Decoding the globe: globalization, advertising, and corporate practice

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Abstract. The current graphical rhetoric of advertising includes everything from images of the globe borrowed from the US space program (for example, Hewlett-Packard Corp. computer systems), to pseudoreal renderings of a very different sort (for example, Maurice Merle's (The Coca Cola Co.) Fritspeek). The use of these images are part of what Goldmann calls the economy of 'commodity signs,' where produced meanings are linked to commodities through the medium of the print or broadcast advertisement. The increased incorporation of global images in Western advertising presents an opportunity to analyze the ideological underpinning of the 'new global economy.' The sheer volume of purchased advertising space places these often confusing images before our eyes at an increasing pace, producing meanings which tend to obfuscate and frangible discourse related to globalization. A decoding of specific advertisements with the use of the Hewlett-Packard Corporation as a case study, juxtaposed against the real spatial practices of the company will reveal tensions, contradictions, and inconuence in advertising messages which appropriate the symbolic power of global images.

Introduction

"Signs and language can be set free from immediate referents... We become aware that signs can be cast loose from their meanings in one system of thought, language, culture and history and acquire other, sometimes unrecognizable, perhaps incomprehensible, ones elsewhere. Such a servior movement, of setting signs to sign, and appearance to appearance, on the surfaces of language and culture, does not avoid the question of significance, but rather supplements, extends and complicates it."

Chambers, 1993, page 195

In the 1990s, images of all or substantial portions of the globe abound in the blizzard of print advertising the media consumer is subjected to. Everything from views acquired through the US space program to synthetic, unbrushed representations produced by graphic artists, and a plethora of other cartographic "fragments" assault the reader at every turn. In many cases cartographic conventions such as graticules, complex symbolization, and classification schemes are applied to the illustrations. Quite often the global image or some fragment of it will turn up in the oddest of contexts, forcing the reader to consider the literal as well as allegorical logic behind its use.

The accelerated appropriation of the global image reflects an ideology underpinning what Dickens calls the "increasing globalization of economic activity which is occurring within a dynamic framework of turbulence and volatility in the world economy." (1992, page 5). The recent historical-geographical context of globalization includes the reconification (still in process) of the delicate balance between the USA and the USSR following the collapse of the Soviet system in 1989 and the resulting proclamation of a "new world order" by then-president George Bush (Featherstone, 1993; O'Toole and Luke, 1994). These events and their direct and indirect consequences have opened vast labor and product markets to increasingly hegemonic Western and

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East Asian capital, which leaves transnational corporate managers drunk with the accumulation possibilities inherent in the emerging integrated world economy. Simultaneously, the increased use and importance of securitization and other circulation technologies in the organization and management of 'broad-scope' enterprises have further accelerated the shrinkage of social space and erected the conditions for growth of an ideology purporting the final triumph of the modern project and the technological imperatives (see Schumdt and Wilson, 1990). To quote the wake-like 'spokesperson' for MCI Telecommunications (McCaw Cellular Communications, Inc.) in their recent 'information superhighway' television advertisements, "There is no more there ... only, air ..." This collapse of social space, however, also serves to expand and enhance the ironies and contradictions of late capitalism and the 'high modernity' of technology, technology, and the globe-grasping ideology which supports it (Adas, 1989). As trade barriers fall the internal realities of former client and subject nations are laid bare for all (or at least given their 'fifteen minutes of fame'). This was most clearly shown recently in Chapsas (Taboj, 1994).

Recently geographers have begun to take notice of advertising and its significance in the construction of consumer worlds (for example, Harvey, 1989; Jackson, 1993; Sack, 1992). In this paper I contribute to and extend an ongoing discourse. In the first section I will discuss the phenomenon of globalization and its relationship to advertising. This will be followed by a discussion that shows how the use of all or part of the global image in advertising 'means', in other words, how it works as a system of 'commodity-sign' production through the subjective and transactional processes of advertising 'reading' that involve elements of abstraction, equivalence, and reflection (Goldman, 1992; Williamson, 1978, 1986). I use a 'deriving' of several print advertisements that contain global images to illustrate how these processes work for a specific advertiser, the Hewlett-Packard Corporation (HP). Last, I will reflect on the significance of the recent emergence of a global semiotic in advertising and its penetration of popular conceptions of globalization.

Globalization and advertising
If markets (labor, product, service, finance etc) provide the mechanisms that connect producers and systems of production with consumers and systems of consumption, then the inherent sparsity of expanding markets and the physical separation of producers and consumers present themselves as obstacles to overcome through purchased access to mass media and other distanciating technologies. The condition of complementariness necessary to the establishment of robust interdependence, cannot flourish without the existence of commodity knowledge among demanders/consumers. In this view, advertising immediately and irreversibly becomes a tool in the production of social space (LeFebvre, 1991), although the ways that advertisements recur to us are fundamentally subjective, involving reflective interpretation on the part of the reader. To the degree that advertising 'creates' or enhances demand (where once more existed before) social space is structured, and this new sparsity reflects socially differentiated space researched, targeted, and perhaps imagined by marketers (Goss, 1997).

The evolution of advertising as a set of systems intended for the representation of the claims of producers to potential consumers occur as a necessary component of the market, and not inconsequentially encroaches on its own semiotic economy. The advertiser seeks to enclose the field of knowledge of the particular commodity and position themselves favorably within the matrix of choices available to the consumer, enhancing at once the 'world' of consumption opportunities and advertising the producer/consumer in the most modern of relationships. In this respect, advertising becomes an instrument of distraction, drawing together disparate components of
the physical and social worlds; resources, laborers, circulation technologies, economies, and consumers (Jackson, 1993, page 217).

The role of advertising in pulling together the components of the national US space economy during the halcyon period of Fordist industrialization in North America (1920–70) has been explored by others from the perspectives of modernization (Marchand, 1985), social reproduction (see, for example, Dewar, 1976), and the creation of negative stereotypes (O’Barr, 1994). Strasser (1989) has detailed the way that advertising was used in the early 20th century to build consumer trust in emerging mass manufacturers and allowed the standardization of brands and products and the stitching together of national consumer markets. Advertisements in national circulation publications during this period are seen as shifting from the function of carriers of informative messages about the uses and qualities of products to more subtly crafted appeals.

It can be shown that advertising in mainstream publications such as Time employed cartography in a very different fashion during this period. Typically, maps were used by transportation companies such as railroads to show the locations of their lines and the cities they connected. Topological relationships between cities were normally maintained. Figure 1 presents a rather stylish example of this genre, an advertisement for Delta Airlines, Inc. from late in the period (1955). Emerging sunbelt cities are connected to dominant east and west coast centers through the Atlanta hub, a portent of urban expansion (and contracting) in the next few decades. This contrasts sharply with the current use of maps and global images. For example, figure 2, a recent magazine advertisement for UPS (United Parcel Service of America, Inc., 1994) shows the map of the world as a blank sheet of paper with the world’s major cities depicted as dots. The reader is encouraged to “connect the dots” by UPS, who bemoans that

**Figure 1.** Delta Air Lines from regional carrier to global catalyst. (Used with permission)
Figure 2. United Parcel Service, in the world of circulation, absence says more than presence. (UPS and UPS shield design are registered trademarks of United Parcel Service of America, Inc., and its permission.)

"Unfortunately, all of the world's cities aren't centrally located." The world becomes a blank sheet on the jobber's clipboard and the only significant places are the UPS-defined world cities. In this world, the nearly 5.5 billion not resident in these fifty-eight metropolitan areas do not count (Espernade and Watson, 1985).

Advertising and marketing can be used as a window into our ideological constructions of the 'global', at times providing a stunningly clear reflection of 'corporate culture' (Schoenberger, 1994). At other times this invocation of the global image is given within a context which trivializes the meaning of globalization and creates a mask for the entities which 'harmonize the major and minor players in the world economy. Geographers and others are paying increasing attention to globalization over the past decade, although no clear consensus has emerged with regard to its contours (for a selection of the perspectives on globalization see, for example, Ekins, 1992; Harvey, 1989; Lipietz, 1987; Pett, 1991; Smith, 1993). Goddard (1990) presents a conceptual model of globalization that is useful in this discussion. Goddard sees globalization as the spatial manifestation of high modernity and the end result of two centuries of expansion and rationalization in the world economy. He claims that we can identify four axes composed of structural clusters, around which globalist ideology is focused.

Capitulation or accretion of capital in the context of competitive labor and product markets (The World Capitalist Economy)

The global image, or some fragment of the total globe, often is used by advertisers as an invocation of the globalism of today's economy and the international seal of approval for the commodity or service being pitched. It is often placed in the advertisement as a 'brass-plate' acknowledgement of the wide scope of operations of the multinational corporation; as if to say, "Globalism spoken here!" Many of the advertisements where it is being used in this context self-financial services, banking services, or other types of "soft" commodities. A recent advertisement for Merrill Lynch & Co. (1994) from The Economist exudes the new globalist ideology. The left half of the full-page advertisement is a grainy, black-and-white photograph showing a renaissance, celestial, and modern globe. A bold headline, upper right, declares...
"The difference between competing in the global marketplace and leading it". In this advertisement the globe serves merely as a prop, placed within the advertisement to evoke the broad reach of Western capital and to signify the worldwide access the user of Merrill Lynch's services will surely accrue.

Surveillance or the control of information and social supervision (The Nation-State System)

Whereas Giddens proposes the system of nation-states as a structuring component of globalization, what advertisers give us, in terms of cartographically accurate representations of national boundaries, is laden with contradictions. In most global images presented in advertising, boundaries of nation-states are explicitly omitted. For example, a recent advertisement for the Crystal Cruises Company (see figure 3) from the New York Times Sunday Magazine (1994) promises "Luxury without boundaries". The image of a borderless world, levelling for the free passage of capital, goods, and (sometimes) labor without the restrictions imposed by national boundaries, is a major component of globalist ideology and clearly a preferred interpretation of satellite images featuring "the big blue marble". This one-world vision does not square well with the reality of the fragmented, post-cold-war world, rife with ethnic and nationalist tensions (O'Tuathail and Luke, 1994).

Figure 3. Crystal Cruises: white-glove service offers the world as a pun. (Used with permission.)

Military power or control of the means of violence in the context of the industrialization of war (World Military Order)

There are historical-geographical links between the formation of the nation-state system and a world system of military powers, and many writers have also linked capitalism and the extension of the world capitalist economy and militarism (for example, Braudel, 1981; Lenin, 1966). Given the proportion of the world's productive capacity devoted to military uses (essentially 'dead' capital) it is difficult to separate militarism (as an ideology or as an economic activity) from any other major component
of the world economy, and indeed the rhetoric of advertisements abound with
references to military terminology. Perhaps the most relevant sets of technologies (for
geographers) that have the closest link to the military are the burgeoning GIS
(geographic information systems) and GPS (global positioning system) industries. GPS
and GIS advertisements are filled with global images, which in most cases suggest
the global reach of the satellite system and the spatial empowerment of the user
(Roberts and Schein, 1995). The GPS was developed (beginning in the 1980s), however,
as a military system, which would allow the precise positioning of US weapons
systems. The tactical success of this technology in the Gulf War added to its ‘seriousness’
in the worst sense of the word. Advertising for imaging and remote-sensing technol-
ogy, also developed principally through defense research and development, commonly
employs a global theme. With the adoption of global imagery within advertisements
that sell GIS and GPS technology advertisers often seek to link the strategic and
territorial nature of warming to the world of business. In another sense, the growth
of the geodemographic marketing industry illustrates the realization by advertisers
of the differentiation of urban residential space and their attempt to manipulate consump-
tion through spatially crafted appeals. The widespread use of military rhetoric in the
demographic press reflects the appropriation of a powerful set of tropes in the
service of marketing, accumulation, and consumption (Goss, 1995).

Industrialization or the transformation of nature towards the development of the created environment
(International Division of Labor)

The international division of labor can be seen as the geographically contingent
outcome of worldwide industrialization. This is bound up in the other three poles of
Giddens’s globalization diagram: world capitalism, the nation-state system, and world
military order. In the 1990s, footlose capital roams the globe under the umbrella of
Western military hegemony and a nation-state system coordinated by the world polit-
cal and financial organizations. The explosion of circulation technologies which have
collapsed space, such as telematics, just-in-time production systems, and overnight
delivery services utilizing wide-body air freighters, is an outgrowth of the new inter-
national economy, enabling the coordination of wide-scale enterprises. Hence, in
advertisements for these services we commonly see a global theme adopted, often used
in underscore profound claims of space annihilation and the final resolution of the
Kantian dilemma. The effects of absolute space are attenuated through the rapid trans-
fer of people, goods, and capital. Indeed business can now take place on the fly with the
use of airphones and laptop computers. As we all know, time, not space, is money.

One might add a fifth pole to Giddens’s model, one which seeks to capture the
component of a globalization ideology that derives from the apparent growth of
environmental awareness since the 1960s. This ‘green’ globe is perhaps the most
frequently invoked symbol coming from Madison Avenue in the 1990s, currently
being used to sell everything from natural food to toilet paper, while co-opting the
environmentalist critique of development and commodity relations. Green Seal, an
independent, nonprofit organization “dedicated to promoting the manufacture and sale
of environmentally preferable consumer products” in the USA, allows their seal of
certification to be placed on products which meet their standards. The ‘seal’ itself is a
small, featureless globe with a green check mark emblazoned over the Green Seal logo
(1995). Among the companies that have sought and received certification through this
program are Kerr-McGee Corp., a diversified energy and chemical company, and
Sherwin-Williams Co., a manufacturer of coatings and related products. For their
part, Kerr-McGee was named in 1993 as a potentially responsible party (PRP) by the
Environmental Protection Agency at fourteen existing Superfund sites and other non-Superfund sites, with an estimated cleanup cost of US$444 million. Sherwin-Williams has also been named as a PRP at nine of these Superfund sites, and has been named in a number of lawsuits arising from the manufacture and sale of lead pigments (Moos' Investors Service, 1994).

Giddens's view of globalization is only one of many. For example Johnson et al. (1995) have recently drawn together a collection of essays organized around multiple themes of economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental change. Though Giddens's conceptual model could be criticized as a broad-brush (and perhaps incomplete) approach to an understanding of globalization and its contingent relationship to modernity, it presents an essay for the analysis of several ideological positions associated with advertising and cartography. It is Giddens who claims, globalization as an ideology, clusters around these four structural clusters, ten recognizable references to signs or relations should be classifiable into one of the four to five dimensions in advertisements which adopt a globalization theme. On the other hand, advertisements which use cartographic or graphical representations of the globe which are only tentatively related to one of these dimensions might be accused of fetishizing the meaning of globalization. What will be seen is that the global image and cartographic representation, when invoked on Madison Avenue, quite often does make a fetish of the globe; that is, it creates an image which serves as the object of extravagant trust, reverence, and obsessive devotion. Marx made it clear that commodities obtain their mystical properties not through their use but when they acquire exchange value, that is, when they become commodities (1977, page 455). The fetishistic power of the globe-sign, recently put to work by advertisers in legion, however, may partially be ascribed to a shared 'immensity aesthetic' discussed later in this paper.

Decoding the globe

In the act of glancing at advertisements, reading the copy, studying the graphics and images contained within the margins, and deciphering the relationships between the various meanings contained in the advertisement, we participate in an economy of signs. What is said and is being produced and simultaneously consumed is the 'commodity-sign', an entity that colonizes our lifeworld and attaches meaning to commodities with the participation of the reader (Goldman, 1990)."A commodity-sign joins together a named material entity as good or service as a signifier with a meaningful image as a signified (e.g. Michelin beer=good friend's). Though people have invested objects with symbolic meanings for thousands of years, the production and consumption of meanings associated with objects has become institutionalized and specialized according to the logic of Capital in the twentieth-century. Commodity relations systematically penetrate and organize cultural meanings in the interest of extending the domain of exchange values. ... Not only are commodities joined to signs, commodities get produced as signs and signs become produced as commodities" (Goldman, 1992, page 37).

The production and consumption of sign values take place simultaneously, just as meaning is transferred from a human-produced material commodity (for example, Hewlett-Packard computers) to a set of signs and shared meanings (for example, global sales and global empowerment). The way that this attachment of meaning works, in the context of the magazine advertisement, is through the interpretative acts of abstraction, equivalency, and reification (Goldman, 1992, page 39). For example, the advertisement shown in figure 3 (Crystal Cruises) asks the reader to link the extended, white-gloved, globe-wielding hand to unlimited luxury "In a Crystal World...". In a flash the corporation becomes the world, the world becomes the globe-sign, the
globe-sign becomes the notion of unburdened luxury in a swirling (and perhaps confusing) exchange of meanings. The averted passenger experiences "a world of space, grace, and choices beyond compare ... without a limitation in sight" (at least for as long as the duration of the purchased cruise).

Magazine and newspaper advertising are a huge component of the larger advertising industry. In the USA alone over $21 billion was spent in 1993. On the use of print advertisement, which constitutes over 44% of the total advertisement spending that year (Advertising Age 1993). This is not intended to exclude other media such as television or outdoor signage, rather magazine advertisements are useful in this context because of their concrete form and long historical record. Magazine advertising has developed into a highly sophisticated system for assigning meaning to commodities, and magazine readers have become familiar with the format and more or less adept at decoding its component parts. The main features of a typical magazine advertisement include:

1. a photographic signifying image;
2. a "morsel" an insert containing product logo or an image of the product;
3. a "frame" of advertisement copy that links the morsel and the image;
4. graphic services (lines, color) which serve to connect and separate the different components of the advertisement.

Through the graphical logic of this textual form, advertisers seek to link meanings, principally highly stylized or generalized social or economic relations, with particular commodities or services. In the signifying act of the advertisement, meanings can be transferred from one reference set (for example, family, home, happiness) to another (for example, airline companies and fast-food restaurants). Purchased access to magazines, newspapers, television, and radio by advertisers has become all pervasive in the 20th century. Daily experience is so saturated with exposure to these media that our consciousness becomes colonized by sets of meanings that are produced through this expanding logic of commodity relations.

 Hewlett-Packard and the world

Whether capitalism has become a "global" phenomenon or not, it is difficult to dispute that virtually all nations have been penetrated to a greater or lesser measure by the expansion of commodity relations and the consumption practices associated with modern or Western (United States, Western Europe, Japan). This "new globalization" has become a common refrain in current advertising in virtually all media, but it has become particularly apparent in magazine advertisements. Several uses of the globe are common. For instance, HP uses a global theme in several of its recent magazine advertisements (see figure 4). In this advertisement (1992a), used in the information systems trade magazine Datamation, the principal signifying image is a basketball, inscribed with a world map in the form of a globe. The globe is inscribed with the logo of Spalding Inc, a leading manufacturer of sporting goods. The lighting of the globe-ball is stark, suggesting the lighting of the earth as seen from outer space. The globe-ball is centered on North America, showing national boundaries, states, and the principal cities and identifying the principal geographical target of the advertisement (and perhaps hinting at the geographical illiteracy of Americans). At the top, right corner a bold text box frames the image and links it to the advertiser:

"Hewlett-Packard computer systems helped Spalding's worldwide revenue grow four times faster than the industry average."

The globe-ball fairly explodes from the page, suggesting the fourfold growth in Spalding's revenues. Fine-print text in the lower right corner (barely read by magazine readers) further details the ways that HP products and services were used by Spalding to "make the 115-year-old sporting goods company more responsive to customer
demands around the world and save money at the same time'. The competitive sporting goods commodity market requires "instant global access to management information". HP finally recalls the symbolism of the globe/ball, suggesting that "you might want to rethink your company's game plan". The small HP logo and product image serve as a visual counterbalance to the immense globe/ball, connecting the entire advertisement and its message to the commodity being pitched.

At times the reader is forced to ask, "What is for sale here?" It is not always clear within the context of the advertisement; one may be asked to draw connections between what is taken as common ground or the shared experiences of popular culture and the message that is being presented in the advertisement. Another recent HP advertisement (see figure 5, over) combines a global image and an oyster shell, suggesting a "world in your oyster" reading (1993b). The advertisement is dominated by part of a huge, gold-trimmed plate, resting on a napkin with the recognizable Sheraton logo prominently displayed. Resting on the plate is an oyster shell containing a small image of the earth, apparently taken from interplanetary space. The image is centered on the Atlantic Ocean, prominently showing a large portion of North and South America, as well as a small bit of Europe and Africa. A bold-print text box in the upper right corner frames the image.

" Hewlett-Packard's open computer systems reach across 72 countries to help ITT Sheraton pamper their guests. While keeping the lid on costs."

In the detailed copy the advertisement makes a number of punnish claims such as "With low cost of ownership, scalable range of systems and global support, HP has delivered a world of value". In fact, later in the advertisement the glib copywriter states that you can "shell out less than you think for a gem of a system", one again transferring meaning in a confusing fashion between the globe, geostations, and computers. This type of offhand punning is common in current advertisements which invoke the global image.
HP is widely viewed as a model corporate citizen in the new global economy. The doyens of Silicon Valley electronics firms, HP was founded by Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard in 1939. It has consistently been named as one of the better companies in the USA to work for, with early implementation of a scholarship fund (1951), profit sharing (1961), abolition of time clocks (1962), flextime (1967), and a long-standing policy of no layoffs (Travis et al. 1992; Zahn, 1993; Wilsher, 1992). In fiscal year 1993, the 97,500 employees produced revenues in excess of $20 billion; about half of their sales coming from the USA and the rest from Asia and the Pacific Rim, Canada, and Latin America. The company is deeply involved in "re-engineering" corporate enterprises through its products and services, as evidenced by its Corporate Profile, presented in the 1993 Annual Report. "Our basic business purpose is to create information products that accelerate the advancement of knowledge and improve the effectiveness of people and organizations. The company's products and services are used in industry, business, engineering, science, medicine, and education in approximately 110 countries" (HP, 1993a).

In reality, however, it is a curious world that HP inhabits. Operating in "approximately 110 countries," spanning the Americas, Europe, and Asia with product-development centers, manufacturing centers, and country headquarters offices, it has managed to avoid entirely the former Soviet Union and more tellingly the continent of Africa with these higher level functions. The geography of HP reflects the geography of advanced capitalism with production, research and development, and management functions concentrated in North America, Western Europe, and Asia with major outposts in Australia, Latin America, and South Asia (1992; 1993c). Only one third of HP's 35 million ft² of manufacturing, marketing, and distribution centers is located outside the United States (1990) and 75% of this property and the associated real estate is owned outright by the company. As international expansion occurs HP utilizes US designers and site planners, and they manage their properties in order to...
maximize their appreciation potential. The speculation of company strategists with
regard to the strength of particular commercial real estate markets is a significant
consideration in their location strategy. Dennis Raney, director of real estate for HP,
commented on this aspect of company location strategy by noting that "there are
going to be significant speculative shifts in both the East and Europe—
opportunities beyond what we are likely to see in the US market" (1990). Profits
derived from real estate are to be directed into corporate earnings on a regular basis. It
is rather ironic that HP's international strategy, at least partially, is driven by its
assessments of commercial real estate markets, and this global reach adds value to its
manufactured products and corporate services.

In this instance the appropriated imagery of globalism used by HP in its advertis-
ing campaigns serves as a mask for the real spatial practice of the corporation. The
'global basketball' advertisement most closely adheres to Goddien's first dimension,
that of the globalization of capital and commodity relations. The glib rhetoric in the
advertisement copy contains several obvious and subtle references to wide-scope
capitalism and positions the commodity being pitched, HP computing systems,
favorably within the array of choices available to the reader through the use of a
testimonial from Spaulding, a corporate customer. The reader is asked to place him or
herself in the position of the successful multinational manufacturer of sporting
goods, establishing an equivalence with the pre-HP Spaulding and producing the
desire for HP's products and services. Thus does the global image, abstracted from a
system of cartographic symbols and meanings and inscribed on the ball commodity,
become currency itself in the exchange of meanings. A new set of social and
economic relations is valorized through the reader's own subjective 'reading' of the
signifying image. HP becomes the globalizing agent through its power to create a
new system of accumulation, etching the commodity/globe onto the corporate entity.
The transaction is completed by the reader's identification of the logo or morse,
cutting through the 'tongue-in-cheek' backstamping of the advertisement copy or frame and
the signifying image to establish equivalence between the commodity/sign (go-
bal empowerment) and the commodity (HP computing systems).

The global pearl advertisement asks the reader to make a more difficult transfer
of meaning. Using the same testimonial technique as the 'global basketball' adver-
sisment, this time with ITT Sheraton as the happy customer, HP asks us to establish an
equivalence between the apparently high standards of the successful Sheraton chain of
luxury hotels and its reengineering of the corporation's information systems. The
pearl/globe becomes the philosopher's stone, empowering its owner through mystical and
seemingly esoteric channels, redirecting values and knowledge or information to those fortunate enough to bask in its worldly glow. But unlike the
recent gem it has been equated with, this world can be acquired only through the
purchase of the goods and services of HP; for us, we know, Sheraton must have highly
rated room service, but they are normally not known to deliver pearls/globes to their
customer's rooms with their meals. The space-bound image of the jewel-like earth,
that which struck the human consciousness with such force when first acquired during
the 1960s, produced what Bachelard might have called collective daydream:
"Daydream undoubtedly feeds on all kinds of sights, but through a sort of natural
inclination, it contemplates grandeur. And this contemplation pressues an at-
itude that is so special, an inner state that is so unlike any other, that the day-
dream transports the dreamer outside the immediate world to a world that bears
the mark of infinity" (1958, page 183).
It is this recent historical contemplation of immensity that ascribes the power of the earth to the gaze of men, and this immensity another has taken on an era through of meanings. It becomes a "crystal ball" or a "magic wand", possessing mystical properties which endow it with the ability to mediate social relations, engender success in the management of biota-scale enterprises, or redirect corporate resources. It becomes the mirror of social life, we see in it our future self, transformed through our purchase of the commodity or image. Upon viewing its image we recall the first time that we embraced the immensity of the world and all that it contains, whether, in our recent vicarious experience of the space program or earlier in our socialization. The shared deep experience of the world, "worshipping" if you will, becomes the canvas on which advertisers invite us to sketch our commodified desire. To the degree that "the gaze" is accorded preeminence among the senses in establishing the veracity of claims, and that truth "induces regular effects of power" (Foucault, 1979, 1980, page 131) the form of the world image, first proposed by Polanek and finally confirmed by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), has become the signpost of our sandwich board of change in the late 20th century.

The advertisement as spectum mundi

In The Name of the Rose, 14th century Franciscan monk, William of Baskerville, struggling with the incompatibility of Roger Bacon's logic and patriarchal Christian spirituality observes that, "in order for there to be a mirror of the world, it is necessary that the world have a form." (1984, page 136). The modern practice of cartography gave the world of science a form, that of the globe, relying through scientific observation and deduction Aristotle's most perform form and condemning the mappa mundi of medieval Christianity to the eternal role of enlightenment whipping boy. Not until the 20th century, however, was that form captured and appropriated through photographic technique by the farthest human reach of that project, the US space program. As Cosgrove (1994) has pointed out, image 13777 and other similar photographic renderings, though often receiving passing interest from the Apollo scientists, were seized upon by the world public and subsequently appropriated and transformed into a commodity-sign by advertisers. This sign has become a part of our cultural landscape, and has been ascribed a chaotic set of meanings by advertisers and graphic artists ranging from 'new age' green political positions (exemplified by the Whole Earth Review) to the world-grasping ideology of free trade hinted at in the advertisements for HP. Our worlds have become so permeated by the sign that it need be merely suggested in the most rudimentary of sketches, witness the uninhibited "mind", "body", "planet" signs currently being used to hawk Fruitopia, Minute Maid, and Coca Cola. Indeed, the globe-sign is the perfect "mirror": once the relationship of equivalence has been established the consumer "fills-in" the approximate meaning, a meaning that in fact as well as fantasy includes him or her in the image.

Advertising is now the dominant discourse in the print and electronic media, buying access to an increasingly segmented media consumer and hence selecting what we can or cannot read or see in terms of news, entertainment, literature, and art. Advertisers (and their agents) hold immense power to shape our symbiotic experience of phenomena such as corporate restructuring, downsizing, job loss, and deskilling. Globalization is constantly used as a trope for various manifestations of the penetration of commodity relations into new realms and because such a chaotic assemblage of meanings are accepted in the context of globalization (for example, the global economy, global communications, global military power, the global environment, etc.), advertisers often playfully hope that consumers will assign a more benign
meaning to the image than the real concoctions globalization may carry for the poor.

Although the importance of advertising as a symbolic device useful in the construction of consumer identities and the creation of consumer desires cannot be underestimated, the explosion of global imagery in advertising in the late 20th century deserves attention as a special case of the production and marketing of a particular set of commodity-signs reflective of post-1989 triumphalist ideology. The production of social space occurs at many levels, and the global world of advertising may indeed be the specular realm of the 1990s. It is important to make certain that this mirror distorted and flawed much as the circus fun-house mirror of recent days past, is balanced with portrayals of globalization which expose the realities of production, trade, and consumption in the present era.

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