to a younger set. That was my impression. Again, I wonder where these ads appear. I’m sure they’ve appeared in certain magazines, but this one it looks like they’re going for the young and beautiful people (why) because of the two people they have in the picture. They’re young and they’re good looking. And I guess, when I think about it, when I think of wool I think of thick wooly sweaters and you know bundled up for the winter. This is not the winter, the other thing is they’re saying you can wear wool next to bear
skin, so you’re wondering does she have any underwear on. I don’t think its offensive to me, I just wonder if that’s necessary, but it caught my attention and made me read it. Now I’m wondering if that makes me want to go out and buy wool.

DOES IT HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

None actually (laughs). Because in this ad I’m thinking, well in that ad (Jimmy) well, she’s got more money than me. And this one I’m thinking they’re younger than me. And actually they’re not, I mean they’re not teenagers, they probably aren’t my age, but I don’t relate to them. I don’t think I would ever be as free as that, rolling in the grass in the park. Maybe that’s why.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD

It got my attention and I read it through. I wanted to know what it was about, and I was surprised I think that it was for wool (what did you expect it to be?) I thought maybe it was for cologne or perfume because you know I’ve seen a lot of ads like that for perfume (like?) Like the ad for Eternity, its similar, its black and white. And those ads, to me that’s for a younger set of people too for some reason. In those ads they are young.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DISLIKE ABOUT THE AD?

Maybe that if I am being critical, I wouldn’t say that I’m a prude, I think I’m pretty liberal actually, but I have a teenager and I honestly don’t like her to see a lot of public displays of affection. And so I think I have all of a sudden become more conscious of things like that, because I have a teenager who’s getting into that realm. I think because it says never wear wool next to bear skin, it makes you think of the skin, of being more intimate and closer. Not that its going to make her do anything, its just I think a mother’s reaction at this point. (Do you feel that you daughter is vulnerable to lifestyle depictions?) I think people can become desensitized, you know there’s a time and a place for intimacy, and when you see it...I mean its not pornographic or anything, but when you see it in ads like that it just becomes more matter of fact, more an acceptable thing. No, I mean I wouldn’t say that ...they’re just kissing in this picture, but that for me anyway made me think of something more intimate. I think for my teenager, just seeing a lot of things like this and in some of the like Calvin Klein ads I mean they get quite...there’s not a lot of

217
nudity in there, its not full frontal or anything, but maybe we’re showing just a little bit too much in these ads. I don't think its necessary to go that far.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

They look like they are young, good looking, they live a good life, they have money. I don’t know if we still use the term Yuppie, but I would probably say that, young professional people.

DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING ANY VALUES?

I’m not sure about that, I’m not sure what values... you know the message is everybody can wear wool, to me is not just a winter thing, its not just an old lady thing, its for everybody. I don’t know how to describe what values. I don’t think they don't have moral values. Again its not really a family thing, its a couple thing, like the first ad we looked at. I mean they’re not trying to appeal to a mother or a father even, so again its almost a selfish thing, indulge yourself, reveal yourself and wear this and be glamorous and sexy in wool. And at this point in my life I guess I’m more attracted to things that are geared to the family, because that’s what’s surrounding me, that’s on my mind all the time. So I would say its not one with family values.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT APPEALS TO TO BE GLAMOROUS AND SEXY?

Even reading that and looking at this it still doesn’t make me feel that about wool. To be desirable, you know I still think silky, something like that. So this ad doesn’t convince me...Okay if I were a single person and not a mother looking at it, I don't think it would make me go out and try to buy a sexy woollen outfit. I want to be - obviously I want to be desirable, I want to look nice and smell nice. But I don't want them to tell me how to do it, and I don’t necessary want to look like this woman. I don’t think people should be expected to be desirable or sensual. I like to be independent and encourage that thinking in others around me, so I don’t want, I wouldn’t like to think that advertising was trying to make us all the same or tell us what to do, how to dress, how to be. It kind of puts pressure on women in a way, because not all of us look like her and we’re not going to look like that all day. So I guess I do resent that, now that I think about it in advertising and in TV shows. They always use beautiful women. How many women look like that, and I guess I remove it from my own life though. I just know that its not me. I think its bad
for younger...going back to my teenager who’s very impressionable, who looks to see how skinny this person is and look at her own waist and look at her shape and think well I don’t look like that. I told her, you know we’ve spoken about it, well, that’s not the way you look. So I guess it is damaging to women, it puts pressure on us to look a certain way, to be thin and glamorous and most of us are not like that. I do resent that in advertising. I’d just like to see an ordinary person in there, advertising something nice.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THE AD HAD IN MIND?

Well, the way they started, ye olde dress code, they’re saying get with it. If you want to be hip and happening, and here they’ve chosen two nice people, I guess they’re saying you’re not with it if your not wearing wool. The rules no longer apply, which again is very selfish to me, reading that. I’m a person who likes rules, I guess and trying to be considerate of other people, and when I hear the rules no longer apply, I just don’t like that phrase actually. They’re saying how it used to be, never reveal the figure in the presence of the opposite sex, and now they’re saying its OK, we want you to be shapely and flaunt it. I don’t think we should flaunt it. I think very often there’s too much emphasis placed on the outside, on physical beauty, and physical attributes and we end up with very shallow relationships, because the relationships are based on physical attractions rather than a deeper spiritual relationship.

BALLY

HAVE YOU SEE THIS AD BEFORE?

No, but I’ve heard of the brand.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

You know I don’t have very strong feelings about this one, like I did about the other ones. Its actually seems like kind of a boring ad to me.

WHO DO YOU THINK THE AD IS SPEAKING TO?

I don’t know, I was wondering that. This could either be a man or a woman’s shoe really. I guess its appealing to both sexes. Again we’ve got young professional people and again when you read the print, experience the legendary elegance of Bally, the touch of supple leather...its kind of a snob
value thing. Handcrafted workmanship, impeccable styling, a feeling of luxury...so, my feelings are similar to the way I felt about the first one (Jimmy) its not a shoe that I’m going to buy. I actually don’t think I’ve ever tried on Bally shoes. I don’t have a pair. Its a snob value thing to me. You buy it if you have lots of money and then you say I have Bally shoes or I have Rolex watch.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PEOPLE RESPONDING TO SNOB APPEALS?

I notice more not amongst my age group but amongst ...I think because I have a teenager, I keep going back to that, you know there’s a certain type of jean you wear, a certain label. Okay, and even if you could buy the same style for twenty dollars you still have to go to this store and get this label and pay fifty dollars for a pair of jeans so that you can say that you’re wearing these jeans. And I don’t know how to get it across to my only daughter. It doesn’t matter to me anymore, I’m not interested in labels, I want to look nice but I don’t need to spend an extra thirty dollars on something to look nice. I don’t need that affirmation, I guess, that I’m cool. But there are some people that do and not just teenagers, obviously.

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THIS AD THAT HAS ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

No it doesn’t really relate to me in any way.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD?

They look happy (laughs) and I wonder if I did have a lot of money and I could go anywhere and buy whatever I wanted, I would think about it differently. It would be nice to have something handcrafted. Its going to be a better shoe, its going to be comfortable, but the way its advertised here its more the name, you’re buying Bally and getting a good feeling.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE PEOPLE IN THIS AD?

They’re beautiful people again. Well, they could be ordinary people. My neighbors don’t look like this, you know, they’re not... they look like they have money, just from the haircuts they are... they follow fashion more closely I would say, trendsetters maybe that’s the word I’m looking for, what they are. (How do you feel about the appeal to be a trendsetter?) Personally I have
never been a trendsetter, not the height of fashion any way. I like to look in style for the period, but there are some people that like that. I mean there are some people that naturally do that well and I don’t seem to emulate them I guess. I want to do what’s right for me, I want to be comfortable and look good in the way that I feel most comfortable, whether its the height of fashion or not, I feel anyway as long as I look nice and feel nice that I’m ok. So its not important to me to follow these people.

HOW DO APPEALS TO TRENDSETTING MAKE YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF?

I sometimes think I wish I were a little bit more glamorous, not necessarily like them, especially this picture, but yeah it does sometimes make me want to smarten myself up. Maybe not be really skinny but maybe lose some weight so that I do look good. But I’ve realized that I’m not ever going to look like a model, but yeah I do want to look good. (Do you find the ads help or add stress) Neither one really. I don’t feel stressed to be like them. The other thing is that you know we live in Utah. None of these pictures really represent the type of people that live around here. Look at these people, its more like California, this one gives me a California feeling, or New York, where the actual city or the whole state is more trendsetting, they live a different kind of a lifestyle than we do here in Utah. (what makes the difference?) Well one difference is the mormon values here in Utah, the emphasis on family. I think in Utah we are to some degree sheltered from outside trends. Well, with fashion trends for example we’re a little bit behind, we’re not on the edge of fashion, like in New York for example where you have some wild, extreme fashion, we tend not to see that, or I don’t anyway around here generally. And so that’s what makes these people seem removed from the... they actually seem like they live in another state, they don’t look like the kind of people I live around.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND OBSERVES TRENDS?

I want him to look nice too. I want him to be current and in fashion and not be outdated. We often go shopping together to help each other chose clothes, so he doesn’t mind that at all. And I ask his opinion on things that I’m looking for as well, so for us that probably enhances decision making, if I’m more aware of trends from advertising I can give my opinion on something. I look at what I like and then I might think I wonder if he likes this too and I might compromise and go with something else.
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE VALUES IN THE AD

They look happy and satisfied with life. I wouldn't say that it's promoting... you know I get an impression that they're at a party but we're not seeing drinks or anything. They look like decent people so I feel Ok about that.

VERSACE

WHAT ABOUT YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

I don't know what to say about this one. I look at this and then I think about my family and - you know what, these people for one thing they don't look happy, it seems a very arty picture and the people I can't think what word I need to describe this, they look aloof, they don't seem like ordinary everyday people. When I looked at this I thought I wonder what they do. First of all, without looking at the label, it doesn't make me want to be a part of that family. It makes me think they have money, I guess because they look like they're standing on the steps of a stately home. I don't know if it is there home. Yeah, it definitely looks like they have money, the parents, or grandparents, or whoever they are, look like trendsetters to me. I might describe them as being on the edge of fashion, looking at some of the hairstyles and the dresses here, and the parents don't look like that, they look like a grandma or grandpa or parents. They actually don't look like they fit with the rest of the family. Its maybe not a family, is it? Except the reason I got the impression it was a family is because it said a family album, so you think they are all one family. (Why do you think the parents or grandparents don't fit?) The clothing, and the hairstyles. You know they look like old money, you know, but they have kind of a simple elegance, and then some of the younger ones are pushing the edge of fashion I would say. (what does old money mean?) They look like they've had money all their lives, maybe he's a Lord or something and they've lived with money, they look like they've lived good lives to me, that they haven't had a hard life, haven't had to work hard. I don't know why I would say that but that's the impression I get. And these people don't look like they've had to work hard either, but they (the older couple) just look different, maybe more sensible, is what I'm trying to say.

DOES THIS PROMPT ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

It doesn't. I think I must leave a more conservative lifestyle, in the others I talked about families and they didn't seem to be geared towards family people,
and now here we are with a family, but it's still isn't like my family. They look like they have enough money that they could play all day, that's the impression that I get, and I feel I'm a working mother and I work hard and it might make me wish I had money (what do you think about not having to work?) With the two older people in the picture they don't look like they are just spending leisure time doing nothing, just playing and using up all of their money. For some reason I feel like they are, in quotes, hard workers. Some of the others seem vapid, like there's nothing else there. They look good, that's their job is to look good. They're buying expensive clothing and trendsetting, you know you've got earrings here and, even the little children have a certain look about them that makes you wonder what's behind, you know is there anything there behind them, the faces. So it makes me in this case I think, sometimes I think I would like to have more money and be able to buy whatever I want, but I wouldn't want to end up like this, because they don't, well actually they filmed them all without smiling, they took pictures where they're all serious. And it kind of looks empty (what do you think they lack?) That's a good question, I was going to say experience, real life experience you know, when you don't have money things don't come easily and sometimes you appreciate things more when you've had to work for them. So, yeah, real life, they're living a different life.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD?

Well I notice in the family there is a real mixture and its interesting how we have black people in the picture (why do you find that interesting?) Because I don't like to think that I'm prejudiced and so I like to see an ad as integrated as that, and I guess that makes me feel good.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

They are not people that I would aspire to be like. One thing that I feel is good, that might be classless, is that they show a lot of individualism, and I think that's a good thing. I don't think we should all look the same. You know you've got trendsetters here, you've got the earrings, and the certain hairstyles. I guess I kind of like that about it, that they don't all look the same. Sometimes in a family, or even in our culture, in our church, we try to make people all the same and I resent that sometimes, so that's another thing that kind of stands out. They've all got their own style, look to them. They look like the upper class, like playboys and girls. They maybe already had a place all ready for them in their dad's company or whatever. I don't think they
should be role models, for anything. Apart from looking good, I don't know what else they have to offer.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING TO MAKE THEIR APPEAL?

Well the use of the family, I guess. You know they don't look like evil people. And they've got such a range from young to old. I can't see what the benefit is other than looking good, and that you might be admired by others, because of the label.

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR TEENAGE DAUGHTER LOOKING AT THIS PARTICULAR AD?

Actually no, no I don't have any strong feelings like I did with the other one (wool). I don't think any of this clothing or these styles would actually appeal to her. The thing about this ad and like some of the Calvin Klein ads or Eternity, there's no copy on it, and sometimes you feel like you need more information or is everything on here really made by Versace. Which ones are? And where can you buy them, and so I have felt that way sometimes I think. All they put is a word on there. I suppose that means if we're interested we're going to go out to find it or we would know just where to buy it. It makes me feel stupid, ignorant I should say because I don't know where to go, where would I go in Utah to buy that? And I don't want to feel ignorant. I'm sure for the artistic value they don't want to ruin it by putting copy on there, but it does make me feel a little bit ignorant.
“BELINDA”

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

HOW DO YOU IMAGINE YOUR FRIENDS WOULD DESCRIBE YOU?

I think most of them would describe me as a very serious person. I take things seriously if I’ve committed to do something I follow through. I think they would say that I value my family, that that’s important to me, that I make family a priority. I think they would say I’m a hard worker. I think some of them might say I don’t spend enough time on myself. I tend to run around doing a lot of things for a lot of other people. I hope that they would say that I’m compassionate.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE VALUES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO WHO YOU ARE?

I guess my number one priority is my husband, and then my family. So I highly value my own little family, and so a lot of what I do is revolving around them. One thing that I’ve just come to a realization just within the last few months really is that I don’t do a lot for myself, because I have felt selfish if I take some time and go off and pursue this hobby or go out with the girls or something. I’ve neglected that in myself so that has become just recently more of a priority, I’m talking about priorities and values as if they’re just the same. And its hard for me to do actually, because I feel guilty, I think oh, well, I shouldn’t go out, but you know its not as if I have little babies at home, but still I often think well I shouldn’t be going out in the evenings. But I realize I need to feed myself and nourish my own character, and that’s important to everyone to be able to do that. (where do you feel the guilt originated from?) That’s a good question. I think probably from my own mother and because I was raised in the church and had a lot to do with the church. Sometimes other women actually make you feel more guilty, or they’re more critical of what you do than men are. Well, for example, as a working woman I’ve almost all of my married life been a working woman and although we don’t hear as much criticism at church as we used to fifteen years ago, you still get it, you know you get Relief Society lessons about staying at home and being with your family and that’s what the Lord wants you to do, and the Prophet is telling you this. And yet, I’m at the point of my life right now where we could get along without my income, but I enjoy working, I feel like I’m a better person, I feel happier when I’m at home because I’ve got something I’m doing during the day
which I feel is fulfilling to me. Not that raising a family isn’t (laughs), but its important to me to have this other... being able to do something and see the results of it besides my house and my family. But other women are very critical of that, especially, well mostly, women who are homemakers. And I’m not sure what’s the root of that. I guess what I think is that they, maybe they would like to do more and they don’t so they lash out at you, or maybe its just a commandment that easy to keep for them, they want to stay at home, you know the Prophet said to stay home and so they do what the Prophet said, they feel so good about it that...

HOW DO YOU MANAGE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN KNOWING WHAT THE PROPHET HAS SAID AND NO LONGER HAVING AN ECONOMIC NECESSITY TO GO OUT TO WORK?

I don’t feel guilty about it any more because I feel I have the right to make decisions for my own life and my husband I, you know we discuss it, its something I’ve not taken lightly and I just think Oh I’m going to do this. It was a big decision to make, we talk to each other, pray about it and it feels right for me and it feels right for my family, and so I don’t feel guilty anymore. I guess sometimes I think well, we don’t hear it from church leaders any more, I think president Benson was the last one that talked about mothers and women staying at home, but I think the church is changing now that they recognize that there is a large percentage of women outside of the home, and you know I guess a lot of those that would be for economic reasons, but there is a good number of women who are working because they want to work, and so I guess I feel eventually they are going to come around to my way of thinking. I don’t feel wrong about it.

YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU HAVE COME TO REALIZE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOURISH YOURSELF, WHAT IS IT THAT HAS ALLOWED THAT TO EMERGE?

I think just getting older, and thinking about the future, and thinking, you know, I’ve got to plan ahead, my children are not always going to be here and need me and my husband may not always be here, he might die before I do. What do I have left? If I’ve given everything to them and to the house, and done nothing for me and they’ve all progressed, and I haven’t. Also I just want to be more independent, not that I want to leave my husband, but you know we do have a partnership, and more and more I realize ... you know its interesting at the beginning when I got married I didn’t really like that, I wanted him to make decisions because that’s the way I had been raised and
that’s the way my parents did it. But now I like the equal footing that we have and I just want to be able to continue to progress and to grow so that we can always be equal. Because he is, he is growing and progressing. And also I think I have a friend who is a student, she’s twenty five, we were talking just recently about this, how she was raised in the church and mutual and young women’s and everything, the goal is that you grow up and you get married in the Temple and you live happily ever after. Well, she came out to BYU and that was her goal and she did well in school, got to the age of 21 and people were saying oh you ought to go on a mission. Well, she’d never planned that because she thought she’d be married by then, but she ended up going on a mission, then she came home and thought okay now I’m ready to get married and start a family and that didn’t happen. Now she’s graduating and she hasn’t made any other plans, because she never even thought she would graduate, she just came to BYU to get married and I thought, I don’t want to be like that, I mean I’m past that point and I am married, but I don’t want to be dependent in that way, I want to be able to stand on my own two feet. If my husband should drop dead tomorrow you know I want to be able to handle the finances and be able to go out and buy a car and you know run the house and things like that, I don’t want to be a weak person.

HOW DOES YOUR HUSBAND FEEL ABOUT THESE CHANGES IN YOUR DESIRE TO BECOME INDEPENDENT AND EQUAL?

Fortunately he’s very supportive of that. In fact he will say to me you ought to have a hobby, you know and I’m thinking oh how can I have a hobby when I’m working all day and then I come home and I’m cooking and doing laundry. But I realized its important for me to do that and he does, he’ll make time, he’s pretty good about taking turns to cook and you know. Even though I’m the woman you know I’ve been out at work all day just like has, so if he gets home first he’ll very often start cooking something. So he’s very very supportive of that and I’m lucky. I can’t imagine what it would be like if he was not. It would be very difficult for me.

DO YOU FIND ANY OF YOUR VALUES PRESENT YOU WITH CONFLICTS?

Another thing that I’ve been thinking a lot about recently is more and more I think just having good Christian beliefs is enough for people. We make a lot of fuss about being the only true church and I think there are a lot of good people in other churches that are living good lives. The main thing to me, and fortunately I am in this church and was raised in this church, but more and
more the main thing to me is just that I believe in Christ, I believe in God and I live a good life. And so sometimes the directives and the policies and the counsels are peripheral, I guess. I don’t feel that I have to - I don’t think they are important. And sometimes I think the Church gets into so many different little aspects of our lives that are not necessary, and we teach that we teach them correct principles and let them govern themselves. But the leaders don’t allow us to do that, and sometimes I resent them, because I think they really don’t allow us to. You know it’s interesting for me because I start having these feelings and questions, but I’m here in the heart of the Mormon community and I work for (a church organization) and sometimes that really is a conflict. I find especially at (church employer) that its like the church, I would feel more comfortable I guess with a separation between the church and my job, and I count that as my job. Sometimes we’re going to have a little staff meeting and they want to open it with prayer and I feel that that’s not necessary because its a staff meeting, its only going to last twenty minutes. And so I guess - its not a major conflict, it’s just interesting to me how I’m changing. Especially coming from such a strict religious home, the church was my parent’s life and I’m finding that it’s not for me, actually. It’s an important part of it but it’s not my whole life.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT FEMINIST OBJECTIVES FOR WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN RELATION TO YOUR OWN LIFE AS AN LDS WOMAN?

It’s interesting because I would not have described myself as a feminist, but I think I am. Not militant or anything and I guess the problem is that when people hear the word feminist they just think of the militant feminists out there. But I do agree with a lot of their messages, and the things they are trying to accomplish, which is difficult in the church because of the priesthood. Naturally, the men always are the leaders. I was thinking about that about my job, and started to talk about it and got side tracked, that very often, well mostly men are the managers, and when it comes down to a decision they always have the final say and you know I think I have a lot to give to this, you know, I’m an experienced person, its very difficult because they will use the church and the priesthood to keep you in your place. I guess my solution for that is to find a job that’s not connected with the church. I don’t think...I think its important that women be independent. There are times in your life, you know for me I’m just now changing and starting to think about going back to school, I have actually been thinking about changing my job for something that is more fulfilling and challenging to me, but a few years ago I wouldn’t have felt that, and I think there are times in your life when it’s
appropriate for you to be more independent. I guess I’m pretty lucky in my marriage because my husband wants that too, he doesn’t want to have dominion over me. We have always been equal and he was the one at the beginning that kind of drew me out and said, you know its okay, you can have a say in this and you can make decisions, to the point where I wanted to and I didn’t at the beginning. I don’t think the church encourages that at all, and I have made an effort with my own daughter to let her know that she is a valuable person, that she can do anything that she wants, have any job she wants. I want to make sure she goes to university and that’s a goal of hers. And actually its interesting with her growing up and the world changing the way it is that she takes a lot of things for granted that were struggles ten or twenty years ago for women. My daughter’s grown up with it and okay that just the way it is for me now. But the church I feel is behind in its attitude, behind the world.

DO YOU SEE YOUR DAUGHTER IN ANY CONFLICT WITH CHURCH PROGRAMS AND VALUES?

She has already experienced that. She was a class president in a Beehive class and so she got to go to Bishop’s Youth Committee meetings and she would sit and listen to them, and this was at age 13, talk about what the boys were going to do and then what the girls were going to do. One example was that one night they would have a sports night and the boys would be playing and the girls would be in the kitchen cooking, and then they would serve the dinner to the boys. And she objected to that, and said wait a minute, why don’t we have the boys cook dinner for us and serve us, and ... you know in our home the reaction would have been oh that’s a great idea or we would have gone along with her, but people were upset because she was changing... you know, we’ve always done it like this. She was changing what they wanted to do and so she would come home from the meeting and ask how can the boys get to go and mountain climb and we painting little wooden things. You know, we have given her every opportunity and not kept her to just traditional, feminine roles, so she thinks she can climb a mountain, I can play basketball like a boy, because she’s never been told otherwise at home. So it has been a conflict. Sometimes, another recent thing that happened, she came home from a church meeting and said is it true that the Prophet said you shouldn’t marry someone of another race? Because we have tried to teach, you know, you should love everybody no matter what color or what religion, what sexual preference even. We have been very liberal as far as that goes and so she...it seemed so strange to her that our church would encourage something like that, and she couldn’t
believe it was true. So she is in conflict already with some of the teachings.

WE SAW IN THOSE ADS MESSAGES ABOUT LOOKING DESIRABLE. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT A TRADITIONAL ROLE EMPHASIS FOR WOMEN TO BE DESIRABLE?

I am uncomfortable with that. I acknowledge that appearance is important, you know your first impression is important, but as a society we place far too much emphasis on the outside and not what’s on the inside. And so its very unfortunate if you’re not a Vogue model, you don’t get taken seriously. On the other hand if you are a beautiful blonde you are pigeonholed...assumed to be beautiful and you’re dumb. I don’t know if men believe that you can be beautiful and intelligent. I mean I do, but I think it works against us as women. We’re constantly talking about that to (our daughter)...I’m always talking to her about not placing too much emphasis on looks, but you know she wants the boys to notice her and at this point the boys are not interested whether she can have a conversation with them about anything. They are looking at looks and I’m trying to teach her that in the long run that’s not important, her education is important, pay attention to that and do well in school, and always tell her eventually it will all fit into place, hoping it will. I’ve also, since she has started to take an interest in boys, we’ve been talking about how she needs to be very careful about the people she chooses as friends and eventually to date. The way they treat her, you know, I don’t want her to fall for someone that doesn’t treat her well, that abuses her or doesn’t value her or treat her as an equal. So I’ve already started talking to her about that, and thinking about in the future about choosing a husband, miles down the road, but I just want her to get that into her mind and start thinking about the type of a person that she should be with.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DIFFERENT FROM CHARACTERS PORTRAYED IN ADVERTISING, OR MEDIA IMAGES?

I wouldn’t describe myself as materialistic. It’s interesting, last time you asked me to look at the ads and describe what values I saw and I kept thinking, well I don’t see them promoting any values. And when I thought about that afterwards, I thought, that was a little bit narrow of me because I was thinking in terms of my values, of having a close family, belief in Christ, of service to others, things like that. And I was looking at the people and the ads and thinking there’s nothing there because from those ads they are materialistic, appearance and image was very important. Those were their values, but I was thinking they don’t have values because those are not my values. I like to look
nice but I don’t think I’m consumed with my appearance or my image, and sometimes you get that impression from those ads.

NOW THAT YOUR HUSBAND’S SALARY COULD MEET ALL YOUR EXPENSES AND YOUR OWN IS SURPLUS. WHAT DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DOING WITH THIS SURPLUS INCOME?

That’s interesting. I want to have a nice home and I want to be comfortable, so we have started and have been able to buy nice furniture and a big screen TV and things like that. But they’re not.. its not an all encompassing task, I don’t think our neighbors down the street... We happen to live in a neighborhood where there are doctors and dentists and lawyers and people that are in a higher income level than us, right close to us. I don’t find myself thinking well, I need to have a boat, because they have a boat now and we really should be buying skis and going skiing. I think, anyway, that I just want to have a nice home for me and my family. But like I say, its not a big priority, its not something we spend a lot of time thinking about or spend a lot of money on. (What do you find you chose to spend your disposable income on?) We like to take family vacations, so at least two times a year we will go away and spend quite a bit, we’ll go to Disneyland and go for a week to California and we do that because we just want to get away and spend some time together as a family and both of us think its important for the children to have good memories like that. I guess that’s a priority. We don’t have a lot of expensive hobbies, we don’t ski and we don’t boat and things like that. I suppose we do spend a lot of money on clothing, probably more than other people, not excessive, but we like to look nice. All four of us do. So we find throughout the year we’re out clothes hunting. With jewellery and stuff I’m not into kind of thing.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE ACQUISITION OF GOODS?

Its distasteful to me. A show of money like that. People who do it just for show, buy something and park it out front so everyone can see it, I don’t like that, I think its sad, they’re lacking something to me in their lives, that they’re basing their value on their possessions. And it does happen in a Mormon community. I think the world generally is becoming more materialistic, more selfish, more self centered. I don’t know if we can blame advertising on that though, I’m sure its helping it along. But I think its a general trend and its happening in the Mormon community too. (what is it that you think these people lack?) Maybe just self esteem, a feeling of individual worth. If they
need outside things, showy things to get approval from other people, they’re lacking something personally, that maybe they don’t feel good about themselves, they don’t feel confident, they need to have a nice fancy car so that they can feel the same as their neighbor and feel that they are worth something.

WHAT PROJECTS DO YOU SEE YOURSELF OR YOURSELF AND YOUR HUSBAND BECOMING INVOLVED IN AS YOUR CHILDRENS’ DEPENDENCE ON YOU DIMinishES?

That’s interesting. As we have become better off financially we have actually talked about and decided to help other people, friends that we have and family members that are struggling, and we’ve decided around Christmastime, and hopefully throughout the year, but definitely at Christmas we do this, to have a family project where we work together and give of our means to other people. I think we would like to continue doing that. I think as we get older and the children are gone, we want to spend more time together and find hobbies, maybe travelling or maybe starting up a business, we talked about, that we can work in together.

CHURCH LEADERS HAVE MADE COMMENTS FROM TIME TO TIME ABOUT MEDIA OFFERINGS AND HAVE DIRECTED THE CHURCH NOT TO WATCH R-RATED MOVIES. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT DIRECTIONS LIKE THAT?

For me personally I like to be the one to choose the movie. I don’t stick to their directive, I don’t follow their directive. I never go and see a movie if I don’t know about it first, I’m not just blindly going to the movies. And so if its something that sounds interesting to me and appeals to me, I’ll go and see it even if its an R. I wouldn’t say that I’m desensitized to bad language or nudity. When I see it I think well, I guess I wish it wasn’t there, but it doesn’t make me want to walk out of the movie. So, I guess I feel I want to be able to make that choice myself.

ARE THERE OTHER AREAS WHERE YOU FEEL YOU WOULD LIKE MORE ROOM TO MAKE YOUR OWN CHOICE?

I’m sure there are. I just recently was called as a teacher in Relief Society, which kind of surprised me. Number one, because I’m kind of a quiet, basically shy person, and I get nervous about doing that. But its been really good for me, to help me be more confident and know that I can do that, but
also to be able to talk about some of the things that...I kind of slip things in I feel like sometimes, and its surprising the responses you get from the women in Relief Society, that its good to know that some of them feel the same way, and some of them will get upset about it, you know, they’ll want to stick to the lesson, but I will talk about working women and try to get across the point, not to change their minds necessarily, but just to get them thinking there’s another side to this. I do this in my office as well, we have a lot of students, and I just sometimes feel they’re so narrow minded, they don’t see the whole world. Mormons are a very small percent of the population and what we try to do as a church is make everyone think the same as us and I don't agree with that. And so I sometimes will deliberately say something contrary to get a discussion going, to get them thinking about another side of the issue. An example of that is the gay issue. Last year I guess it was, the gay clubs in schools, which I’m not opposed to. I would have discussions with the people in my office, just trying to get them to think about the other side of it. Is it really a choice this person’s making, could that really influence other children to become gay or lesbian. Like I say, I’m not trying to change anyone’s mind and sometimes its not that I believe that, its that I want them to be more open minded. I don’t think the church encourages people to think for themselves or to be open minded. In fact it punishes people that do that.

WHAT AFFECTS YOU MOST STRONGLY ABOUT ADVERTISING MOST STRONGLY?

Oh I think it plays a role, I think its necessary to have advertising. I don’t think it should become important that we should be getting role models or it shouldn’t be determining our values, so its a necessary thing but it shouldn’t have too much power. I think certain groups are more vulnerable, thinking about teenagers who are struggling and they’re at the point where they’re trying to find themselves and they are an especially vulnerable group that might glean the wrong values and messages from advertising.

WHAT TYPE OF APPROVAL DO YOU LOOK FOR FROM YOUR PEERS?

I want people to like me because I am a good person. Not because of the things I have but because they like me. That’s pretty simple but that’s how I feel.
"CLAIRE"

VERSACE

WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AD?

I guess I don’t know what they’re selling here, that’s the...I like this picture. I think the family’s fun, its inter-racial but are they selling a family album? I don’t know what they’re selling (clothing). I think that the first thing I was drawn to was the old couple, and then I started looking at the family because I could tell it was a family photo, just because it says a family album, and I thought, well, its inter-racial, that’s interesting. (why?) Because they all look content, it doesn’t look like there’s contention within the family. So I just thought it was a really interesting group of people, that seem pretty happy with themselves, but I could not figure out... I didn’t know what it was selling. I sat there and looked at it and thought what are they trying to tell me. It looks like this is a nice family.

WHAT DO THE CHARACTERS SEEM TO REPRESENT TO YOU?

Well, they’re wealthy. But maybe that’s part of the reason why I thought the inter-racial was odd (Why odd?) I just think, this is my total personal opinion, but I think wealthy families tend to be more aggressive about how they, who they marry. They tend to want to marry like people. Its expected of them. I feel like even really wealthy families still kind of match-make, if that makes any sense, trying to pick an appropriate mate for their family instead of maybe marrying for love. (What do you think about that attitude?). I’m not sure it wrong or right, really. I think there’s a lot of marriages that people think they’re marrying for love and once you get married that relationship either grows closer... I mean I totally love my husband in a completely different way and completely different feeling than I did fifteen years ago when we got married, a completely different kind of love, so I don’t know that marrying for love or match-making is more successful.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE IMAGE OF WEALTHY PEOPLE HERE?

I wouldn’t be comfortable there, because I don’t feel like I’m that level. I’d like... I would like to be the kind of person that a person from this kind of class could come to my home and feel comfortable, but also that a person from a lower class could come to my home and feel comfortable. I feel like I’m
somewhere in the middle.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT CLASS?

I don’t have a lot of… I try not to be judgmental, I try to get to know the person individually before I make a big judgement but I know because of the way that I was raised and I was raised in a totally caucasian environment that I have, you know, built in feelings that I don’t always recognize and I’ll make a first impression judgement that may not be flattering to me.

DOES CLASS HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

It may… I may not go into a certain situation because I may not feel worthy. It may stop me doing things on the upper end, but the lower end I feel comfortable with. And I think that may be because my father was raised kind of poor and so he… he kind of teases that he has lots of friends in low places, and its a joke in our family. But he does, he’s kind of a man who’s always tried to pull for the little guy and help them out, and so I think I was raised in the kind of environment where we try to help. I never felt comfortable in the upper end and that might be because of the way I was raised, even though my dad did very well and ended up being very politically active and my mother is very much with the social scene at BYU, which is not real wealthy but its… you know, they did fine but I think they never really felt like that’s where they belong.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR OWN SOCIAL SCENE?

I’m just a mom in an upper class neighborhood and we shuttle kids to school and its what I dreamed about being, I just always thought I’d be a mom in a neighborhood with… then it was a station wagon when we dreamed as kids, but shuttle little boys back and forth to baseball practice, and that’s pretty much what I’ve become.

WHAT ASSOCIATIONS OR FAMILIARITIES DOES THIS HAD HAVE FOR YOU IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

Well, yesterday we went to the blessing of a baby and it was very similar to this, we had two sets of grandparents, everybody was dressed probably as nice as these people are, and they all looked nice and we took family photos, and
maybe somebody would look at our photos some day and say Oh that’s a nice home and a nice area and nice people and nicely dressed...to think the same thing of our family, I don’t know. I guess I’m not too concerned about clothes. I think they all look nice. I think clothes play a role in terms of class, I think that’s how we make a first impression of people, is their clothing. (How do you respond to an appeal to clothing such as this ad?) Some of it I like, some of it is very traditional and I’m very traditional. Of course, because of my environment this wouldn’t do (points to woman in sleeveless dress) but other than that everybody else’s clothes look really nice, and I’m pretty traditional so I would probably buy something fairly traditional.

TELL ME WHAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE AD

I don’t like the gym shoes on the little boy, it doesn’t fit with the rest of the clothes, it kind of jumps out at you. He needs a little pair of black leather shoes. Are they trying to tell me that its for everybody. I think he’s (pointing to youth with long hair)a little unkept (sic) for this group of people, his hair but he’s a young adult too and we always have one of those in our families, who is unkept and is trying to rebel a little bit - I’ll wear my hair a little longer than my dad or grandpa would approve of. Other than that, I think the picture is kind of fun. These little girls look like they’re just enduring this picture to the end.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE THE AD IN ANY WAY WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I need some more information on what they’re trying to sell me, but other than that I think it would be fun to see it in color (why do you think they’ve used black and white?) To emphasize the clothing, to make the background not the focal point, but the people and the clothes but not the size of their house, I’m assuming.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THE AD?

I feel like this is the head, if this is a family, the head of the family (pointing to the old man) and probably these mid aged people in the back are brothers and sisters and brothers and sisters in law and then grandchildren, but I don’t know how these two fit into the picture (the non caucasians) and whether these two are married.. I don’t know. They’re pretty reserved, they’re not going to shout hooray for anything are they? I think they’ve been trained to not get too excited about... neither too excited nor too, you know, upset or
sorrowful. They’re just kind of monotone. I wonder if they’re really happy with each other, do you know what I mean? They look kind of distant, it seems like to me they can’t... that they may not be able to express true feelings with each other because they’re not... Other than these two right here there’s not a lot of affection in this picture, if that makes sense. (why do you mention affection?) Because mine is and we do display that but... and this is probably from TV and television, you know, it seems like you see on TV, the really upper class family, those few half dozen families in the world that have millions of dollars. Media maybe plays a role in saying that they don’t... they aren’t able to express their feelings with one another like they should be able to, at least I think they should be able to. But, to me, there’s no mistake that can be made that can’t be fixed with children, they make mistakes and do things, let them accept responsibility rather than cover it up but this family seems as if they’re just expected to live without making mistakes.

WHAT OTHER VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING IN THIS AD?

It just looks like its an issue of if you wear these clothes then you interpret it as having a lot of money. That’s all I’m getting from it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THE AD MAY HAVE HAD IN MIND HERE?

I don’t know, its very odd. The more I think about it the odder it gets, because your first impression it feels like a family and the more you look at it you think is it really now, or is it just a group of people sitting on stairs in their clothes. When you start to try and group groups, I mean there’s several... If this were my family there’d be several families here and you’d be able to tell kind of the moms and dads and the children, and who groups with who, and the more I look at it the less I can do that. I can’t tell who this child might belong to.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU USE ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUR LIFE?

I don’t know that they make a lot of impact on what I buy, they entertain me more than they impact me on what I would purchase. (Do you make comparisons between what you see in ads and what you have?) It would depend on what the product was probably. I might stop to compare an automobile.... clothing and jewellery I probably wouldn’t. I just kind of buy
what I need and if Kmart has the same product as ZCMI, I’m more of a bargain person, I mean, and I probably look at the quality when I buy to see if I get the same quality, but an advertisement for Chanel at ZCMI would not do much to make me go and buy at ZCMI. I’m not terribly trendy, so I buy what I like and I don’t have to be in style any more like when I was a teenager. (what’s changed?) My maturity level and not having to worry about it if I think somebody expects me to meet, I just meet what I expect from me. I have a lunch group with ladies every Tuesday and we probably influence each other on what we get, and how the group gets influenced I don’t know, but we talk about you know the things we like, what we buy. My daughter’s into a certain kind of shoe, where did you get those shoes, I got them for a cheaper price here, you know, that kind of thing.

CAN YOU THINK OF INSTANCES WHERE ADS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO YOU?

No. Well, lets no say that. Occasionally if we’re looking for something and we’re serious about buying we may look... we have an idea of the car we want to buy, and we’ll look at price...we’re very slow to buy. I’m one of those that, I’ve needed a new car for a year now but I’m still considering what I might get. (Is the consideration just economic?) It will be a balance between the kind of car that we want which would be... I need eight passengers, all terrain kind of vehicle, you know. So its a compromise between me and my husband and what our needs are and the best value for my money.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS FOR LUXURY ITEMS, ROLEX, FOREIGN SPORTS CARS AND THE LIKE?

It would be nice to have. And I flip the page. That would be fun but its a fantasy, it will never... I think even if I had that kind of money I still wouldn’t buy a Rolex, because a Timex will work just fine, does that make sense? And I probably would never have a Jaguar unless somebody gave it to me because to me an automobile’s the worst investment you could make, ever. Even if I had the money I would probably get what suited my needs and that’s a mom with children and a car full of kids, you know what I’m saying?

YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A VEHICLE AT THE MOMENT. THERE ARE PROBABLY A RANGE OF DIFFERENT VEHICLES THAT MIGHT MEET YOUR NEEDS (about five, maybe). ARE THERE ANY ASSOCIATIONS THAT ATTACH TO EACH OF THOSE VEHICLES?
Oh, probably. Probably there is a social status too. Suburban seems to be a big thing for this kind of neighborhood right now where maybe in a different neighborhood it would be something else. Suburban is a social status thing because of our environment, I mean we’re LDS families with lots of children and lots of family activities going on. Everybody in our neighborhood has one or two kids going in five different directions, to ball practice or something. (What is it about a Suburban?) Its large enough to carry a big family, I think you can put eight to ten kids in there, get everybody where they’re going. But they’re in there and they’re comfortable. Its large enough that they’re comfortable, so I think... Its a pricey car, its not a cheap car and everybody knows that (laughs).

**JIMMY**

Oh I think this one’s kind of fun. This looks like where we belong. This is a mother with two children, probably works, maybe not and she sends her children off and does a lot of errand running, but I can relate to this ad. This one I thought what is it (Versace ad), but this one I can relate to. I can relate to her because of her, you know, she’s got her To Do list, its a little different than my To Do list, but she has a To Do list and she probably has children, she just feels like she’s my kind of person. And that sells that automobile for me because she... I can relate to her. I just need a little bigger one, she’s only got room for five and a little luggage. (What about her activities?) Well, what have we got up here, tune up her bike, and homework. Is it her or the kids that she’s got homework to work on? Its either her or the kids, she’s got to take the dog to the vet. She’s a little fancier than I am, she’s going to the theater, I’d be going to BYU football game or something like that. Call the hunt club, well we’d be going to the ladies fitness bar or something. We’re similar in a lot of ways. So because of the similarities... she’s got a family and she’s a busy woman. This suits her needs because of that. She has things that she needs to haul around and that car accommodates her.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WOMAN IN THE AD?**

She looks to me like she’s self-confident, kind of her own woman, does her thing, but she’s got a little busy life and she’s a list maker. Oh, she makes her own jewellery. I didn’t see this, this didn’t jump out at me until now. Her description. But obviously her clothing... she looks a little inflexible to me, just the way she’s dressed and because she has a list that she’s going to be cropping off and I can relate to her, but I feel like I have to be more flexible than she is.
That picture to me makes me feel like she’s inflexible. She’s too neat and tidy to be a mother of three or four children. She’s on her way up, she’s going to get things done her way. (Do you feel you are an on the way up lady?) I think I’ve been there, I think I still aspire to go in certain directions, but right now I’m in the period of my life where I’m raising children, and I’m not up to where they’re heading out and doing their thing. Maybe then I’ll start to do some of the other things I’d like to do, but I’m at a point in my life right now where I’m content to stay home and take care of babies.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE ABOUT THE AD?

Well, you know, because of my personal preference I like the pots and plants because I like to do that kind of stuff, and skiing and the equestrian thing...Okay, we’ve done horses and the picture frames meant nothing to me.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE IN THIS AD?

I think even though she’s well dressed, she’s well dressed for a purpose. She’s either going to school, she’s dressed for that purpose, but she has a lot of just kind of basic, mall, everyday values to me.

BALLY

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Okay, I hate this one (laughs). I don’t know why I hate it. I just don’t like the shoe, I don’t like the shoe. And then I look over at this picture of this couple. It feels like maybe a business party or some kind of an evening party that me and my husband wouldn’t want to go to but you end up going to because you have to make an appearance. And you never enjoy yourself like these two are, although they always make you think that if you go to a party like that you’re going to. And I’ve never gone to a party like that and enjoyed myself yet, or felt comfortable there because everybody’s trying to put on airs. And then I just don’t like the shoe (what does that shoe say to you?) That shoe, I don’t know what that shoe says to me. I don’t know if I have an association to it, I’m trying to think. Its a twenties, mafia, I don’t know. Its just a style I don’t care for. I wouldn’t wear it, so maybe that’s why (do you think that’s a man’s or a woman’s shoe?) I think it could be either. I think its more a man’s shoe and... My husband would never put that on in a million years, he wouldn’t even consider it, not for a second. If he came home with that on I’d wonder what
was wrong with him.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

I think they’re trying too hard to have a good time. That’s what I perceive in this picture, they’re at a party, there trying to be somebody that they’re probably not. (tell me what you mean when you describe people at these parties putting on airs). I think its realistic when you’re with people you don’t know and you’re so worried about making a first impression. Trying to be somebody you’re not. I tend to avoid those situations.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING IN THE AD?

It feels to me like its a business party that you’re expected to be at, where your promotion might be kind of vulnerable. So, here you have a man that’s ladder climbing and trying to move up another rung. The shoe doesn’t even match...To me I feel like you wouldn’t wear that kind of shoe to that party because its too eccentric. (what about the women in the ad?) I can’t tell... I’m trying to decide if she’s a wife or a date, or an escort. You can’t tell if she’s really enjoying herself or if she’s pretending.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND WITH THIS APPEAL?

There’s no appeal to me (laughs). I think they’re trying to say that if you wear this shoe you will be able to climb the ladder of success. Maybe its appropriate... my husband wears the clothes he wears to work because it probably is appropriate. But he doesn’t wear labels. (what might prompt you to buy a label?) Maybe if it was really good quality and I felt like it was good value, the price was right. The only time I buy a label is when I buy Levis for my son because its important to him, and there’s a certain stage in life when you just don’t get through it unscarred if you don’t have the right kind of clothes, do you know what I mean? And then you get past that. And its more important to my husband than to me because his mom couldn’t do that, it was difficult for her and it was hard for him. He got teased because he didn’t have the right clothes. I tend to go by... I think it happens with my husband, I tend to say Oh he’s Okay he can have the $11.99 whatever brand of shorts instead of the $17.99 Levi brand shorts, and he will say nobody buys that brand of shorts because he went through that phase in life when he wasn’t able to get nice clothes. And I didn’t, so it wasn’t really that important to me. (what about brand status in your neighborhood community?) I don’t think its as
important as it was a few years ago. I don’t know, maybe its just me, but I don’t tend to buy labels any more, at all. Unless its Levi brand pants that maybe important to my sons. I don’t think even my neighbors buy brand names kind of things. If they do, I’m oblivious to the fact that its brand name clothing because I don’t care. I remember there were lots of them when I was a kid, but I couldn’t even tell you certain brand names now. My son is just getting to those teenage years when I might hear a few more names during the next few years. I’ll let him go ahead, but I’ll let him know I disapprove.

WOOL

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

This is one of those that surprise me and I get amused at, because I don’t think wool’s ever going to make my figure look like that, no matter what. I just think its kind of...they’re trying to give you the impression that wool’s going to take care of your romantic lifestyle. And they’re trying to tell you that wool isn’t what wool used to be, of course, that it’s more comfortable now. And maybe its such a strong ad you look at it and you think the rules no longer apply, okay, so I don’t have to wear a T-shirt under my sweater any more. I get the point. I might would buy a wool sweater. I don’t care for the picture but it doesn’t offend me either. I kind of makes me chuckle, it amuses me. (Why?) Because I just think, well she wears it in a way I’d never get away with. (And if you could?) If I could I might, but I can’t, but I don’t think I could really feel confident doing that.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CHARACTERS IN THE AD?

I guess to me its a married couple and so that’s maybe why it isn’t a problem, because they’re a little older. If its just a kiss that’s fine. But if you’re having to show your romantic feelings every second of the day in the park at that age then that’s offensive to me because you should be past that point. We show our affections for each other in a different way, we don’t have to do that in public. (what do you think about public displays of affection when you see it?) It depends on the situation and how much it goes on. Like, at Disney World we were standing in line and two young people in front of us couldn’t keep their hands off each other in the line and I thought, Oh this is just too much. A little flirting is fine, but they couldn’t keep their hands off each other and I’m thinking let us alone, its getting annoying, its distracting to me. And it makes you uncomfortable or the people that are standing around, like we’re invading
on a private moment.

DOES THE AD PROMPT ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

Sure. I’d love to spend an afternoon in the park with my husband, even with the children. Maybe there are children off playing and she’s the mom and reaches over and kisses him and that’s fine. And I would hope that I’m still attractive to my husband without being all decked out and overdressed.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS MAKING AN APPEAL TO SENSUALITY?

This one doesn’t bother me. Some of them do, because... she’s not immodest, but some of them have no clothes on. (what about the message to be desirable?) As a woman I want to be desirable, men and women have different roles, so that’s okay to me to be sensual.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND IN DESIGNING THIS AD?

That maybe I’m old fashioned, and I probably am. And I think they are making a sexual appeal and maybe that’s why it’s not acceptable to me.
“CLAIRE”

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR FRIENDS AND THOSE WHO KNOW YOU WELL WOULD DESCRIBE YOU?

I don’t know. Friendly, maybe a little bit of a perfectionist, patient, I don’t know.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

A lot calmer on the outside than I am on the inside. I tend to hold a lot in, but I try to be patient and tolerant, and a lot of things don’t really bug me. I think at work I see a lot of different personality types, some people will get really uptight over little things and they really don’t bug me. It really doesn’t. The stresses in my life are maybe more my personal life, or my relationships with people, how people feel about me as an individual. My expectations of what people expect of me create stress in my life. (Do you feel there are a lot of expectations?) I think I create them. I don’t think people expect as much of me as I think they do. (Why do you think you have these impressions?) Probably my home life, my dad was very strict and a little bit abusive and so that was my mechanism for survival, to please. And I didn’t do well in school as a child, I was put in remedial everything, I was considered a problem. And I knew I wasn’t but when you get that kind of feedback you start to wonder. About 5th grade I realized I could do it and about 6th grade my family lifestyle started to change too, my dad became more interested in the church and eventually went through the temple and so some of his behaviors changed too in the way that he treated us. (Are you still affected by those early things?) Absolutely, I don’t think they ever go away.

YOU MENTIONED THAT OTHER THINGS SEEM TO BUG OTHER PEOPLE BUT NOT YOU...

I think its because I just learned to be patient, to be tolerant, I had too, I didn’t have much choice. (What do you find yourself holding back?) I think I’m getting better at it. I think its just stuff like I’ll get really caught up in, well my house isn’t clean, and the corners are getting dusty, and I feel like it needs to be perfect all the time and its not, of course its not. But I get caught up in that. Just my household has to be really in order for me, and its an important thing
for my husband too. He’s much more... I mean, the man I’m married too doesn’t roll his socks because it stretches the top, if that says anything about him. And so...he’s a lovely person, but I think I create a lot of stresses because I’m worried about pleasing him. So some of that I may hold in, instead of, oh fold your own socks the way you want to, you know what I mean, instead of making waves. And most the time it doesn’t bother me, but there are times when life gets so busy that I’ll kind of have to let things go. And I don’t think he really cares as much I think he cares about if the house got vacuumed that day. He may comment, oh the house didn’t... And I’ll take it very personally and he meant nothing by it, you know. But I’m, well, if you don’t like it than vacuum it. And then I feel bad about that.

WHAT WOULD YOU DESCRIBE AS BEING YOUR OWN KEY VALUES AND MOTIVATIONS?

I think my house motivates me a lot and it shouldn’t. Just keeping it organized and clean, and its so time consuming and I’d like to be doing other things. I really would like to be working on my genealogy and getting that stuff done and there’s no time for it. I’d like to read more with my children and I try to make that a priority and I do the best I can, but there are so many other demands that... But I’d like to be more involved in their education. A priority for me is to help their little self esteem’s grow and so I spend a lot of time at ball games and functions for them that help encourage that, and help them to learn about being beat and winning and all the avenues of life that you get. And so my children motivate me a lot. I want them to learn as many lessons in life as they can, and work through them so that they grow from them instead of letting them conquer them, you know the problems we get in life. And then I’d like to be able to educate them all enough that they can grow and progress as much as they want to and they’re not limited by what I didn’t do as a parent. I guess that’s a main priority that I feel like I’m failing in, but I try to do that.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE LIMITATIONS YOU FEEL YOU ARE TRYING TO OVERCOME YOURSELF?

You know I think we live in a society, as much as they probably try not to judge others, we do, we make a judgement. And even when my children were very young I used to say to my husband, now honey don’t cuss because they’ll learn to cuss and that will limit them and what they can do. Because if they’re cussing in a home that is LDS and they don’t approve of that then the parent
might limit that child from playing with them. And maybe that comes from the fact that my family wasn’t a strong LDS family when I was little and I felt those limitations and I felt bad about not being accepted or involved because of the community, and you know, primary and young women's, were activities that I saw the kids go to and do in your area. And not that they mean to exclude you, its just their culture. And so if you’re parents aren’t up to date on when those activities are and what’s going on then you discover you may not be included.

YOU STARTED TO MENTION THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY AROUND YOU AND INADVERTENT CULTURAL JUDGEMENTS. DO YOU HAVE OTHER CONCERNS ABOUT COMMUNITY VALUES?

You know this neighborhood that I live in right now is the best one yet. Some of the others... It seems like when we were starting out and were a little less active in the church and in just kind of an apartment setting, that you don’t get... There isn’t even a community it doesn’t feel like. No sense of community or being able to go to your neighbor for help or... And then we went to another neighborhood that was similar to the one that we’re in but we lived in a little house kind of off the edge of the... Kind of across the busy road from this neighborhood, and we still weren’t’ terribly active at that point but I went to church and the kids went to church, but I still felt kind of alienated because... I think more because of where we lived, not being able to cross the street, the children couldn’t... Children play a lot in how you get along in your neighborhood. I think kids tend to bond parents more than your social group or church or whatever. The children flipping back and forth from home to home make you communicate with you neighbor next door and you learn more about each other through your children. I think that’s the main thing. I think that was what the barrier was, the road and being across the street on a little bit.. And just kind of alienated from the group. And kind of at a different level. I was newly married, five years, but just one child and kind of a young.. The rest of them had been married a few years and had a few children, a little bit different time of life, you know. But this neighborhood’s been real accepting of (my husband) and... He’s a little bit on the rebellious side, so they’ve been accepting of him as a person. He’s pretty outspoken, he says it like it is and if you don’t like it its no skin of his chin kind of person. But we’ve done well here and the people have been really nice and accepting. In fact people have said I like it how candid he is, you always know where you stand with (my husband). He’ll say it like it is and you don’t have to worry about what he thinks of you. They seem to appreciate him more here than I
have felt in other neighborhoods. I’m sure that has to do partly with our religion, and I think it has a little bit to do with the social economic part of it too. I don’t know if... I think the more education you have the more your world’s opened up maybe, and you’re more tolerant and less judgemental, and I feel maybe that’s what’s happened, people have been really kind to us here.

DO YOU FIND ANY CONFLICTS IN ROLE EXPECTATIONS FOR YOU AS AN LDS WOMAN AND HOW YOU WOULD REALLY LIKE TO BE?

No. I don’t. In fact I wish I could be more like they... I wish I could stay home with my children all the time. I wish I could be that mom that... I didn’t realize how hard it would be to work and to be a mother, and didn’t realize what an important job that was too, I think. You just think, Oh what a hard job it is, what a hard job it is. (What are your feelings about the Prophet asking women to stay at home?) You know, I’ve got a wonderful balance so I don’t struggle with that. We’ve never had to leave our children with a babysitter except when we were getting our education and grandma was always the babysitter, which is a better babysitter than mom I think, she loves as much or more than I do, and so I never had to struggle with that feeling that I was leaving my child with somebody may not care about them as much as I do. I guess for me, and I guess we all rationalize ourselves away, but I’ve always thought like I’ve had an ideal situation as a working mom, I couldn’t ask for a better situation. And I love what I do, I love being a nurse. After eleven years I’m starting to feel burn out, I’m starting to feel like I need a change, but I still like taking care of people, and I love the people I work with, they’re good friends. That’s kind of my social out in some ways because... If I wasn’t at work, though, I’d probably find something else. In fact I’m probably more limited working because I come home and I don’t feel like I should go to maybe a little scrapbook party to work on my scrap books, or Relief Society homemaking night, because I’ve already been away from my home three nights that week, and so if it doesn’t sound really good or really important I tend to say I won’t go to that tonight, I’ll stay home with my family. Unless I really need an evening out to myself and then I’ll say I’m going tonight. I don’t know how single moms manage. I don’t know how you can be a positive influence in your children’s lives when you’re working and not there.

WHEN WE LAST MET WE SAW A NUMBER OF IMAGES SUGGESTING WHAT IT IS TO BE A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN? WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THE WAY SUCCESS IS DEPICTED IN ADVERTISING?
I look at it and I think... Basketball players that are making millions of dollars that have poor, in my opinion, have made poor life choices, you know. And we’re paying them so much money and teachers that get nothing for such a hard job. I just think our value system is so incredibly confused. You know, I think that when we look at advertisements we’re supposed to be perfectly well kept, ideal weight, a Better Homes & Gardens home, one child, two child tops and out in the work force doing your thing. (How do you feel about that?) I don’t know that it brings you great happiness. Maybe ten years I would probably would have said, yes I want to climb to the top of the ladder. I just think they’re false, and I think it brings an incredible amount of stress to try to keep a perfect body and a perfect home and a perfect family and a perfect job. Its impossible, there’s no way you can do that. (Do you find yourself making comparisons?) Oh sure, especially when you hit thirty you’d sure like to, at 35, be as thin as you were when you were 18, have the same complexion. And it doesn’t happen, its unrealistic. You’re growing old, old bodies falling apart and cellulite’s where it used to not be. And for me to go waste time, to me it would be a waste of time to... I mean, yeah, go work out your half an hour a day to keep yourself healthy, but to go to work out three hours at a gym just to be beautiful, just to keep up that image, that’s just a fraud, it’s not true. I have an image of myself as I’d like to be but I know I’m kidding myself the older I get, but I can probably tone up a little bit. We all have these ideals, what we used to be and would like to be again, but its impossible. (How important are looks to you?) The more I start to grow old I think I’ve started to look at older women and see how some grow old kind of gracefully, and I think as long as you’re taking the time to stay well kept it doesn’t matter if you get wrinkles or you have an extra ten pounds or... You’ll still think that person’s attractive. I’ve look at people and thought she’s attractive, and then really analyzed them and thought, well she’s got lots of wrinkles and could lose 10 or 15 pounds but my first impression is that she was beautiful because she was well kept. All you need is to keep clean, brush your hair and put on a little makeup.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DIFFERENT FROM WOMEN IN ADVERTISEMENTS?

What ads are all trying to portray is what we all want to achieve and its impossible. As long as you keep them in perspective, maybe its okay. I mean, I’d like to have a Better Homes & Gardens home all the time, but it doesn’t happen. Its lived in, my home’s lived in. It’s not a picture on a magazine page. I don’t know that I’m tons different, but I’m not consumed with it.
WHAT VALUES FROM YOUR CHURCH DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH MOST STRONGLY?

I probably... I guess being a good mom. I want my children to be prepared to face the future. And I struggle about how to do that. I worry about how well I'll have them prepared or what they'll need to face. Being LDS gives me some guidance and direction that women that aren't LDS may not get, just the guidance about trying to be at home with your children as much as possible, the guidance to pay their tithing, to be financially prepared, to be spiritually prepared. I think the church tries to teach how to teach our children to be well rounded, and to be educated spiritually, educationally and financially.

DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE ROLE DIFFERENCES THAT THE CHURCH MAY TEACH YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTER?

Well, they are different. I think... I know they are taught different. I want them all to know that they can accomplish anything they want to do. I want them all to know that the most important thing for them to do in this life is to marry a good person, have a family and that that's a top priority for them. And I don't think I care if they're a mailman or a doctor as long as what they're doing they feel good about and they're happy about and, for my sons, I want them to be able to provide for their families. I want my daughter to be educated enough that she can take care of herself if anything should happen in her marital situation. (What about traditional roles?). I think my sons need to know how to bake and iron, and I think the church would say, yeah, you're right, I mean they head off on a mission if they are lucky enough to want to chose that and I hope they don't end up in any kind of trouble, because its a hard thing for them to do. They need to know how to bake, and cook and iron and clean, and do all the things a woman needs to know too. I want my boys to contribute to the home as much as their dad does, they have that example. (My husband) cooks and cleans, and takes care of the home and I can change a tire on a bike if I have to, do you know what I mean? We through the years of marriage have... Every time we have a baby we go through who's the most picked on syndrome and then the chips start to fall and we take on different tasks assigned to us, and its not really a this is yours and this is yours and this is yours and this is yours, they kind of just fall that way, but if he's not home I can sure change a tire if it needs to be fixed and if I'm not home he can sure fix dinner. So they need to know it all and then in your relationship with your spouse you decide who's going to cover what.
DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR VOICE AND OPINIONS ARE SUFFICIENTLY NOTICED IN THE AFFAIRS OF YOUR CHURCH?

I feel like we have enough voice. I don’t have a problem with that, I know a lot of people do, but my feeling is just that you know its a partnership and men have priesthood power, yeah and great and that’s a good thing to have, but a woman has the power for creating life and it takes two to do that, it takes a partnership, a priesthood holder and a woman to conceive a child, you cannot do it without a spouse. Its a total partnership. There’s a lot of concern in the church about unrighteous dominion. I don’t feel that in my home, I haven’t seen that a lot in my neck of the woods, but I don’t have a problem with this, I don’t feel like I’m any less powerful because I’m a woman.

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT FEMINIST OBJECTIVES FOR WOMEN?

I think some of the things they started out doing were great (like?) a single woman that’s struggling to take care of children in a single home needs to get paid for the same work, their right to vote. But I think what has happened is in most revolutions, when somebody is trying to obtain a right it was a we not me kind of thing, originally. It was what was right for the people, not what was right for... Not for selfish reasons. I think the most.. I don’t know and I don’t even want to get into the issue of abortion, but some of the things that they’re trying to fight for their right now, saying more of me not thee, more selfish kind of reasons, and I’m not sure that’s something to really battle for, does that make sense? (How do you feel about women choosing a professional life over a family role?) I don’t know what their situation is, so I don’t have a judgement. I don’t know if they’ve never been asked to be married or if they have just chosen that because that’s their passion or, you know, maybe that is their mission in this life. (Do you see any differences between status of married and single women in your own Ward?) I’m trying to think of any single women, I mean I know there’s few but they’re still young, I know we have widowed women and they have their little elderly clique, if you want to call it that, but they take care of one another and kind of check on one another. I’m sure there are women in our ward that are single and I don’t maybe know it. I cannot think of one right now. Everybody’s married (laughs), no, and we don’t really have single wards anymore either, but I guess they have accommodated to that but usually that was a younger crowd.

ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY CONFLICTS IN YOUR LIFE IN BEING LDS?
Yeah, wearing shorts in the summer with my garments. I started to look... In Florida, you know, I’m like gol, these things are hanging down to here, and then in Utah I don’t care because you know that’s family underwear, but in Florida I was doing a little wondering if people were saying, oh look what that girl has on, you know. That’s not really a huge challenge is it? The real big stuff is not hard for me, like wondering if you’re being honest in everything you do when you fudge a time for a med that you give, you know, and you can’t remember, you know, you think am I being honest in everything I do. Probably, but you know, I think some of those little things we rationalize and wonder if we are really doing that commandment justice or not.

YOU IDENTIFIED ISSUES ABOUT SOCIAL CLASS WHEN WE LAST LOOKED AT ADVERTISEMENTS. YOU HAVE ALREADY IDENTIFIED YOUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD AS UPPER MIDDLE CLASS, BUT WHAT DOES CLASS MEAN TO YOU IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

I think its way more important to me than I’d like to admit. I don’t know why that is, I think its just a society kind of thing. I don’t know why we get caught up in that, why do we get caught up in that? But we do, its bred into you from the time you’re very young. Is it from the media or is it from your family? Or is it from... I’m comfortable here, I probably wouldn’t be comfortable any higher up or any lower down. But how do we decide that’s where we belong? I don’t know. (What is that you think would make you uncomfortable either higher up and lower down?). I’d probably lose a value system and maybe that’s where it comes from you know, the value system. I’d lose... The children my children play with are good kids and I may not have that. I guess it boils down to they have the same values I do. I mean that maybe really wrong for me to say my child may not have as good a friend in a lower class, because they’re little kids, but they’re taught different values in their home (what values for example?) Maybe that they wouldn’t be... I just maybe feel like there’d be a higher chance of my children getting involved in drugs or stealing or being deceitful in some ways. Whether I feel the same way on the opposite scale, you know, a higher class, you know maybe the pressures from being in that situation. Well maybe here I just feel like I have a sense of myself and that I can be true to myself and I wouldn’t be able to be lower or higher. I’ve never tried it, maybe I’d be fine lower or higher. (You mentioned earlier feeling excluded from the community in your first apartment...) Yeah, nobody cared who we were or what we were. This is one example and maybe this is why I feel this way. They didn’t even care enough about us as people, but there was a family that lived in an apartment across the street, I don’t even
know what nationality they were but they weren’t... I don’t know that that makes any difference, but they all had one really nice car but didn’t have the money to buy the gas from the car, so they would steal it from the cars in the parking lot to drive this car, and we kept on noticing that our gas tank was empty and we... The only reason we knew it was this family is my husband said, okay, great, I’m going to leave them a can of gas out there then, with some sugar in it, and so he left it and we bought some locking gas caps, that the next day they couldn’t get their car going. My husband went out and helped them push it into the driveway and said, gosh, it sounds like you’ve got sugar in your gas, you know, because... And that’s (my husband), that’s his aggressive... Probably wasn’t right but that was a way to teach them a lesson. I just thought like, yeah, exactly, nobody valued us as a person, nobody took the effort to come get to know us, and we meant nothing to them except for that we were a kind of parking lot they could take gas from to drive their car. I didn’t know anybody, nobody ever took the effort (was this an LDS community?) I don’t know if it was or not, I mean I’m sure some of them were, it was here in Utah, in south Provo, which is kind of a iffy area, if you want to call it, but what the ratio of LDS people there I don’t know. And when you’re in an apartment situation people move in and people move out that quickly, you know. (What do you think makes the difference now?) I’m sure part of it was us, we were in school and working and not home, you know, I think like I said earlier your children make you meet your neighbors, they want to have little playfriends and its easier for children to make friends with people, its not hard for them at all, but as you become an adult its so difficult to reach out and put yourself on the line to meet another person. I think maybe it is was mutual kind of thing, we were busy and not interested in getting to know our neighbors and they weren’t really interested to get to know us.

WHAT SPECIAL CHALLENGES CONCERN YOU AT THE MOMENT?

Just look what our neighbors have done (points to a large storage building obstructing the rear garden view). It’s been really difficult because our neighbors are in our ward and its a conflict between them and four other neighbors surrounding them, and we’ve been trying to handle it as tactfully as we can, but I’m not married to a very tactful husband and, oh really hard situation, trying to be... Struggling with being Christ-like but not being taken advantage of, how you protect your investment in your home and community but without stepping on anybody’s toes, its impossible. (What has been the response to your concerns from your neighbor?) they’re just not nice people, they’re just... Its been a struggle. I went to try to talk to her to see if we could
just come to some kind of a understanding of one another and she was so angry with me, that we would even feel like we had the right to say that building was ugly, that we even had the right to... We had an appraisal done and it devalued our home 25-30 thousand dollars, and the marketability went from one in five to one in fifty because most people just wouldn’t deal with that kind of a building in their back yard. We just didn’t expect that when we bought the home, and we expected Orem city to protect our investment by their ordinances and laws, and we felt like they didn’t do that. And he’s in the political picture and we felt that may have had some pull in being able to do this, and felt like they just didn’t pay attention to us. So we’re taking a stand on it, and our neighbors, at the expense of these neighbors who didn’t want to work with us anyway. That said to me that they didn’t care about what they did to me as their neighbor, they only cared about themselves. And when I went to approach her about it that clarified it, she just gave me an ear full for about an hour and I didn’t go over there to fight, I just wanted to talk and I explained that to her, but she certainly wasn’t Christian or Mormon in what she told me, so, yeah, that’s probably my biggest obstacle right now. Nobody’s going to win.
“ALAN”

VERSACE

TELL ME YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AD

Its black and white, conservative. Pretty...it almost looks like a family except for (points to seated asian youth)...he stands out. I don’t know if...that draws my attention probably more than anything else, that there, compared to everybody else in the picture. I don’t know what they’re trying to say, I don’t know if he’s Asian or what. And then I’m drawn to this fellow because I’ve seen him in other ads, he looks familiar.

TELL ME WHAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THIS AD

Well I guess what I don’t like about it is what are they advertising? Are they advertising those clothes or are they advertising...what are they advertising!? I don’t know what they’re advertising (clothes, I think). I would have to assume that but...are all of their clothes black (laughs)? Yeah, it doesn’t inspire me to want to buy the clothes if that’s what their intent is.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU LIKE?

Not particularly. It doesn’t really do anything for me.

DOES IT HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

No, because it looks very European, and I’ve never been to Europe. I don't have any association with that...(how does European look?) Well, the architecture, and the building and the background. I guess the old...it almost looks continental. Its a continental look to me.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING IN THE AD WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

I think I would state in it somewhere that they’re clothing other than couture, because most people don’t know what that means, you know. Its just very ...its a picture and it has a name and that’s about it. What it is the smallest type, photographed by Bruce Webber. So!? Who cares!? A family album.
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THE AD?

I think they look fine. They are supposed to look like a family, but it doesn’t look like a family because you’ve got a mixture of ethnicity, I guess and trying to tie...where does the african american come from, or if he is african american, and the asian? Are they trying to say everybody’s a family or this a family or...this doesn’t pull together. No continuity.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THIS PICTURE?

Bleak. The colors, everybody seems to be either smiling or indifferent, but its the lack of color, all the black I guess. It doesn’t excite me that’s for sure.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING IN THE AD?

Maybe they’re trying to appeal to all walks of life, I don’t know. Very conservative and traditional values would be the best I could come up with. Its upper class, wealthy, just from the setting.

DO YOU FEEL IT REPRESENTS A PICTURE OF SUCCESS, PERHAPS?

No. It represents old money. Old money isn’t success. They hand it down. He’s (pointing to elderly man) probably the grandson of the original estate and these are his offspring, or family associations. Its old money which is not related to being successful.

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?

I guess I’d say I’m glad its not my family. I guess I don’t have a lot of respect for money that’s handed to people and I would think that old money would view...they’re conservative because they’re part of a social class and they’re locked into that lifestyle by society rather than by virtue and values they’ve developed due to life’s experience. They’re a family that have to maintain an appearance.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THIS AD HAD IN MIND?

If you don’t want to look like a nouveau riche you could wear their clothes and be part of the upper class or something. (what do you think is the difference between nouveau riche and upper-class?). Well, some people are trying to escape the stereotypical yuppie, upwardly mobile, nouveau riche...those who
have gained money quite rapidly and new money, and want to be part of this lifestyle. Maybe that’s what they’re trying to appeal to. I don’t know why people would want to be like that. I don’t. Some people just live by pretense I guess. In this add, they almost look like they’re all in uniform. Not very individualistic. Everything’s black, almost like they got back from a funeral.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU USE ADVERTISEMENTS?

Probably my motivation at looking at any ad is for specifications and information. If it doesn’t tell me something, I don’t usually look at it. I want to know what it is, the quality of it, its specifications, what it can do for me. I’m not a slave to fashion I guess. Its got to be functional, which is the way I am. What makes the difference in ads is information that’s provided. Like I’ve got a Vertex(?) watch. I would want to know what functions it has, what can it do. This is an altimeter, it tells me what the altitude is. It tells me what altitude is; that’s what I was looking for. What can it do as far as tell time, give altitude, temperature, those such things. Not just what it looks like. Some people are different, looks are everything. For me its the function.

CAN YOU THINK OF INSTANCES WHERE ADS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO YOU?

Yeah, when I get on the internet I wanted to find out the specifications on a watch, and I compared it and got a comparison between maybe a Casio and a Vertex and weighed the differences. So that’s what I’m looking for in an ad, information. (What about pausing over ads in magazines?) No, well, it depends if its something I have interest in. Now if its clothing I’m generally not going to look at it, I don’t care that much about clothing ads. (What about ads for luxury items?). Oh, its nice to look at but they’re not practical. I’m a person who’s pragmatic and don’t waste a lot of time wishing. It’s an image they’re trying to project, not an image I’m trying to project. If you buy a Rolex you’re buying it for one reason and that’s to present an image. There are probably a lot of quartz watches out there that are more accurate than a Rolex. If you buy a Rolex you’re buying it for one reason and that’s to present an image to say I’m rich.

WHAT’S YOUR OPINION GENERALLY ABOUT ADVERTISING?

I think it appeals to, its more focused on a market that they feel is more vulnerable to an emotional response. Impulse buying. It’s not directed at me per se because like I’ve said I’m pretty practical, pragmatic about things. And
if it looks pretty glitzy and so forth that doesn’t affect me. Its like I say, I’m looking for information. I want to qualify it rather than if its pretty, so what?

**JIMMY**

Oh, here we go! There’s information here.

**HAVE YOU SEEN THIS AD BEFORE?**

Yeah, of the ads this is probably the only one I’ve ever seen before.

**TELL ME YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AD**

They’re obviously going after a marketplace, the suburban housewife, I guess you’d say. I know that GM and all the manufacturers are trying to capture a marketplace, and those are very popular items. I think they’re trying to appeal to male or female, they market that way, they’re obviously trying to appeal to the independent woman, the equestrian sports type, probably all aspects of life, of the upper suburban lifestyle. (How do you define upper suburban lifestyle?) Well, probably upper income, making $50-100,000 a year, something like that.

**WHAT ASSOCIATIONS DOES THIS AD HAVE FOR YOU?**

Suburbia. I mean, they’ve got planning styles, Okay, she’s using it to haul stuff for the garden, for the house, to get up to the trails with the horse, get frames, you know just all-round trying to get the impression across to maybe a housewife that these are the types of things that the Jimmy’ll be able to facilitate in their lifestyle, skiing, four-wheel drives. Its a utility vehicle.

**IS THERE ANYTHING IN THIS AD THAT REMINDS YOU OF YOUR OWN LIFESTYLE?**

Well, this is more addressed to a suburban housewife, but I mean I would not be opposed to owning a Jimmy because I like a four-wheel drive, I have a four-wheel drive, and the economy of it, its a smaller version of what I’ve got. But, this is trying to make an association with what she does, pursing masters in clinical psychology, husband Mark.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD? OR DISLIKE?**
I think it's done well in that it's set back, it makes the Jimmy stand out with the background. It's well organized. It's putting the items that they're trying to get an association with in the forefront and making the Jimmy stand out with the color contrast. It's almost a monochromatic tone against a colored background.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE?

No, I think it states its purpose. It's a utility vehicle, something to get things done in economically and that's the purpose of that type of vehicle.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER IN THE AD?

Just a suburban housewife, maybe a doctors wife or something like that. Or a professional. She's pretty typical, that's what I see, I see a lot of...I guess you'd say she's middle aged, a baby boomer. At the time of their life where they're trying to get...maybe a little bit conspicuous consumption.

WHAT ABOUT THE AD'S ATMOSPHERE

The colors give a warmer feeling, country feeling.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING FOR THIS AD?

They're trying to appeal to success coming... this is a payoff for hard work and saying I've arrived and that type of thing after say, pursuing a masters in clinical psychology, she's in the mode of upwardly mobile, maybe, still climbing.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THE AD HAD IN MIND?

They're definitely trying to appeal to the professional person, probably more...stating pursuing masters in clinical, they're intelligent, they're trying to appeal to a professional clientele, particularly female, that are independent, intelligent and more nouveau riche.

DO YOU RELATE TO THAT DEPICTION OF LIFESTYLE?

Not really. I'm not an equestrian. I guess there would be some little more
pretension there. And some people are trying to say all the time, I’ve arrived, I’ve got lots of money, I’m upper class, that type of thing. That doesn’t appeal to me because I dislike being made to feel like I’m not wealthy and therefore even if I had money, I wouldn’t want to make others feel uncomfortable when they came to my home or make them feel like, I don’t know... Some people kind of get off on flaunting their money and looking rich and that. I think that has a tendency to cause resentment among other people, and ostracizes them, maybe a little snobbish I guess.

WOOL

WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

Probably just trying to make the statement that wool is comfortable. Something that you can live in and trying to dispel some myths about wool.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE WAY THE AD IS TRYING TO DISPEL THOSE MYTHS?

If indeed the clothing they’re wearing is wool, they’re not wearing anything underneath it, its on their skin, they’re out on a spring day, lying on the grass and doing things that you would normally be wearing cotton for (laughs).

WHAT ASSOCIATION DOES THIS AD HAVE?

Young and in love. Its an effective statement about wool being comfortable.

TELL ME WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT THE AD

Its simple. The clothing is simple, something to put on. Not trying to make a fashion statement, I don’t think. Its not distracting by looking at some beautiful model’s face or his face, they’re pretty much...not hidden, but they’re not the main focus of attention. Its not trying to say if you wear these clothes you will look like them. That’s the way it is - what you see is what you get.

IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THE AD YOU DON’T LIKE?

Not really.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD WANT TO CHANGE?
No.

TALK TO ME ABOUT THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD

(thinks for a long time) I wouldn’t say there’s any particular class distinction. They’re probably middle of the road.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS MAKING AN APPEAL TO?

Oh, probably more conservative. His haircut, the clothes he’s wearing. Maybe a little more country clubbish, but I don’t know. That’s not, I mean I could wear that. (What do you think about the couple making out?) Oh, I don’t know that they’re making out, they’re not lip-locked and you know - its actually very innocent, its not selling sex, they’re selling lifestyle, they’re selling life itself. You know, this is an event in a day in life. Its not groping, its a kiss. (why do you think they would use that image in this ad?) I think they’re trying to say is that when you’re wearing this type of product you can enjoy life as it is and the clothing is not going to be in the way of you carrying out a day to day activity type of thing.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE CREATORS OF THE AD HAD IN MIND?

Well, because of the photography I think maybe they’re trying to create it as memory. These were the clothing we were wearing when we met or when we were in love or something of that nature, trying to kind of black and white romantic scenario.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ROMANTIC ELEMENT?

Well romance is something that’s always very appealing to anybody, and anybody that’s been in love they can say, yeah, I remember when we did that, we laid out on the grass, and kissed. I remember what I was wearing when I first met my wife, you know, that type thing. And clothes are kind of important. She remembers what I was wearing, and in fact I was wearing a shirt just about like that (laughs).

ANYTHING ELSE?

Well the framing of it, the brush strokes draw attention to the ye olde dress
The code, the text, the font they’re using is trying to say this was traditional belief, and that’s not the case any more. Wool was a different fabric and what it was perceived to be.

**WHAT CONNECTION DO YOU SEE BETWEEN THE COPY AND THE PICTURE?**

They’re trying to say its soft.

**BALLY SHOE**

**TELL ME WHAT THIS AD SAYS TO YOU**

Well, I probably wouldn’t give it a second thought because the shoe doesn’t appeal to me. That’s just a taste thing. They’re trying to portray that this is a party or dress shoe, and by putting it where it is, they’re trying to say you’ll stand out if you wear it. What’s interesting is that it’s cut off from in the picture...I don’t know what their purpose is in that. It doesn’t show him or anyone else in the picture wearing it. They’re just trying to say this is the type of shoe I guess you’d wear at this type of function. You know, probably a reception or a party, or a dance or something.

**WHO DO YOU THINK THE AD IS TALKING TO?**

Young urban professional I guess.

**DOES IT PROMPT ANY ASSOCIATIONS FROM YOUR OWN LIFE?**

No. I guess they’re trying to say its a comfortable dress shoe.

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE ABOUT THIS AD?**

I just don’t like the shoe (why?). I guess emotionally I wouldn’t wear it. I don’t know what type of person would wear that shoe. I mean its pretty much restricted to a one occasion type shoe. (Does Bally have any association?) No. Never heard of it before. Switzerland, they’re trying to break into the American market.

**WHAT ABOUT THE CHARACTERS AND VALUES IN THE AD?**

They’re having fun. I’ve always thought that when they use a black and white
photograph its to say it refers to a memory, a past event, a good time. In this case, when they got married or something, and memories evoke and emotional response. Typically, they’re happy times. Maybe they’re trying to make that association. If its a wedding or reception, everyone’s dressed to the hilt and you can’t tell what their class distinction is, they’re all dressed nicely or...a tux, or whatever. You don’t go around dressed in a tux all the time. Its probably trying to be a very generic, non, ...I mean I wouldn’t say this would be a wealthy man’s shoe. It’s a dress shoe, a slip on, probably very comfortable, probably trying to say you can wear it anywhere.
"ALAN"

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF, YOUR VALUES AND MOTIVATIONS?

Well, yeah that's, try to put that in a nutshell. I guess if somebody was trying to describe me, I guess you would have to say I have conservative values and that can be very encompassing. But on the other hand I am not by any means locked into a set mind set of values that would typically be understood as being conservative. I guess that's kind of vague because there are some things that I am passionate about which would not be mainstream conservative. I've always been very actively involved with, say, civil rights and I believe everybody should be given the same opportunity, regardless of race, creed, color, gender etc. And, I've always made it a practice to start everyone I meet at level ten. Some people start people at one and then you've got to prove yourself to me. I give everybody the benefit of the doubt and if at all possible try to maintain a ten. There will always be people who will disappoint you, but you have to live with that. As far as...I guess you would have to say I'm a thinking person. Like in advertisements, I like to be informed. I'm probably more affected by what I can understand and glean about something rather than how it affects me initially, you know, or emotionally. I'm not emotionally stimulated, but not to say that I'm cold hearted, like with my own family, its very important to me to communicate in all aspects of family. I guess you would say that our family is somewhat demonstrative, very caring about each other and our well-being. We have very close family ties, from my parents and to my own children.

WHY DO YOU HAVE SUCH A PASSION FOR CIVIL RIGHTS?

I guess you would say I'm a product of the sixties. In my more formative years I grew up in New York and watched Kennedy assassinated, and you can see the front page news of Robert Kennedy's assassination, and I was very much affected by Martin Luther King and, as a matter of fact the first book I ever read page to page or cover to cover was "Martin Luther King" by ??? King. I guess it affected me emotionally. I guess you could say I'm pretty black and white in my perception of the things I don't like. I just don't like injustice and
don’t want to be a person who wants to facilitate any injustice. I’d rather be one who is trying to equal the playing field, I guess.

HOW DO YOU FIND THESE VALUES FIT IN WITHIN THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH YOU LIVE IN UTAH?

Well, Utah typically was very isolated and as a result of that it has been somewhat ignorant of the values of other people, other cultures. I find that some of the people who are born and raised in Utah are ignorant of other cultures and ways of life and value systems, and they’re somewhat intolerant of other people’s beliefs. Rather than trying to learn about them and understand why they believe the way they believe, they just discount them and say they’re wrong, and we’re right, and they’re not, because truth... I find that truth is most cases and with most people the product of what they were taught and how they assess truth based on those values. Not to say they are right or wrong, that’s how they’ve been taught, that’s how they believe. Then there is what is called real truth and that’s not always the same thing as what people believe is true. I believe very strongly that you can’t understand another man until you walk in his own moccasins, you have to walk his walk before you can judge him.

WHAT VALUES EMPHASIZED BY THE CHURCH MOST CLEARLY SPEAK TO YOU?

That every man on the earth who has come here, was placed here, has the same life potentials as any other man. There was no pre-ordained or predestined results for any individual person. We are all given the same rights, powers, and potential as any other person, because we’re here. And I do not believe there were fence sitters. Everybody has to make a choice and we all made a choice to be here.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT ADVERTISING DEPICTIONS OF VARIOUS LIFESTYLES, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THEIR VALUE MESSAGES?

I see a lot of advertising, what they’re trying to do is to appeal to certain classes of people, social, economic appeal. The advertisers for sporting gear will all usually typically mainstream either ages 15 through 25, and they’ll have them dress in those type of outfits. They’re going after markets which are pretty much pigeonholed, and a lot of times that involves social status and class. I’ve been in advertising quite some time and I know exactly what they are going for. I was in some advertising for (named company), and they had
two different campaigns. There was one campaign for white bread meal toast ad and then there was a second ethnic ad campaign which was targetted to black people. So there was a separation of not just class distinction but race distinction and so I find the advertising medium to be very bigoted. Socially they are appealing and patronizing an unacceptable social statement that exists in our country (which is?) That we distinguish between class and wealth, and millions of dollars are spent researching socio-economic class and what markets to go after. They’re not distinguishing or determining whether its right or wrong, just that’s where the money’s at.

HOW DOES THE ACCUMULATION OF GOODS AS THEY ARE PORTRAYED IN ADS FIT WITH YOUR OWN VALUES?

It comes down to maturity I guess, but I’m not swayed so much by how things look socially or economically. I’m not going to buy a Lexus or BMW or anything like that. Its a lot of money for transportation which is not - its luxury and I like to ride in nice cars like everybody else but to spend an exorbitant amount of money on it just to say Keep up with the Joneses is not my cup of tea, and I do feel that people spend a lot of their conspicuous consumption, the games that people play to stay ahead of everybody else or either that or keep up.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO IDEAL TYPES REPRESENTED BY ADVERTISING IMAGES?

Measure up? I don’t. As a matter of fact it turns me the other way. I guess I resent it. I don’t like being manipulated, and that’s what a lot of advertising is, its manipulation and I think that’s most of what’s going on around me. I’m not really swayed by...I’m not easily impressed. But when I am impressed its generally for genuine values. I would be probably more impressed by someone who’s very very wealthy that wore a flannel shirt and jeans and drove a jeep rather than a Rolls Royce, or wore thousand dollar Armanis. That would impress me more than the other. I think its a flaw in character to have to try to flaunt your wealth. That’s the way I feel.

HOW IMPORTANT IS APPEARANCE WITHIN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Very much. A hundred years ago Brigham Young said the day would come when this valley, speaking of Salt Lake valley, that a man coming into the streets of Salt Lake would not be able to distinguish a latter-day saint from a
black dog's leg. I guess that meant the gentiles, and I think that's true. So we have adopted, we are not...latter-day saints are not distinguished any more for anything as far as appearance as far as I can tell from anybody else. Except for temple going mormons, you don't generally see them with sleeveless dresses or shorts that are too short, so that would be probably the only distinction you could find. Typically in the mix you would not find any differences. I think that advertising is very effective in how we...our dress standards. Not like it was a hundred years ago and they all wore, even out in the fields, were wearing heavy, dark, like black wool coats and jep shirts and hats and were completely covered from head to toe. Yeah, things have changed.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT AD MESSAGES TO BE DESIRABLE?

I guess it depends on the criteria. As far as women its to be immodest. Nope, I don't like that, and for men to be, to emphasize, machismo or you know superiority or masculinity, that's cheap and very shallow. Most of the emphasis that I see in advertising is very shallow. Rather than appealing to people's values they appeal to their most base instincts, and sex.

LOOKING AT ADVERTISING AS IT ADDRESSES MEN AND WOMEN, HOW WOULD YOU UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS?

A woman has to be glamorous, she has to be thin, sophisticated I guess. A man has to be successful, has to be built like Adonis, has to have, well, has to be the life of the party.

HOW DO YOU FEEL THESE MESSAGES COMPARE WITH WHAT THE CHURCH IS TELLING MEN AND WOMEN IS IMPORTANT?

I think the church is more emphasizing is that the greatest success you can achieve is in your own home and that if you place your values first within your own home and your own self-actualization in your relationship with Christ, that should be paramount before anything else. Success is not a bad thing, its just what you do with it and how much emphasis you place on it. Its a matter or priorities and our greatest emphasis in values should be placed on those things that will have the greatest consequences eternally in long term effects rather than short term effects. So, build up your treasure in heaven and not on earth and the rest of it will be provided for you.
HOW DOES THE CONFLICT OF MESSAGES PLAY OUT IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

Well, I guess my biggest priority is to make sure that my family’s successful in gaining a set of values will be long-lasting, and to avoid the appearance of pretension, trying to be something they’re not and I guess making sacrifices that I need to so that I can fulfil that. I had to make a decision seven or eight years ago whether to say in the corporate world and spend all my time on the road and seeking after the brass ring, gold ring actually, or which was more important to me, my family and my own personal fulfillment, so I left that world and here I am?

WHAT DIRECTIONS COME TO MIND ABOUT ADVERTISING FROM CHURCH LEADERS?

I know that something that I have adopted and that has been said in church councils is not to patronize R-rated movies, period. I draw lines in my life and we don’t see R-rated movies, we haven’t seen one in years. I won’t do that or I can’t expect my children not to do it if I’m doing it. I have to keep the same standards I expect them to keep. Not, because I’m an adult and I can do it and you can’t. The church makes statements about violence and pornography on television. What was considered soft pornography when I was a teenager is now mainstream dress code on television and in advertising today. Its not like it hasn’t gone unnoticed by the Church, and its standards haven’t changed compared to everybody else’s. This is becoming increasingly in conflict because the church is not going to change its standards so as the gap widens it (the church) will become more adamant and we will probably become more criticized because of it. But the church has never asked me to do anything that has caused me harm or detriment, so when they tell me to do something I do it.

YOU MENTIONED R-RATED MOVIES. WHAT ABOUT ROOM FOR ARTISTIC MERIT IN SUCH A WIDE SPECTRUM OF MOVIES THAT CARRY AN R-RATING?

No! I draw the line. Yeah, everybody says go see Schindlers List. Like advertising, advertising counts the dollar vote. The dollar is a vote. Every dollar stands as a vote and I will not patronize an industry that is in conflict with my own personal values. Therefore...I have, in actually drawing a line its a compromise, because there are PG13 movies which in my estimation should be R-rated and unfortunately its hard to decipher what is acceptable before you get there. My wife and I we walked out of PG13 movies because they just have to throw these things in there, so I don’t compromise, but because of that
attitude I find myself in conflict because sometimes the line isn’t good enough, and its probably going to change. Probably eventually we’ll have to draw the line at PG, and like I say the gap is continuing to widen as the adversary has continued to win with society, it’s become further and further separated.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE IMPORTANT ISSUES IN TERMS OF MEN AND WOMEN, THEIR SOCIAL EQUALITY AND PLACE IN THE CHURCH?

I guess in the church, I guess in order for the church to function properly there are certain rules that played, but its not a matter of class distinction within the church. There are differences in men and women. Anybody who says otherwise is ignorant. I mean, men are typically more straight-lined, from point A to point B and maybe a little boneheaded in what they see around them. They’re not as involved in the periphery. Women on the other hand are much more observant than men are, and I guess that’s partly why the church hierarchy, or church was set up the way it is because the men are the ones who are expected to get the job done and unfortunately because of that they seem to miss some of the emotional issues that are involved in their decision making. I think that’s where the women are there to kind of pick up the pieces for when...I think any good priesthood holder who would have a position in the church needs to have a wife to counsel him in his decision making. I don't think a wife should be left out of what a husband does. Obviously there has to be confidentiality in a lot of cases, but I don’t find a problem, its just a matter of identity. There has to be someone that has to openly make the decisions but from the time of Adam, Adam and Eve, they had to counsel each other and make the decision together now that they messed up, and what choice and what path they would take. I think that’s one of the big problems that we have, men taking the attitude that they have to make all the decisions and not have to counsel with their wives. That’s wrong. As far as equality and outside of the church and advertising, or whatever a woman who is in an occupation and has a position equivalent with a man should be paid the same. Work is work, whether its a male or a female if they’re doing the job they should be paid and compensated equally. That’s justice.
“BOYD”

WOOL

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS AD BEFORE?

No, I haven’t.

TELL ME YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD

It doesn’t have anything that makes it really jump out at me, just that, I guess first off looking at it I’m not sure what they were advertising, I had to read it twice to figure out what it was. Obviously its sweaters that they’re wearing, made of wool and you don’t have to wear something under that. The rules have changed.

DOES THE AD PROMPT ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN YOUR OWN LIFE?

No, not really I don’t think. More that I think its saying, well just the way that it puts it, ye olde dress code, the old rule was that this wool was and now the new rule, and they try to portray it I think in the accent of the day where they always throw in sex with it, you know and that kind of stuff. And yet maybe they’ve put it in a black and white photo to make it look old as well, that you can have the old code with the new code mixed together. (What does the appeal to old and new codes say to you?) It doesn’t bother me, they say never reveal your figure to the opposite sex and the picture doesn’t really reveal either their figures too much, any more so than what you see in everyday life. They’re both fully clothed.

TELL ME SOME THINGS THAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE AD

I’m not a big fan of black and white ads, I don’t think they spur me on, yet they use the red type and that’s what draws me in. Its a relaxing picture, it puts you in mind of other thoughts or dreams which you might have done or would like. More of a romantic...I don’t think it pulls those emotions really good, its real subtle. (Dislike?) Well, I’m not sure what it’s advertising except that you can still wear wool but it doesn’t have a name on here you know, you don’t know who its an ad for, obviously just the wool industry probably, but no name brands, you can’t really get a look because its in black and white you
can't tell colors or how it looks because they're lying down too, you don't get a really good look at the whole thing. And if I was shopping for clothes this isn't an ad that really catches me. I mean it really depends on what you're shopping for, but if I was looking for a sweater, the ads saying, yeah, you don't have to wear a shirt or anything under this but I still would. Whenever I wear a sweater I always wear a shirt under it because I prefer that look, and wool has the reputation of being itchy.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING IN THAT AD, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE?

I have it in color instead of black and white, and then maybe so that you can see what they're wearing better. Of course that's not so much what they're advertising, the look of a particular sweater, but you can wear it next to your skin, and that's what they're advertising, they're very close to each other and obviously nothing on underneath.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

I think they portray to me young professionals, mid thirties, successful, obviously nice clothes, not only the sweaters but the nice pants he wears, he wears the sweater pulled out, and even the way that they wear their hair, that they're middle to upper income, maybe single, if you look close she doesn't have a ring on. (Do you identify with the male character at all?) Maybe just a little bit just from age, but not a lot really. I would never wear... just the way he has a pull up on his sleeve. I think the woman is similar to the male, obviously single, kind of yuppie, they're both attractive.

WHAT VALUES DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING?

I think what they're trying to say is people who have time to go out into the park and have fun wear wool. If you wear wool you don't have to worry about getting on the ground. And just where its talking about the rules I think a lower income don't really have dress code rules. You buy whatever you can afford. Those that have money can do whatever they want and be in style kind of. That's what they're projecting, styles of changed, rules have changed. Definitely a middle upper class. It's associated with having free time, fun loving, time alone, that's what you wear.
IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU USE ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

I don’t a lot, I don’t read a lot of magazines. I watch quite a bit of TV, newspapers. I look for stuff from magazines that are specifically for clothing, though, when I do, and that’s why I think I like to see the style, the full outline of what it is you’re looking at. But if all they’re selling is wool then the ad probably works okay, but I don’t think advertisements plays a huge role, but this one doesn’t even have a brand name.

WHEN YOU SEE ADS REPRESENTING LIFESTYLES DO YOU FIND YOURSELF MAKING COMPARISONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFESTYLE TASTES?

Oh yeah, absolutely, that’s how trends start or fashions change, because I don’t go the store and I don’t go to the malls a lot, so its from seeing what’s popular. I usually am a little slower to jump on, if I see a trend starting I don’t jump right out and buy it, I wait until its been out for a while before I adopt that (why is that?) Oh, I’m slow to change, I don’t really care if I’m right up to date, I don’t always want to be way behind but kind of middle of the pack is the way that I adapt to. I’m not a real trendsetter.

CAN YOU THINK OF INSTANCES WHERE ADS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO YOU?

I think ads play a bigger part in bigger dollar purchases like a car, or big electronic kind of stuff. But smaller items, more of a brand name I think is where everybody is, you go to the store you see two items for sale, priced about the same, which one do I buy, the one that I’m familiar with, the name. I don’t look so much for information because so many products in their class are similar and the features that they offer, so its the look, yeah, if I have two items that I like, one I like better than the other one, but I’m not as familiar with, I’ll probably still buy it. The name brand only goes so far but if I have it forever... like I bought a personal stereo just last week for my wife, you know kind of looking at price, there were three or four in the same price range. I ended up buying the one that was not the name brand because I liked the way that it looked better. You know, I wonder well is it as durable maybe, but I bought it anyway.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS FOR LUXURY ITEMS, ROLEX, HAND TOOLED SHOES, EUROPEAN SPORTS CARS ETC?

I like to look at ads for those kinds of things, not that I’m pricing it, just what they have in the ad, they’re usually taken in glamorous places. I definitely
pause, but mostly just for the look and to see what’s different about it, you
know like a Rolex watch versus one you pay $25 for. But even though I could
probably afford a Rolex watch I would never buy one, not now. Its really more
upper class, at least for me. If I bought one it would be for pride, not that it
keeps better time or anything, but its pride, by wearing this people see me
with it on, what’s their opinion.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT ADVERTISING GENERALLY?

I think more and more advertising gets more risque, more sex. I get tired of
advertising, maybe when I buy a magazine its 75% advertising so I have to sort
through all that to get to what you really want to get to. I think in some ways
its kind of a waste of money, especially more on TV ads where I see things like
the Superbowl, they spend millions of dollars for an ad and I wonder if they
really recoup that. If a company like Coke quit advertising for a year would
they really lose that much market share or would they just make that much
money back by not spending the advertising dollars.

YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU TIRE OF SEXUAL APPEALS, WHY IS THAT?

Oh, I suppose it doesn’t really bother me. I think maybe if my kids were older
it might, but they don’t take much notice now, but if they were teenagers, then
I would probably notice it more. I think I probably certainly stop to look at it
more, you know you see an ad that’s portraying sexuality I think I would stop
and look at it, and that’s what they’re trying to do so obviously it works. But
does it affect me buying something, probably not. I don’t make a lot of
impulse purchases. Probably made more when I was single just because I had
more discretionary income than I do now.

JIMMY

HAVE YOU SEE THIS BEFORE?

No.

TELL ME YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AD

I like it. More because its in color, you can see the car. If I was really
interested in buying a Jimmy I would probably also like to see more
information and see more of those kind of things to compare it. If I was
looking through a magazine I would definitely stop and look at this. They’re kind of portraying it, just from the way that lady’s dressed, they’re showing that it’s a luxury car, its not a lower end. This lady could buy what she wants and she bought a Jimmy.

DOES THIS AD HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

Just from the picture, or reading the copy or both of them together. (Whichever) Well, the thing that really catches me is the skis, because I ski and I’m a gardener, cause I like to do that kind of stuff. Hey, yeah, there’s room for skis in here, its a luxury thing with the paintings but can be a little more rugged.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE IN THE AD?

Well, I think its a more comfortable ad than the last one (wool) just because of its color. You can really see the product, I know that its a Jimmy that you see and not just a car in general. There’s no question about exactly what it is they are advertising. Its a little bit of an odd thing because its definitely...in most ads they try to make them look more real. This one is on a canvas which tells you its a staged photo. They try to portray this lady though, just the average, everyday person going about her life and this is what she chose to do it in. (Does she seem to you like an average everyday lady?) Not really, I mean she’s pretty dressed up. I don’t really see someone like that driving a Jimmy. Its a little lower end for what she could buy for that, or just the way that she’s dressed, the kind of things she’s saying here. Obviously they’re trying to make Jimmy more appealing to people aspiring to a higher end market image.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTER IN THE AD?

I don’t identify with her, she has a cat, a horse, she likes biking, skiing and working out, all of those fit that upper end yuppie kind of lifestyle, no kids, so all those things don’t relate to me, but maybe she works, you know, pursuing a masters degree. If she has a horse she maybe has a rich husband, you know getting a degree in psychology is the in thing to do, its socially acceptable. The saddle is not you know, to go ride in the corral, she has a regular riding saddle, a riding hat, a more expensive horse. But they try to make her seem ordinary because she makes her own jewellery. I think that’s a lifestyle that a lot of people like to have, those that don’t have would like to have, but its kind of a selfish lifestyle, she’s biking, skiing, working out, she has a husband and a cat.
If it were a younger lady then okay or maybe newly married, yeah, but she looks 40, so she chose not to have a family, and have a more selfish lifestyle.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ADS THAT MAKE APPEALS TO CLASS ASPIRATION?

I think they’re fine if they have to, if you don’t have a market that you’re going after, there are real definite breaks and most of them are more economic. And people that have more money generally want people to know that they have more money, so they’re not driving a small cheap car, they buy a more expensive car. What these ads mostly try to do though a lot of it is to try to get people to ride on the bubble, to try to get them to bump up. (To ride on the bubble?) Well, if you said that you kind of have a break at an income of $50,000, those above that have all the fancy stuff and those below it don’t, they’re getting those that are $45,000, $47,000, bring them up to the next level with this advertisement.

ARE THERE OTHER ASSOCIATIONS WITH CLASS THAT ARE NOT PURELY ECONOMIC?

Well there are but all of those have to run along lines of money, because sure you may love horses but if you don’t have money you can’t have nice horses. I think they’re all associated with money in some way.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY PUT THIS AD TOGETHER?

I think that all the different props that they have that they’re saying the Jimmy fits all your lifestyles, its luxurious, its a car that fits everybody. Trying to make her out to be like everybody. When it says she has a husband and a cat, no kids, its just a vehicle maybe for two with room to put all your stuff in it if you’re a very active person, you have all these things that you need to carry around and do.

WHO DO YOU THINK THE AD IS DESIGNED TO TALK TO?

That age group between 35 and 45, obviously women, where the previous one (wool) chose to have one of each.

BALLY

274
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS AD BEFORE?

No.

AND YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

First, I think that shoe’s really ugly. I would never wear that just because its ugly. Shoes are something that I’ve bought and spent quite a bit of money on before. I’ve bought nice shoes before, so I like doing that. You know its not a look that I’m comfortable with or would ever wear, so I would glance at that ad for a real short time. (What look is that?) The two-tone... I think a lot of things that cost a lot of money are really ugly and I would never wear them. Its also an ad out of Switzerland which they have different tastes in some things, so its an ad for them and their industry, but these are the kind of ads that you’d see in an upper end magazine, not kind of Good Housekeeping or something like that I wouldn’t think. So even though its advertising hey buy Bally shoes I think the shoe they chose for their model is... I don’t care for at all. The sleeker looking, little tassel I guess that’s the look that I like. I’ve never seen any shoe like that anybody really wear, its almost like a shoe that someone that was really poor would wear, because often that’s the way, either the rich wear it because they think its, you know beautiful, good looking. That’s certainly right on the trend, and that it maybe the kind of shoe I’ll be wearing in two years because I’ve seen enough people wearing it for it to grow on me and I’ll start to like it.

DOES THE PICTURE IN THE AD HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

No, I don’t dance. But its also saying maybe not just the dancing but hey they’re having a good time enjoying themselves, I assume he’s wearing Bally shoes. He’s out there having a blast and from that I would say more upper class as well, and that’s what they’re advertising, they’re not reaching out to me. I don’t think I’m their target market with this ad at all.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS THAT SEEM TO SPEAK TO PEOPLE IN A HIGHER CLASS THAN YOUR OWN?

It doesn’t bother me at all. It is certainly speaking to a higher economic class, but when I see an ad for something that maybe I like, like a very nice suit, or a tie that costs $200 or something, if I like that tie I’ll stop and look at it. And
clothes are something that I would spend money on. But even so, I could get a magazine like GQ and a lot of things that I see in there I wouldn’t wear. I just don’t like that kind of European style of thing or to be the first person out there with that style, maybe after two years it comes around to me. And I think a lot of people wear these things just because its the name value, it costs a lot of money to buy these and that’s all you can say about them. When I go to places where I see higher end people wear that, I think I would never wear that, even if I had the money they had, I would still not wear that.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BUYING DESIGNER LABELS?

I kind of have mixed feelings, it depends on what it is. Some things I think there’s better value and if you spend more money you get what you pay for, especially clothing. But not everything, like Levis, you can spend a $100 on a pair of Levis but I never would. Or like a tie you can spend $5 on a tie or $100. I would be more likely to spend $100 on a tie than on a pair of pants (why?) I think its the look. Levis are not dressy wear for work, you wear them to lay around in the house. They don’t say anything special. You buy them for comfort and if you spend $100 dollar for a pair versus $20 you get nothing more out of them. I suppose you can use that argument about a tie, but you can wear it with a nice dress shirt and a suit, its a focal point. It’s just one of those quirks about me I guess that I would spend more money on a tie than on a pair of Levis.

YOU SAID THAT YOU ENJOY BUYING CLOTHES. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR MOTIVATIONS WHEN YOU BUY NICE CLOTHES.

I think the reason that the reason that I spend more money on clothes is the look it gives you. It certainly makes you feel good if you wear nicer clothes. Its the first thing people see and people do judge you on what you wear. Like when I go to work and girls wear that 70s look I think are you wearing that because you think you look nice or just because its the style.

HOW DO YOU READ THE MALE IN THIS AD?

I don’t really like the picture of him. I don’t think he’s good looking at all, they’ve kind of got him pulling a funny face. I found more appeal in her just because she has a smile, she has pretty face. I wouldn’t like to be like him at all. I think the look is more European and it just doesn’t appeal to me, I don’t want to that kind of a look. You know when you read the copy and they talk
about hand crafted workmanship, styling, yeah I look for those type of things, but I would probably look more at the picture if I thought he had those shoes on.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY PUT ALL THESE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS TOGETHER?

Well, putting them all together, I guess you can never spend too much money on shoes, get the best, wear the best shoes when you’re wearing the best clothes and going out to have the best time, with your best girl. You know they have this girl in the background looking at them and smiling and she’s probably longing, hey I wish that I was her, dancing with the guy in Bally.

VERSACE

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BEFORE?

I have not, no. Looking at it I wouldn’t know what they were advertising. I don’t know if they are advertising like a photo studio or what, clothing? For me I’d have to be familiar with that name brand I think to know that’s what they were doing, because at first when I looked at all the ads I thought this was an advertisement for a photo studio that took family portraits.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS ABOUT THIS AD?

Oh, if they’re advertising clothing and its a black and white photo I can’t see anything I like except basic styles. For me I guess they’re going for some kind of a shock feature there, because they try to make this look like a family album, they have all these mixtures of different kinds of people and race, hairstyles.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE AD IS TRYING TO SAY?

I just think they’re going after some kind of a shock feature. And I don’t really like this ad. Its like they’ve run out of ideas to advertise their clothing so they’ve got the white girl holding the black baby, the guy with two earrings, kind of a punk hairdo look, and this guy with a new age look. Maybe they’re saying our clothes fit everybody. But they’re saying our clothes fit everybody and then they kind of throw it in to make it look like hey this is our family portrait, they have the older people in the middle and all the kids and
grandkids in the front.

YOU MENTIONED THE SHOCK VALUE, THE INTERRACIAL ELEMENT, HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

It doesn’t work for me at all, I’d look at it and say what are they advertising here. They wanted to say hey its okay for you know white girls to have black babies, men to wear earrings or hey our clothes look nice. That’s what I think a lot of advertisers do, what advertising’s gone to now, they don’t advertise their product any more, but more off the wall the better the ad is supposed to be now. They’ve gotten away from advertising a product. Just about everybody, well not everybody, but a lot them have gone after a shock feature or something. Maybe they think that will draw the attention and people will say oh I’m shocked. (Are you shocked?) No nothing really shocks me any more I don’t think. (Do you find the ad distasteful?) Well, probably down front they have the guy with the earrings and the white girl resting her shoulder on the black man’s shoulder and the white girl holding a black baby, those are the two biggest shockers that reach out and hit you, and I think they’re trying to go after something there. But I wouldn’t look at this and say I’m shocked, I can’t believe they do this. For me it just falls into that category of advertising that’s trying to do something. Or maybe ten years ago that would have been a bigger shock.

ARE THERE ANY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE PICTURE THAT YOU IDENTIFY WITH?

Well, just that we have family portraits taken and we all dress up and wear our nice stuff. To look at it its a family portrait which I’m not sure if its really supposed to be or not. Whatever we live through and whatever happens, trials and struggles in our lives, if they were really embarrassed about something then they wouldn’t have a family portrait, no we don’t want to have this keepsake, you know. But they obviously feel good enough that yeah, lets get everybody together.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE IN THIS AD?

I would probably take out the girl holding the black baby (because of shock value or something else?) Well not that its shock value more socially unacceptable to me. You know even if she had her husband with her, they kind of leave it to say to interpret she’s had a baby out of wedlock and its black and there’s no father with her. You know that happens more and more
and is more and more socially acceptable but in my life its not socially acceptable, not because I think I'm racist just that it's easier... You think of this child growing up and what children have to go through, and it works to no one's advantage. Not that I don't mind what other people do so much for myself. I wouldn't feel bad if I saw them in the mall together, but I wouldn't want it in my family, I wouldn't want to be associated with it. The same thing with the guy with the earrings, the guy wearing two earrings. I don't see why guys wear earrings, its something I would never do. In fact its everywhere around you, you can't go any place without seeing that. You know it used to be fairly big shock value a few years ago (what does the earring say to you?) Mostly, and I've asked myself that before, why would you do that, you know, just because you think it looks pretty or good looking or tougher. I think its more different people for different reasons. A pride issue for some, or others a shock value, rebellion kind of thing. Others just to fit in. You see more and more of it in prominent people like sports figures do it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CHARACTERS IN THIS AD?

They're very wealthy, but I think that's almost in every ad. They always try to make...if I buy this I will come across as being very wealthy. It looks like they're standing on the steps of a big mansion, a very elegant kind of look to all of them. The guy's look very slick and upper class. And even the dresses, you know, they look very expensive and high class. (What do you think about high class?) Its fine, in some ways everybody tries to reach into that if they can, maybe you don't own a million dollar home but you can buy an expensive dress or something like that. Basically its pride to distinguish yourself from others, and the way it makes you feel, that's why you buy it. I could probably go another three or four years and never buy another piece of clothing because I have enough to wear, but you do just because you want to keep updated and you don't want to be seen in the same stuff everyday, you feel self conscious about it. People love to watch upper end shows about the rich and famous, what they do, how they dress, how they act. (Do people like this have an influence on you?) Oh you notice the way they act and interact and you try to imitate those kind of things.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND WITH THIS PARTICULAR AD?

Just looking at the ad it was difficult to know what they were advertising. Its definitely supposed to appeal to a higher lifestyle. I look at ads very quickly,
some people get in them but if I don’t understand it or the picture doesn’t appeal to me I will just ignore it. Because of the size of this ad too, its a centerfold, I might look at it and then I’d move on.
“BOYD”

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

HOW DO YOU IMAGINE YOUR FRIENDS, PEOPLE WHO KNOW YOU WELL, WOULD DESCRIBE YOU?

Oh I think the would say that I’m funny, good sense of humor, more laid back, not a lot of things make me upset, pretty easy going, and generally overall fairly nice, I think is how they would describe me.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR MAIN MOTIVATIONS?

My family is important and my friends are important, I think I ...I don’t know that I’m really driven towards things. It kind of depends, some things I’ll jump right in and just go and get done and finish and then there are those I put off forever. I’m not one of those people that makes lots of lists, or has lots of goals. I just do the things that need to be done and go ahead just because I want to get it done. I prioritize and move things back each day, and those that aren’t important... But I like to have a lot of fun and I love to golf and those kind of things, I think those kinds of things motivate me. You know, I can’t do this unless I get this done. The nicer things motivate you to work harder, so if I can’t afford it now if I work a little harder, those kind of things.

DO YOU FEEL PASSIONATE ABOUT ANYTHING?

I don’t know if I really feel passionate about anything. Nothing really makes me mad, you know a topic or anything. I think that rather than get mad about things I find humor in things. When some people a topic really sets them off, like “that upsets me, you’re attacking this belief I have” and to me I just take that more as humor.

DO YOU PARTICULARLY IDENTIFY WITH ANY LDS VALUES?

Family values, morality value. I think that’s a big strong thing and I think, you know, if you said does that make me mad, I think our society’s morality or morals are definitely, you know, gone and maybe that’s maybe the route of a lot of problems. But it doesn’t make me mad. Those things don’t make me mad if someone attacks my values, but those are more my stronger values, that
family is important, kind of having a faith or a belief in something. When people just live one day at a time I think it almost hurts society, they don’t really have any responsibility to anybody. I think it just really builds on the moral value thing that you’ll just kind of decay, you know, if you don’t have that strong will or morals in your life. In business practice for those kind of people its more of an I thing. That’s maybe another value, something that I think about often and talk about often, finances. I mean those kind of values go back to my church background, stay out of debt, live within your means, that’s another thing that can really hurt society, credit card debt, live today and we’ll pay that off tomorrow. But those things don’t make me mad.

DO YOU PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM UNWELCOME OUTSIDE INFLUENCES IN ANY WAY?

Well, I don’t think that you can. I think some people try to at home or school, being real selective with friends and people that you associate with. I don’t think you can really do that. There are certain guidelines you can follow, the kind of movie that you watch, you have that control, the language that you use at home and how you handle things. Kids and people are going to go out into society, school or wherever and they will bring these things home, but if you’re open and can talk about them, ask why, and I don’t agree with that or that’s right or why we do, what we do, compared to what others do, and what we believe, why we think this way is better than others. That’s how I handle those things. We can be sheltered to a small extent but you can shelter too much. You need to opportunity to figure it out for yourself.

YOU MENTIONED CHOICE OF MOVIE AS ONE MEANS OF CONTROL. DO YOU HAVE ANY FEELINGS ABOUT THE CHURCH’S DIRECTION NOT TO WATCH R-RATED MOVIES?

I feel fine about it. Its no problem whatsoever. And the reason that I do, I think they’re wrong, but you can take some PG movies and say this is worse than this movie, and I think some people try to say this is rated R because, and then it maybe language or it has this one little thing. But the reason I don’t have a problem with that, and I think its like other kinds of things the church does, because its a faith thing. There are blessings for just following directions. One I can relate to is that several years ago the church used to ask us to pay ward budget, and you don’t any more. They just stopped it. Well, from the ward budget was where you... where wards can have a lot of extra money, the more money you pay the more money you have for youth
conferences and fun things, and those kind of ended when funds became very limited. Some families said, well, I'll just continue to pay that. I have lots of extra money, let me you give you a $1000 and then my kids can go on these things. But to do it on a faith thing, its a matter not so much about money as it was faith. Its not what everyone can understand, but its a matter of faith to live these small principles.

DO YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF IN CONFLICT WITH CERTAIN CHURCH TEACHINGS AND YOUR OWN PREFERENCES?

No. I really don’t. I guess I’m fairly conservative. I still think that the church gives us lots of latitude. I don’t feel its a real limiting kind of thing in our lives, that there’s all these rules that you live by. All the rules are good for us, but I still think there’s lots of opportunity to be individual and do your own thing.

DO YOU HAVE ASPIRATIONS FOR YOURSELF?

I don’t think I have a big goal sitting out there that I’m still waiting to achieve. I think that I have already achieved a lot of what my goals would want to be. To own a home, to graduate from college was a goal, to have a family and have a home. Those things I’ve done. Now I guess its just provide and try to live within your means. And I think maybe just long range, not to let life get me down, keep it enjoyable for me to everyday get up and go to work. If not, that I could have the means to quit and do something else. I don’t want to be so tied down that I lead a mean existence.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU AND GIVES YOU A SENSE OF GROWTH AND PROGRESSION?

For me its sports. I love sports, I love golf, snow skiing in the winter, water skiing and golf in the summer, those kind of things keep me happy and rejuvenated. I like to do yard work and gardening, those kind of things, just working around the house, little projects, fixing things. Some people dread them. I look forward to them and look for, search them out. And just to have the time to do those kind of things, those are what I try to do on the weekend when I have free time. I think church falls into that too, if you go to church in the right frame of mind, it can be a rejuvenating with friendships, spiritual part of it kind of stuff.
YOU MENTIONED THAT FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU. TELL ME HOW YOU THINK THEY CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR LIFE

I have three or four good friends that I’ve had since high school, that I’m still good friends with. I see two every week, some I see almost every day. When I do things like golf and skiing I do it with them. These friends aren’t for me just casual acquaintances. I think its true friendship, where at a minutes notice you would do for them and they would do for me, to help in any way you can. These long lasting friendships are an out that you can share your frustrations or anger, or joke. I think I can make friends easy, but I don’t have lots of new friends that I’ve met in the past year or two say, that I spend a lot of time with, because I continue with these older friendships that I have.

WHAT ASPIRATIONS MIGHT YOU HAVE FOR YOUR FAMILY?

I think mostly that my family is happy, that my kids can kind of come home and its kind of an escape, not a dread. And after they’re married and go away that they want to come home. Even when they reach college age that they would want to live at home or be home. Because that’s the way it was in my house. Some of my friends would say I can’t wait to graduate high school and then I’m out of here. I didn’t feel that way, I always felt comfortable. And to just have my kids be happy and successful, whereas so many people are so unhappy and just in all kinds of trouble and stuff. But I don’t think you can just hope that. (What does successful mean to you?) Well, I think everybody defines that different. Basic success for me is just being able to provide the basic necessities of life. Everybody would probably love the opportunity to live in a million dollar home, but a one hundred thousand dollar home still provides your needs for you. Just being able to be successful enough that some of the daily struggles are not constantly on my mind, like unemployment, having the personality to get a job. But for them if being successful means being a doctor then I hope that they would have the means to achieve that.

ON A PERSONAL DIMENSION, HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE SUCCESS?

I think success in your personal life is just having friends and being happy with yourself and your life. So that you’re not always wanting more or wishing... looking at others and saying I wish I had that. I guess we all know people that are always unhappy. Success in your personal life is just being happy or satisfied with where you are at. (How do you feel when you see peers who are materially better off than you?) Certainly I think we all have peers who have
more than us, but the older you get the more you realize everything that we
get comes from some sort of sacrifice. They may have things but they have to
work a little harder and there’s always a certain amount of luck, its lucky they
get that job or lucky they got this. So I think if you’re looking at what other
people have you have to think that its because of the price they paid, and
they’re still paying on it too. If I truly wanted that I probably could afford, if I
want to pay for it the next forty years, you know. And that’s something that
my wife and I decided not to do. We don’t go into debt, we don’t own a credit
card. Whatever you see here we paid cash for it. There’s almost a certain
satisfaction and we still have money to go to the movies this weekend if we
want to. But there’s a trade off, I think, for everything. Most people who have
a lot of possessions earned it, they worked a lot of hours, they chose the kind
of job that took them away, travel and things which pay more, but all things
come with a price, its just how much you want to pay.

WE LOOKED AT ADVERTISEMENTS AT OUR LAST MEETING AND WE SAW
DEPICTIONS OF LIFESTYLES. DO THOSE LIFESTYLES INFLUENCE YOUR OWN
LIFESTYLE ASPIRATIONS?

I think that, and this is a big generalization for sure, but the more money
people have the busier they tend to be. They go to more functions, dinners,
balls, the kind of things these advertisements had in them, they have more
toys, boats, trailers, campers which take them away more, generally busier.
And I’m very comfortable to just come home from work and be home, eat
dinner, watch a little bit of TV. I’ve seen that battle. When I was single and had
a fairly good job I would do more of those kind of things. Do I miss that? No.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SEE YOURSELF AS DIFFERENT FROM SOME OF THE
CHARACTERS IN THOSE ADS?

Well, the one that advertised the Wool, the man, the woman on the lawn I
related very well with. The others with the black and white Versace and the ad
with the shoe are much more upper class, stuffed shirt, more formal in
everything they do. Fake, somewhat. The ad for the shoe, the dance, kind of a
fake thing. I don’t go out dancing in a tuxedo and all fancied up. Is that a
lifestyle that I am longing for? No. I would rather wear my levis and golf shirt
and just go out and golf and those kind of activities rather than all formal and
dressed up. (What does fake mean to you?) Well, the whole thing, you put on
your fancy shoes, your suit, and look happy and all is well and its probably
not.
WHAT SPECIAL CHALLENGES DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE AS A MAN IN TODAY’S SOCIETY?

Boy, I don’t know if there are any. Everybody always talks about the challenges of being a woman in today’s society. The challenges I have in the workforce, there’s quotas, limitations that people have, I think you have to be more careful with what you do, that you’re important to the company or whatever you do. It used to be if you got a job that you were set for life, but now your job can be gone so fast, average what five or six different jobs in their lifetime, different careers. You realize that that is probably going to happen to you. But I don’t think there are any real big concerns in being a man in society?

WHAT ABOUT WOMEN, THEN, DO YOU SEE PREFERRED ROLES FROM CHURCH AND ADVERTISING?

The church is very vague on that, preferred roles for women. They don’t say women can’t work, but if you can be at home with your children then do so. Its that same thing, if the income that your husband makes is enough for you to buy a comfortable house and to provide, then do that, but if to buy a luxury house you have to work too then your priorities are messed up. But if it takes both of you to live in just a comfortable house then I think that’s okay, to provide basic essentials. But if you’re working to pay for the boat and the cabin, then that’s what my personal interpretation of what they’re meaning. My manager’s a woman, my director’s a woman. Both are very good at what they do, and I don’t have a problem with that. Maybe people who are a little bit older who didn’t have that for most of their working years, that’s where the problem is. (What do you feel about the argument that women need a career to remain stimulated?) I think for some women that is probably true. But if they try to put that on society as a whole you can’t do that. It totally depends upon what each individual woman’s goals or aspirations, definitions of success are. I think success comes because something has to give some place, and yeah I have a successful career but my home life is suffering, then that’s what suffers. But if my home life is great then my financial life suffers a little bit. There is a trade off for everything. It’s what you want to do. Many of the women I work with have children, they go to day care all day, for some of them I think its a bit of a necessity, others its not, its just their lifestyle, and what they have.

And I think that’s bad for society.
HOW DO YOU FEEL TOWARDS ADVERTISING PRESCRIPTIONS TO BE DESIRABLE?

I think that its fine. I think that its good to look desirable. I think there are some limitations from that but everybody likes to look nice and to look nice for other people. I think if you look successful, you act successful. A lot of times what you wear determines on how you feel. If the boss has a tie on today watch out, because dress evokes a lot of different emotions in people, but I guess what else would I want to see advertised, if they advertised ugly things, would you be interested in those? And I wouldn’t be. (Desirable in terms of sexually desirable, then?) I guess that’s interesting because advertising says in order for you to be successful you have to evoke some kind of desire for sexuality. But I think people should be judged not on that but on their capability in the workplace, don’t judge me because I’m a woman but judge me on what I do. But that’s not how they advertise it in magazines. Being desirable has a huge effect, but personality plays into that a lot too. But how you dress can also affect your personality as well. It can affect your chances for advancement. You get noticed, you look more professional. Put that together with a good personality and good social skills then you have a very winning combination. Those that don’t learn that... If you see a woman who is more educated, they tend to dress well, their personality comes out more. And advertising teaches them that too, if you want something you go after it. If you’re a little more desirable its going to put you above the next contestant. And I think that’s true if they’re being hired by a woman boss. Whoever you hire is a portrayal of your success as a manager. These are the people who go out and represent your department every time they talk with people. You want them to represent you well.
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS AD BEFORE?

No.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD

I guess it discusses something about wool, that I wouldn’t, I mean its hard for me to see the relevance of never reveal the figure in the presence of the opposite sex, (reads). I’ve never heard anybody talk about wool that way and I don’t know that it would impress me to buy wool. It seems rather archaic, actually. I mean the lady is obviously baring a fair amount of skin, even though she is apparently wearing wool, so it seems like their message and the picture doesn’t coincide.

DOES THE AD HAVE ANY ASSOCIATIONS FOR YOU IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

Well, I mean the man is young and handsome and the lady is young and good looking and they seem to be having a good time, and they’re carefree and I assume that that’s... Oh, I see what they’re doing. As you look at this you see the rules don’t any longer apply, so apparently this is the old code this is the new code, and they’re applying the new code. Things that apply to me in my life? Other than I remember a time when I was young and vigorous and it looks like they are young and vigorous, but that’s about it. Would it prompt me to buy wool? Probably not.

TELL ME THE THINGS THAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE AD

The photography, I like photography and the fact its black and white and sort of like similar to the photographs of Ansel Adams and forth that stress black and white imagery, I like that. Maybe I was a little thick in not connecting the old message compared to the new down there. I guess just the picture is the primary thing that appeals to me (and the fact that it’s black and white, what impressions does that have for you?) I guess I would concentrate more on the figures in the picture rather than the color of grass and see that some of it was yellow here. It makes you concentrate more on the people. And what they’re wearing, I assume is wool, can’t tell. Again, I assume one of the things that
since you’re thinking of an LDS market why these people are amorous and maybe they are on the verge of having sex and so forth. I don’t know that that’s something that particularly crosses my mind and it doesn’t bother me that they are in that pose.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE IN THE AD?

Well, I guess I would try to make the association between this and this a little more obvious (old and new rules copy). If you look at an ad and you’re going through a magazine you’ll obviously look at the picture. I didn’t initially make the association, and so if you’re trying to say this is the old dress code and this is the new dress code and you should wear wool because the new dress code applies, this has to be associated with that a little more prominently.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERS THAT THE ADVERTISERS HAVE USED FOR THIS AD?

Very young, vital, nice looking, undoubtedly models. Most normal folks don’t look like these two people, but then again I don’t know that a middle aged man and woman in wool would sell wool, so. They look like yuppies (why?) well, they are both young, they are both well dressed, well groomed, they have the time to lay out on the lawn and frolic and not be in the office working so I assume that they have some disposable income that they can spend the time doing this. (How do you feel about yuppies values?) I was a yuppie at one time, I don’t particularly apologize for that, I think yuppiedom gets them some things done, it spurs people on to invent Microsoft and so forth. I don’t mind it, again she’s in modern day dress, is fairly scantily clad, the neckline is low. You can make out the outline of her breasts there, so it assumes that her morals are not puritanical, but again that doesn’t particularly bother me.

WHAT OTHER VALUES DO YOU SEE THE AD APPEALING TO?

That these people are young, they have enough money to spend on the product, they’re carefree, that’s about it.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT APPEALS TO CLASS ASPIRATION?

Again, these folks are young, good looking, thin, and the same thing as cigarette ads appeal to. You know, those people are always young, thin, good looking and they don’t put somebody in there with emphysema and cigarette
burns on their fingers to try to sell cigarettes. And wool, why these people are young and that’s the kind of life that we are led to desire.

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU USE ADVERTISEMENTS IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

Well, I think that advertising is largely like throwing out a net in a big fishing boat and you trawl along and you catch some fish occasionally and occasionally you don’t. Advertising to me, if its very striking, if its an image that is something that I haven’t seen... There’s an ad on television for Jeep where they have three young people who throw a frisbee, and its been on so much that I’m getting somewhat tired of it, but initially it was a fairly striking ad, because you look at the scenery there you see again young people, they’re vigorous, they’re doing things that most of us would desire to do, and if you were in the market for a vehicle that allowed you to do those things then probably that would have you stop and consider the Jeep. Most advertisements I don’t particularly pay a lot of attention to. It really depends upon what I am in the market to do at the time that I look at the ad. As a male, perfume ads don’t do much for me. I don’t like snooty ads. This is more upscale but its not snooty (wool ad). So it really depends upon what I’m in the market for. Ads just by themselves, unless they have a significant visual effect as I’m thumbing through magazines I wouldn’t pay much attention. I bring up the Jeep ad because the things that they are doing grab your attention, and make you notice the product.

WHEN YOU HAVE NOTICED A PRODUCT, HAS IT AFFECTED YOUR BEHAVIOR?

Well, at my age in life, one of the things I want to do before my protoplasm stops working is travel, and so if there are ads that show places that are particularly exotic, or comfortable to visit, places that I’m not going to be ... For instance, the people in the Jeep ad are young, they’re in their walking shorts, they’ve driven their jeep up to this place, and that’s striking but I don’t want to do those things. So, if an ad shows a, I guess my reason for going to Kenya is because the ads that we’ve looked at have shown the Masai natives and the animals on their migrations and the tundra. And so I’ve looked at those ads and thought that that’s a place on earth that I haven’t been and I want to be there before I die, so that persuaded me to look into it and go.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS FOR LUXURY ITEMS?

They used to have an appeal, although Rolex watches have never affected me.
To me that seems like... You can tell the time with a Timex as easily as you can a Rolex, and it seems like kind of an extravagance which I would never buy. I've had a few people who I've known that have done that and they've not been the kind of people I would particularly want to emulate. In contrast, sports cars... I've enjoyed speed over the years, I've owned two Porsche’s and I've bought those, not from any ad, but I enjoyed the speed and things like Rolls Royce’s have never appealed to me or Bentley’s. They're a snooty kind of people’s car. I don’t particularly identify with those folks, but the Porsche with its sleek design and 150 mph top speed is something that used to appeal and still appeals to me a little bit. I guess I enjoy that kind of thing, speed.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT ADVERTISING GENERALLY?

It reflects the feelings of society at the time, its kind of fun to go back to old life magazines that are 40 or 50 years old, and see what was advertised and how it was advertised, because I'm sure that advertising is a reflection of the general mood of the times, and so I think its interesting to look at. I think it can be carried to extremes, Calvin Klein and his ads for young people who look like heroin addicts, I would never buy anything Calvin Klein ever and I wouldn’t buy it for my kids or family or anybody. And quite frankly because of those ads. If they wanted to buy Calvin Klein I would not buy it, because somebody who panders to that kind of image, who promotes that its something desirable, that’s reprehensible. And I think if there was a way, without a lot of effort because I don’t have a lot of time to devote to that, but I could write to somebody and have them stop buying their product I would do it. (So, do you think advertising has a powerful influence?) Oh sure, I think it does. I think Joe Camel and all of the hearings that have been held about Joe Camel and his influence on getting young people to smoke, and the glamorous image of young people when they smoke... You never see anybody in the last throes of life just before they die, as they’re gasping for air because they’ve smoked for 40 years, you never see that. Its always the young people, who are vital, who are enjoying life because they have a cigarette in their hand. I think the danger part of advertising is much more a problem with the young than the old. I think by the time you reach 50 or 60 you’ve had enough experience of life that you may be influenced by certain images like I was by the pictures of Kenya. But I think as far as being seduced into using cigarettes or something like that then by the age of 50 the dangerous part of it is far less.
BALLY

TELL ME YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD

This seems to be sort of stretching it that you can have this feeling because you have that on your foot. But again, the image is very stylish young people who are having a good time just as these folks are and, its a little more obvious here, you know, its not separated and quite as obtuse as the previous ad, but a little too obvious that you can have this good feeling because you have that shoe on your foot.

DOES THE AD PROMPT ANY ASSOCIATIONS WITH YOUR OWN LIFE?

Nope, I can’t... Other than it being in black and white, not a whole lot. I wouldn’t wear a shoe with white on the top and brown on the bottom, that’s not me. Very little association with my life. (Who do you think that shoe is?) Some young missionary type who has been, ex missionary type, who has been very successful on his mission, who has found that image often more than substance seems to play well, and would want to make a statement in his foot wear.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE BALLY AD?

Again, the black and white photography I’ve always liked. I don’t like the shoe, its just a shoe that I would not buy or consider particularly attractive. I don’t know that I could get that feeling from this shoe.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHANGE ABOUT THIS AD?

Well to me a shoe is more something that you... Again, at my age it needs to be comfortable, and this applies to somebody who is 56, I’m looking for something that would allow me to spend a day in comfort not party and boogie at night, so that’s probably because of my age that I would look at it that way. Again if I were, and I use the term sarcastically, back from a mission, I find that a lot of missionaries once they have been out and they’ve experienced the fairly superficial exposure to life that they have on a mission, come back and do those sort of things. As opposed to someone who has spent two years in the Peace Corps. I don’t think that’s a Peace Corps volunteer shoe. (Is shoe image important to you?) No, not a whole lot.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT APPEALS TO IMAGE?

It’s okay. I think its something that we are subject to as human beings and one of the things that’s interesting about advertising is that it does exploit our feelings and it does that in every age. And I think if one would try to legislate it as being a First Amendment right, why I wouldn’t want that done. I think that... Well, maybe I would take that back because again I think in instances of things that appeal to young people and how they appeal to young people, I think they ought to have their cigarette ads up and half the page ought to be the warnings and some sort of visual image with the warning, because I see a cigarette ad and then I see this little thing down here that says carbon monoxide may be hazardous to your health, that’s a pretty puny warning compared to the big message of a cigarette ad. I tend not to want the government to meddle in things, but when it comes to things like cigarettes and the dangers of alcohol, I think there probably ought to be some rules and regulations. When it comes to shoes or wool, yeah, fine.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IMAGES IN THIS AD?

They are a little more yuppie than these folks. These folks are a little more down to earth (wool), they’ve chosen the grass to frolic in whereas this is probably an upscale party and, so these folks are a little more party animals than these two people.

DO YOU SEE THE ADVERTISERS USING ANY VALUES TO MAKE THEIR APPEAL?

Young, attractive people and trying to make the association that if you wear this shoe you can have that scene.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ADVERTISERS HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY PUT THIS AD TOGETHER.

I think they probably chose that shoe because its kind of a shoe that you’re not going to see a guy in from Blanding, Utah. You will see it on maybe someone who’s a stockbroker or the really yuppie folks, and I guess if you have a spectrum of yuppiedom, I didn’t object to yuppiedom, but this getting near the end of the spectrum that I would not feel comfortable with. So this ad has far less appeal than the wool ad. The people in the wool ad looked they were actually having fun. These two people look like they’ve just had a few drinks and they’re loosened up and its less appealing.
VERSACE

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD

These people remind me of the Kennedy's, they're well dressed, high class, sitting on a railing which is fairly high class, that would quite frankly turn me off because it's a little snooty. These people all have the model looks, they don't look like a real family. They have the kind of in your face look that models have when they walk down the runway. It's unreal. Here's grandma and grandpa who are very stylish, I'm trying to pick out father and mother, and I don't. These all look like little urchins that have been out on the streets and have kicked the drug habit and spiked their hair and put on some clothes and come to this snooty place to have a picture taken. It is in black and white, again I enjoy black and white, but this would not impress me at all. And Versace couture which I assume is fashion, the family album. So if its for fashion, and this is a line of clothing, I would not buy Versace, because I wouldn't want to be associated with these people.

WHAT DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THESE PEOPLE?

Decadence. They are too superficial, they look like they are just trying to... They're all snooty and I guess the oriental down there with his two earrings, I don't know if he's gay or bisexual or... This guy looks like he's really ticked to be there. Grandma and Grandpa look like they've had some affection for one another, but all of these progeny, if that's what they are, have kind of gotten on their nerves and it's the kind of thing I try to spend my life not doing is getting into this in your face, snooty kind of role.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ADS THAT APPEAL TO THESE ASPIRATIONS?

They would be more towards the cigarette ads, again I don't think the ought to be particularly regulated or anything but to me they're silly. They appeal to more of the negative aspects of getting ahead, I think, than the two previous ads. (Which are?) The lack of ethic, the get ahead no matter what, that being thin and your hair spiked and earrings and - I've had problems with folks who look like that. Again this guy looks like he's just kicked his habit just a few weeks before and is till, you know, pretty edgy. People who've had a lot of problems, and they've had a lot of problems because they figure that style is much more important than substance.
ARE THERE ANY ASSOCIATIONS FROM THIS AD THAT RELATE TO YOUR OWN LIFE?

No.

DO ANY VALUES STRIKE YOU WHEN YOU LOOK AT THIS AD?

Again, snooty comes to mind, the first word. Snooty, uppity, troubled, superficial, not the kind of things that I want to associate with.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT CLASS?

I think class is... I think there’s a certain amount of class. I don’t want to be perceived as being classless. On the other hand I think that sometimes, particularly European countries, are a little too stratified. That once you’re born or adopted or however you get into this sort of group that you’re stuck there and you can’t get out of it, and I think that’s a little too rigid. So I think the class barriers or stratification in Europe are a little too burdensome.

HOW DO YOU THINK THIS AD MIGHT APPEAL TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE?

Well, we were in Japan about ten years ago and everything over there was New York. New York really appealed to the Japanese, and so I think haute couture and so forth, the French fashion, is supposed to appeal to people of the world, and particularly Americans who think, jeez, I’m not quite as good as the French, and so if I get one of these pin striped suits and if I spike my hair my couture is going to be up to the standards of the French. Again, the ad evokes the feeling of something French and the French have always been a little too effete for me.

ANY FURTHER COMMENTS ABOUT THIS AD?

Well, the house is nice. Looks like the house has been there for a while because the mold on the... So its a nice old English country manor that all of these ex-derelicts have gotten together at to have this picture taken and once they get through here they’re going to jump into their Ferraris and Porches and go back to screwing the people of the world and generally messing up the rest of our lives.
WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE RACIAL DIVERSITY IN THIS FAMILY PHOTO?

He looks oriental rather than black... I don’t know, that doesn’t bother me particularly if people want to do that as long as they’re... I don’t see the black father so I assume that she had him out of wedlock and was trying to do the right thing by raising him and that, again, is a sort of politically correct thing now. It doesn’t bother me one way or the other.

JIMMY

WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THIS AD?

This is more of a homey, a western kind of thing, the saddle’s there. This is something that I could relate to. Again its a vehicle and being a male I relate to much more than the shoe ad. The little note at the top, To Do, I make notes to do and I do them through the day, so its something that would appeal. I don’t particularly care for GMC trucks, but as an ad in general its better than the others, its not as artsy as the others because its color and plain spoken.

WHAT APPEALS DO YOU SEE IN THE AD?

To the people who are not as yuppie as these kind of folks, they’re married, this lady probably has a family, but she has some money that is disposable because she has her saddle with her little polo hat there, and of course she’s been skiing and of course she’s been out buying frames for her van Gogh copies and she’s again nice looking. She’s not sexily dressed like the lady in the wool ad, but she looks like she would appeal more to the homey values that I would identify with.

WHO DO YOU THINK THE AD IS SPEAKING TO?

Folks who are in their mid thirties who have now gotten through school and are finally earning some money and have some disposable income to be able to do these things and buy that car.

WHAT ARE HOMEY VALUES?

They are the opposite of the Versace ad. Homey values are things that you’re trying to nurture family and home and get these things done as opposed to stand around and look like you’re in withdrawal.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CHARACTER IN THE AD?

I think she’s attractive, she looks like she would be a person that would be easy to get along with, she’s out doing her do list and she’s not in a mini skirt and high heels, and nothing low cu*, yet she’s attractive so she’s a person who would be pleasant to be around.
"CLIVE"

LIFE WORLD INTERVIEW

TELL ME HOW YOU THINK YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY WOULD DESCRIBE YOU

I think they would say I’ve changed a bit in the last few years. When I was younger I was very driven to succeed, materially. And I think because of that some of my values as far as the amount of time that I spent with the family and so forth were put aside. And we could spend a lot of time on what I perceive as my justifications for that, but I think they would say that when I was younger I was very driven. I’ve always been fairly sarcastic. I view that as realistic, but they prefer to use the word sarcastic. I think I care a lot about people and I think they would say that. But that I can be fairly judgmental at times and want things to be done my way, want them to be done now, want to get on with life. That’s one of the things that I say and my wife kind of picks up on that one. Other people say that I’m not the only human being on earth. But it seems to me that after you’ve discussed and debated a certain issue you just need to get on with other things. So fairly hard driven, get on with things, enjoy life as much as I can. There was a book I read many years ago by George Bailent (sp?) who’s a professor of psychology at Harvard, and it was a study they started back about the late 30s and they took a class that was entering Harvard, not medical school, but just Harvard and they followed them over the years and the name of the book is Adaptations of Life, and when I first read the book was about 1970 so it had been going on about four years. The study’s still going on and the people are dying off, but it went into great detail into many of the people’s lives and how these were intelligent people - you don’t get into Harvard if you’re stupid, and they had very privileged lives and yet they had many many troubles through their lives. Some turned out to be great successes other people became alcoholics, other people attempted suicide, and it tried to discuss what they felt were the origins of their difficulties. And one of the sections in there, towards the last there was a paragraph that said one of the greatest tragedies in life is a man who’s on his death bed, the chest pain from his heart attack as he’s about to die, and he thinks of all the things that he could have, should have done over his life and how he wishes he could turn back the hands of time and do those things. And then there’s another man in the next bed who’s going through the same thing and yet has this wry smile on his face, that he thinks I’ve squeezed that lemon for every drop of goodness that I could get out of it. And I’ve often heard that life is not a dress rehearsal,
that you go through it once and when you get to the end you can’t say whoops, jeez I want to go back and change a lot of things. So you have to make the right decisions about career, about marriage, about how you spend your time, about how you spend your money, about how important money is, and those things are... You can’t go back twenty years later and say well, I wish I had done this differently. There are things I wish I had done a little differently, but when I think about them in relationship to my situation in my life, and how I was raised and so forth, there’s not a whole lot that I would change dramatically.

YOU MENTIONED BEING VERY DRIVEN WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER. WHAT WERE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR YOUR DRIVE?

Primarily to show my dad that I was not a son of a bitch, a useless son of a bitch. And those are very harsh words, but my relationship with my dad has been very very poor in my life. I came find when I was oh, mid forties, and it turned out that my mother-in-law was doing some genealogy work and my mother became very upset because I was born at probably seven and a half months, and I’d never stopped to figure it out, you know, I didn’t know. So apparently my parents were... She was pregnant before they got married and this was back in 1939, and that is something that is still in the church considered something you obviously should not do. And back then, it was much more frowned on. So once I found that out I tried to analyze my father’s feelings about me in relation to how that may have influenced them. When I was about eight, why I remember my Dad telling me that if I didn’t like the way he did things or the things I was required to do, there was the door, I could leave, and so when I find out he had had to marry mother, I pictured him as figuring that I was this little, literally, bastard, who had essentially ruined his life and he was not close to me, is not close to me. We visited there just a week or so ago and we got into a very heated discussion. He’s now 83, but still a very combative, very... Believes the same way he did 35 or 40 years ago. He and my mother don’t get along. My feelings for my mother are tremendous. She helped me through life. I would not have made it without her. She protected me against him, both physically and mentally, and so I was very driven to show him I was not this little worthless piece of flesh that had ruined his life.

WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TO RE-EXAMINE THE MOTIVES FOR BEING DRIVEN?

Oh, I guess it was... I don’t know that there was any one point. As I got older in
life and found out about him and mother, and tried to think that through, probably I was about 43, actually his position has changed, not in the way he talks or the things that he pugilistically stands up for, but I don’t know where the quote is, I think its in Shakespeare, when someone doth protest too much, and one of the things that happens when we go over there now is he says, do you know what makes me happy in life? Now I’ve heard it fifteen times so yes I know, which is that he’s very happy that I’ve succeeded as much as I have and he’s never envied that. Sounds very nice. But when you put it in the context of how he’s lived his life, if you go over to my dad’s house he has at last count 29 vehicles around his house in various states of disrepair, cars, trucks, tractors, generators, etc etc. It is trashy, its junky. Every piece of property he has ever had has turned out that way, the house has turned into that. Its a source of constant friction between him and me and between my mother and him. And so I don’t know that he has changed, but I think his recognition of his assessment of me when I was 8 or 9 and 10 and so forth has changed, although he has never admitted that, he’s not said. So I think as I’ve gotten in my late 40s and early 50s why the need to succeed for that particular reason, to show him that I was not worthless, has changed. And, at this point in time I now work two days a week in the clinic and I’m attempting to write, I’m attempting to do some other things that I just want to do just because of wanting to do it. I feel secure enough now that whatever comes I can live and exist and keep food on the table, I’ve put money enough away to help my kids through college. I’ve become less liberal with them, as well as providing for them. Our first son we put through law school and he got through law school and decided he didn’t like law and now he’s back into teaching, he’s at BYU getting his teaching certificate, so there’s $75,000 down the tube. Well, our next children, if they go to graduate school are going to end up with some bills rather than having everything paid for. So I’d say probably towards my late forties and I’m now just 57, and so over the last decade or so I have gradually shifted.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ACQUIRING MATERIAL POSSESSIONS?

I think they’re important. I think that it allows you to do things in life which if you didn’t have those material things you couldn’t do. We’ve been to Europe, we’ve seen various parts of the world, this summer we’re going on a fairly long trip. And so its certainly allowed me to do things that I would not be able to otherwise do. It has allowed our children to do things that most kids their age have not been able to do. I think that you can pursue material things just for material things sake, and I don’t know that I’ve done that because I’ve gotten
to the point where, you know, if I were a really big spender, I mean I like airplanes, I have an airplane, I have a boat, but I don't own a jet. If I were a really big spender I would lust after a Gulf Stream 5 at $25 million, but I think to achieve that I would have to become... I would have to compromise some of my ethical values, and spend less time with my family and so material things are important, but from my own personal perspective I've got enough now that I can live comfortably and I don't want to achieve materially much more than I already have.

WHAT ARE THE VALUES THAT YOU THINK MOST DEFINE YOU?

I guess number one would be hard work, quite frankly. Its important that somebody get up each day and do something which is of benefit to the world. I think that as you take the long view you should try to make your life so that when you do die the world is a better place because you've lived than it was without you. And that could be a very simple thing, from having raised good plants each year and given them to folks to creating a multi-national organization that employs thousands or hundreds of thousands of people. I mean, a big spectrum. But I think that you should try to make the world a better place when you finally leave it than it was before you came. I think one should do as... When I was in medical school there was a saying, First do no harm, I think whatever you do you should not harm other individuals. We were involved with an investment person about ten years ago when we lost a huge amount of money and it put me back about five years, and spoiled my plans for when I could back off and do other things that I wanted to do. This individual was fairly high in the church and I think what he did was amoral, and did harm other people. Certainly it harmed me. So I think that one should not harm other individuals through the process of making the world a better place or working hard. I think that you should try to have a family. Our oldest son is not married, he's 32, and I think that if one goes through life without experiencing that, there's many things in life which are very good, which will have otherwise been missed, and you won't be able to experience it. I have four kids, nobody's married, I have no grandkids. They say they want to get married but nobody's done it yet. I hope they do, because I think without that they will miss a tremendous part of life which cannot be experienced in any other way.

HAS YOUR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP INFLUENCED THE VALUES THAT YOU HAVE DESCRIBED?
Back when I was young, I viewed the church as being the vehicle by which a person would gain happiness in the world, that if you didn’t do the things the church required that you could look forward to unhappiness, both here and in the hereafter. My change of heart actually changed while I was on my mission, it was my first time really outside of Utah and I saw hundreds of very good human beings who had no association with the church, but whose values were similar in scope, and so I think religion in general, I think people need religion, the human being as a creature needs some sort of organization to help them through the vicissitudes of life, the ups and downs, the uncertainties, so forth. And thus I think the church is a good organization to do that. I don’t think that one has to be a Mormon to make it into Heaven, whether or not that’s the Celestial kingdom or whatever. So early on it was an important thing, as I’ve gotten into my later years in life, in my particular circumstance where I live, I think its important to stay a part of the Mormon church because without that you become rather cut off from the community. And I think that its a good organization, as I’ve looked at it compared to other churches, other organizations, I feel comfortable in that, and that’s largely because of the way I was brought up. But if somebody’s a good catholic or a good methodist or a good lutheran or a good buddhist or even non christian, a good muslim, these things make the world a better place, works to further humanity. I don’t think they are going to end up in the hereafter any place below me at all.

DO DIRECTIVES FROM CHURCH LEADERS HAVE ANY INFLUENCE IN YOUR LIFE?

No, very little at the moment (why?) Because I think that, well, number one I’ve heard them one thousand times each, the message hasn’t changed. And one could say well that’s because people haven’t changed, you know they need to have the same message they did 35 or 40 years ago. And I guess because of my change in heart that I think that religion in general is a good thing in most instances. I think that the Heaven’s Gate organization sort of thing can be a very negative thing. As you think over history probably, thousands, I don’t know that more than any other cause, but between the crusades and various other people doing heinous things for religious purposes, religion can also be a very bad thing in people’s life, it can be very difficult, can cause a lot of murder because there’s nothing scarier than the zealot who thinks he doing something because God told him to. And so as I’ve gotten older my dependence upon a particular source of knowledge has been lessened, thus when it comes from church I look at it and say, interesting, but as far as really influencing my life it doesn’t to a large degree.
HOW DO YOU RESPOND THEN TO DIRECTIVES ABOUT AVOIDING MATERIALISM, R-RATED MOVIES, COMPETITIVENESS ETC?

Some of them are worthwhile. I think some of the counsel about, I didn’t watch a lot of conference, but the little bit I watched, I watched President Hinckley’s last little discussion, plus my wife’s been reading a book and I’ve read part of it about his life, and I picture him as a fairly practical person rather than being a religious dogmatist. There was one other talk that I heard that was a hellfire and brimstone, that if you don’t do this and don’t go through the temple, and don’t do these ordinances, blah, blah, blah, why you’ll end up regretting it, etc etc. And it irritates me, and I shut it off. But President Hinckley talks about recognizing the rights of others to be different than us, the pluralism that exists in society. And I think the church has sort of been forced into that because of number one the growth here in Utah and number two the growth of the church throughout the world, that people down in Tonga now I hear are allowed to wear their traditional dress to church, and you can’t wear traditional Tongan dress and wear garments at the same time, unless you want to show a lot of garment with your grass skirt. So that I think that some of them are very useful, some of them I think are silly. I think the one about R-rated movies is silly. Schindler’s List was an R-rated movie and I think the message of Schindler’s List should be passed on to each generation. I think there are many R-rated movies which are excellent, movies with tremendous messages, and I think to make a blanket statement and have people you know robot like follow that is silly. So some of them are good others are asinine.

ARE THERE DIFFERENCES THAT YOU SEE IN THE WAY MEDIA PROJECTS DESIRABLE LIFESTYLES AND WHAT YOU CONSIDER DESIRABLE IN YOUR OWN LIFESTYLE?

Well, I don’t own an Armani suit, I don’t drive a Mercedes even though I could afford one. It would be interesting to discuss with you why you chose those four ads. I assume that you looked at many advertisements before you chose those four, so you must have had specific things in there that you looking for a person to react to. I picture myself as being not snooty, I don’t dress terribly well, I dress to be comfortable. As I’ve gotten so that I rub shoulders with people who are more and more well off, I find that there’s a certain segment who are really not very well off, less well off than I am actually, who have this veneer, and they need to try to impress you with what they own and where they’ve been and so forth, and you can recognize those folks and I dislike them immensely, and I find the folks who really do have quite a bit materially, but
yet they don’t flaunt it, they don’t show it off and they don’t have to make an issue of it. And those folks I enjoy, they are usually folks of a fair amount of substance who thought about issues and can discuss things with in a serious way and they won’t be bent out of shape. These other folks are very superficial and if you try to discuss things of substance, why they either don’t know about it or have no opinions or... They’re just not the kind of folks I enjoy being around. So I picture myself from being fairly different from most of the people in the advertisements. The young couple on the grass (wool), you know they look like they were having fun and I don’t know what it would lead to. The family with the kid in withdrawal and the lady with spiked hair in the back (Versace), and the lady holding the black child because she had an affair, I didn’t identify with that group at all, at all. And the lady with the car, she was fairly wholesome and was not provocatively dressed, she had her list of things to do which goes along with my idea that you get up and work and make the world a better place. And so I probably identify of all of them with that. The one of the shoe, it was very hard for me to make the connection between the folks partying and the shoe having much effect on their party life.

ARE THERE CHURCH VALUES THAT PRESENT YOU WITH CONFLICTS IN LIFESTYLE?

The need that I should obey the brethren just because they say, is probably the greatest conflict. Having meetings just for meetings sake, you know we have a meeting just because the brethren say we should have a meeting. I hate meetings unless there’s really a purpose for the meeting. Now if we have something, lets decide it and get it over with. Home teaching, bugs the pick out of me. When I was in the Elders Quorum fifteen years ago I handed out a questionnaire and asked people to answer it anonymously as to what they thought about Home Teaching, whether they thought it was useful, how they would change it, didn’t have to sign their name and it was very interesting, and I was know for years for that questionnaire. People would remember it and I found that most people didn’t think that Home Teaching was that useful. There are a small group that its very useful to and those should continue. I think they ought to make it optional, that if you want to be a Home Teacher that should optional, if you want to be Home Taught that should be optional. That each month it shouldn’t have to be that you have to give these numbers up and you know and blah blah blah. Its a big waste of time. Some people need it and therefore it should be done, it shouldn’t be abandoned as a program but it ought to be modified. Going to the Temple, I find the Temple ceremony not to be very fulfilling. I was married in the Temple, I know what
the Temple ceremony was like years ago, I know what its like since 1990, its less offensive than it was before. I find the fact that you have to wear an undergarment really makes you different from other people. If you get into it lots of people say no, its a sign, that you’ve accepted these covenants, and I say I can accept them without having to wear this particular piece of underwear. In the Temple one of the pledges is that you will, if asked to, pledge everything to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and I don’t know that I can do that honestly. My Temple attendance is very rare. I do have a recommend, why, probably because I have a very liberal Bishop (laughs).

WHICH VALUES RESONATE MOST STRONGLY FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH?

Probably family, its stress on family. I think that’s very good. Its stress on honesty, although a lot of people can use that in a negative way, again financial folks can set up pyramid schemes based upon their church membership, which the church advises them not to do, but in fact little networks that exist almost foster that kind of thought. I guess the only real lasting value that resonates for me is the importance of family and the importance of maintaining a family relationship, of being kind and understanding to your family members, and trying to work to have a harmonious family relationship. And as I’ve gotten older the importance of family. We have four children, we went seven years between the first two, we tried to have one at about three, it took us four years to have one, that’s kind of a gap I wish we had another child there. On the other hand I don’t think that there’s little spirits on the other side just waiting for a body to fulfill their destiny, I think that’s just a fig newton of somebody’s imagination. And I notice that the church lately has de-emphasized that, that that’s not a reason for getting pregnant. Occasionally you’ll hear a fire and brimstone talk from the pulpit but its a lot emphasized than it was ten or twenty years ago. And the church does change with the times. I was reading a very interesting article in Dialogue that talked about the thrust of patriarchal blessings, how they’ve changed over the years and back when the church was first formed, it was that church members would be able to participate in a redeeming of the prophet’s blood, not a redeeming but almost a revenge for the spilling of the prophet’s blood, that they would participate in getting back at folks for doing that. In the early part of this century, up to about 1960, it was that people would see the second coming of the Lord. Since about 1965 or 70 its been that you should live a good life. So that the blood atonement part was a big part, then we were going to see the second coming of Christ, now its just as the end of the
Millennium gets closer and the church doesn’t want to look flaky, why the patriarchs have been instructed to make it much more general. So I think the church is a pragmatic organization and changes its doctrine as time goes on. Does that diminish its validity to me? No, not really, in fact it probably increases it. I think as they go along and as the church does become much more multi-cultural around the world that many of these other proscriptions will have to be changed for it to really succeed.

DOES THE CHURCH PLAY ANY ROLE IN THE ASPIRATIONS YOU MAY HAVE FOR YOUR FAMILY?

Well, as I see families, any family, whether or not its a catholic family and a jewish family or a mormon, whatever, any marriage where there are different religions it makes it more difficult. And so in that sense I hope that my children marry within the Mormon church, because Mormonism is much more than a religion, its an ethic. Getting away from Mormonism is like trying to get away from Judaism. Its always there, how you were raised, your belief system and so forth. And it takes literally generations to change that, because you have your children and they’re baptized and then they’re married in the church and then their children are blessed in the church and then they’re married in the church and their grandchildren and it goes on and on and on and on. And so I think since it is a good organization I think the positives in it much more outweigh the negatives in it. I would like them to participate in it, so my aspirations are that as a family we can stay in it. How active they are, its up to them, how many meetings they go to. As far as the good part of it, the family values, the honesty, I would ask them to espouse those things, but as far as feeling that a person has really achieved if they turn out to be a Bishop or Stake President, that means absolutely zip to me. In fact, I would be a little bit worried about it because it seems when you get into those leadership positions its because you’ve been a yes man and been almost too much robot like.

HAVE YOU NOTICED ADVERTISING MESSAGES INFLUENCING THE ASPIRATIONS OF YOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR LIFESTYLE VALUES?

Well, my daughter likes Range Rovers. I think they look like a shoe box with wheels, but they are supposedly high class. She subscribes to a lot of women’s magazines, all the folks in them tend to be thin and well coiffed and so forth, and my wife, I was discussing with her a little bit the discussion we had last time, and one of your questions was if I was influenced by advertising, and I didn’t think that I was that much. And she thought that I was, well she said
the clothes on your back, you buy them I don’t buy them, whatever brand they are. But I think that they’ve been influenced to some degree, probably less than many kids. I think they want to drive certain cars because they’ve seen them. My son wants a snowmobile with a big big engine because he’s seen it advertised. My other son will buy nothing but a Honda because its rated by Consumer Digest as being the highest, so to a certain degree I think they are, but not a tremendous amount. Not as much as I see many kids. None of them run around with these pants with the crotch down to the knee and chains hanging out and nobody’s had anything pierced beyond their ear, the girls, none of the boys have pierced ears so all of this kind of grunge stuff in the media has not rubbed off on them. I guess young people, wanting to get married and have a whole bunch of stuff initially, I think that’s one of the reasons our older son has not gotten married, he went through law school, didn’t particularly care for it, went to the navy in the JAG (judge advocate general) program there for five years and was moving all over the world, and he likes to travel and he was doing it partly for that reason, but came back and now he’s getting his teaching certificate, he’s not going to make very much money as a teacher, but it’ll be enough that I think he’ll finally feel secure enough that he can put food on the table and buy a reasonably nice car and make payments on a house. When my wife and I were married my dad owned a small house divided into two apartments, and it was very run down and for allowing us to live in there I fixed it up and my wife, I remember her salary, she worked at BYU, her take home salary was $90 every two weeks, and I worked part time at BYU installing fire alarms and we had very little. When we got back from our honeymoon, one of the things we both remember is that we had $7 to our name, that’s all me had in the world. And I drove a car that cost $900 I got on my mission. I drove it until I finished medical school, so that was about nine years, never got a new car. I got so I could literally take the engine out of the old Volkswagen myself and fix it and put it back in within an hour and a half. So I think the expectations of what they expect to have in life, a house, a car, travel, buy whatever brand is in for the kids, is much greater now than it was when I was their age. And I think that’s because of the proliferation of advertising and creating expectations. So I think its important not to expect too much in life too quickly.
REFERENCES


Harper & Row.


Bally.
What a feeling.

Experience the
legendary elegance
of Bally. The touch of
supple leather, the
details of handcrafted
workmanship, the
look of impeccable
styling. A feeling
of luxury that could
only be Bally.
To Do
- Bike rides
- Call Hunt Club - 2:30 Sat.
- Groceries for Parable
- Homework
- Farmers' Market

THE DREADED
"TO-DO" LIST.

THE EVERYDAY
CONQUEROR.

PATRICIA BOUCHERON,
JIMMY Owner.
- Competitive equitation. Makes own feed.
- Into biking, hiking and working out.
- Former Master of Clinically, riding.
- Husband Mark, Cat Derby.
- Horse Parable.

JIMMY SLT
Cargo space accommodates all riding gear.
Luxury and style for formal occasions.
Bikes fit easily in back or on available rack.
Available shift-on-the-fly four-wheel drive
Helps entire perfect attendance at classes.

JIMMY
GMC
COMPATIBLY
IN COMMAND.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL TOLL FREE 1-888-97-JIMMY OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.gmc.com/jimmy
YE OLDE DRESS CODE

Never reveal the figure in the presence of the opposite sex.

Never wear wool next to bare skin.

WOOL. The rules no longer APPLY.

For more information, call 1-800-986-WOOL. www.woolmark.com