



HOW LIFESTYLE PRODUCTS BECAME ROOTED IN THE FINNISH
CONSUMER MARKET – DOMESTICATION OF JEANS,
CHEWING GUM, SUNGLASSES AND CIGARETTES

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ABSTRACT

The period from the mid 1950s until the “oil crisis” in 1973 marked a clear breakthrough for the modern consumer society in Finland. Television, advertising, cars and the rise of a commercial youth culture emerged as significant phenomena in the 1960s in Finland as in other Western European countries. This paper looks at the development of the modern Finnish consumer society from the point of view of advertising, modern marketing and the rising consumer culture. We base our presentation on our research on the diffusion of various new household products and on the history of Finnish advertising and television commercials during 1950-1980. The data comprise a variety of qualitative research materials covering cultural products like advertisements, films and magazine articles, as well as archive materials and interviews. One of our main findings concerns the power of American influences in Finnish advertising, television programmes and youth culture, despite the politically sensitive situation in post-war Finland. Jeans, sunglasses, chewing gum and cigarettes offer interesting cases that illustrate the process by which American cultural influences were transmitted into the Finnish consumer market. Design, popular culture, youth culture and fashion gradually gained more and more importance among Finnish consumers in the decades following the Second World War.

KEYWORDS

Lifestyle product, consumption, jeans, chewing gum, sunglasses, cigarettes



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
ADVERTISING IN THE 1960s – “THE CREATIVE REVOLUTION”	5
CASES 1 AND 2: JEANS AND CHEWING GUM – PROMOTING AN AMERICAN LIFESTYLE	7
JEANS – SYMBOL OF HOPE AND FREEDOM	7
FROM ROCK’N’ROLL THROUGH THE WILD WEST TO NATURALNESS.....	8
STARS AND STRIPES – NATURALLY!.....	11
JENKKI CHEWING GUM – HEALTHY THE AMERICAN WAY.....	13
CASE 3: SUNGLASSES – FROM UTILITY TO IMAGE.....	15
SHELL – “AFTER-MARKETING” SUNGLASSES.....	16
CASE 4: CIGARETTES – PURE LIFESTYLE.....	18
FROM GLAMOUR AND LUXURY TO DANGER AND ACTION	19
CONCLUDING REMARKS	21
REFERENCES	25

INTRODUCTION

Our empirical findings suggest that the arrival of new *lifestyle*¹ products into post-war Finland – a small import-dependent country – meant four different, although related, things. First of all, lifestyle products were the *historical outcome of transformation processes* in which consumer and producer interacted with each other. The original need for and function of products were transformed as they spread wider and wider. The motives for buying and using jeans, for instance, changed radically in the course of the 20th century, as former utilitarian use was replaced by leisure orientation.

Secondly, lifestyle products were *purposefully created for specific lifestyles by explicit marketing efforts*. Such efforts made use of specific “segmentation criteria” and “lifestyle categories” adapted from American marketing science and practice. Although the origin of modern marketing practice dates back to the early 20th century, new marketing ideas like segmentation were not articulated academically until the 1950s (Haley 1968; Smith 1956).

Thirdly, a lifestyle product tends to *integrate different practices, actors, ideals and material objects with one site and place (or product)*, both at the microscopic level of an individual household and the macroscopic level of society. American influences, combined with cultural imitation, had particular significance on the way lifestyle products captured the integrative role they have today, especially in Finnish youth culture.

The well-known advertising researchers Leiss, Kline and Jhalley described the 20th-century trend towards lifestyle advertising like this: “In the lifestyle ad, the dimension of consumption that provides the unifying framework of interpretation is action of behaviour appropriate to (or typical of) a social group or situation, rather than use, satisfaction, of utility.” (Leiss et al. 1997 (1990), 262.) Our data support their view. We further suggest that new types of lifestyle products keep emerging on the market, integrating into and determining our way of living.

When a new product appears on the market, it elicits an initial response in the consumer – whether rational deliberation or pursuit of pleasure or fashion. Such reactions are fed by the continual influx of new commodities. The critical question is: why do certain new commodities become *rooted*² in our daily lifestyle, whereas others do not? In this paper we seek a perspective on four different kinds of lifestyle products: jeans, chewing gum, sunglasses and cigarettes. To what extent has there been a shift from the utilitarian product-based mainstream view to leisure-oriented lifestyle advertising of these products and the ways other products have been integrated with them?

This paper is based on our studies on the diffusion of different household products in Finland and on the history of Finnish advertising and television commercials during 1950-1980. Our data consist of a variety of qualitative research materials from cultural products like advertisements, films and magazine articles to archive materials and interviews (Heinonen & Kontinen 2001; Kortti 2003; Pantzar 2000).

¹ For the concept *lifestyle*, see e.g. Chaney 1996.

² Instead of *rooting* we could choose another biological metaphor, *domestication*. “The fundamental distinction of domesticated animals and plants from their wild ancestors is that they are created by human labour to meet specific requirements or whims and are adapted to the conditions of continuous care and solicitude people maintain for them” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990).

Advertising in the 1960s – “The Creative Revolution”

The post-war period marked a clear breakthrough for the modern consumer society in Finland. The living standard of Finns had begun to rise already in the 1950s, but the real advent of the modern consumer society took place in the 1960s. In the first half of the 1950s the Finnish economy was just recovering from the war and leaving behind the remains of the wartime rationing system. The consumer goods market was still weak, although gaining strength, and economic growth was based on sizeable investments on the supply side. Whenever a new consumer good was launched, its demand was guaranteed. A period of vigorous growth began. The volume of private consumption as much as doubled between the years 1950 and 1975.³

Television, advertising, cars and the rise of a commercial youth culture emerged as significant phenomena in Finland in the 1960s, as in many other West European countries. American models played an important role there, as indicated by Heinonen and Pantzar.⁴ Certain institutions and individuals acted as intermediaries of these influences. As the modern consumer society was rapidly developing in the 1960s, it was American models that prevailed. Advertising was particularly open to American influences.

The 1960s have often been referred to as the decade of a “creative revolution” in the advertising business. This revolution started in the United States, and its leading figures were William Bernbach, Leo Burnett and David Ogilvy. They and the agencies they worked with modernized the way of doing advertising. Many big firms and important campaigns – like Volkswagen, Heinz, Lever, Gillette and Mobil (Bernbach), Kellogg’s and Philip Morris (Burnett), Schweppes and Shell (Ogilvy) – utilized their skill and expertise. In 1962 David Ogilvy published the book *Confessions of an Advertising Man* that aroused wide public attention. Ogilvy’s book was also translated into Finnish in 1968.

In the 1950s, the designers of advertising used to base their ads mainly on research. Ernest Dichter’s motivational research and the use of social scientific statistical methods were popular and the services of marketing research institutes were commonly applied in Finland as well.

The creative revolution, however, brought about a dramatic shift from science and research to art and inspiration (Fox 1997, 218). Television as a new medium transferred the emphasis to film and pictures, and added to the ways in which advertising could be presented to consumers. Advertisers discovered the power of the new medium, despite the high cost of producing a TV show or commercial (Samuel 2001, 13, 25).

The rise of television paved the way for the transition from the predominant personalized format towards a lifestyle format in advertising. The lifestyle format became the mainstream in North American advertising during the 1960s. The concept of market segmentation was also very central in American advertising at the time (Cohen 2003; Leiss et al. 1990, 6).

The lifestyle format and the idea of market segmentation were two leading principles which transformed the style of advertising in a variety of ways. Since their introduction, the most important change in the design of advertising been

³ Heinonen 1998, 252; 2000; Ilmonen 1993, 40.

⁴ Heinonen & Pantzar 2002.

connected to technical development and innovations like new communication technology.

Commercial television represented a giant step towards the consumer society in the everyday lives of the Finns. Yleisradio, the national broadcasting company, started television broadcasting in Finland on 13.8.1957. Commercials were shown already on the very first day. A multinational Western commodity culture literally invaded the living rooms of Finns after their austere existence in the post-war years. The late 1950s and early 1960s represented a period of profound change towards a consumer society. Advertising on television was beginning to take shape.⁵

Finnish advertising agencies tried to keep up with the international models of the advertising business. Finnish AD's and copywriters studied foreign, especially American, magazines. In the 1950s, international companies such as Unilever and various tobacco companies showed the way for designing big campaigns. Finnish advertising men and business leaders like Eljas Erkkö, Artturi Raula, Topi Törmä, Henrik Paulig, Armi Ratia and Heikki Huhtamäki had good contacts to the United States or travelled there to form such contacts. The ideas of marketing and market segmentation were adopted into Finnish advertising from the early 1960s onwards. However, the Finnish agencies of the mid 1960s had not yet embraced the organizational idea of the creative revolution – that is, the transfer of decision-making from the top of the organization to ground level. In the United States copywriters and art directors were forming teams that worked together very independently, while in Finland the model of decision-making was still very manager-centred. In the largest agencies the visualizers worked in their own departments and the copywriters in theirs (Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 156-157).

The leading agency in the transformation of Finnish advertising was SEK, a company founded already in 1935. It was among the biggest advertising agencies in Finland after the Second World War as measured by turnover. In 1968, for example, SEK ranked third after Oy Mainos Taucher and Erva-Latvala Oy (Kortti 2003, 111). Especially the young generation of Finnish advertising men – like Eero Kinnunen, Kari Mannerla, Kyösti Varis, Jaakko Ukkonen, Osmo Pasanen, Erkki Ruuhinen and Yrjö Turkama – borrowed the emphasis on creativity from international advertising. Eero Kinnunen, for example, named David Ogilvy and William Bernbach in the international arena and Leon Nordin from Sweden as his models. The ideas of market segmentation and teamwork gave good results at SEK. The agency won an international prize in 1965 in Italy and four years later in Cannes (Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 161).

Teamwork had been adopted as the basic organizational concept at SEK. In the late 1960s independent design teams were formed in which copywriters, art directors and designers worked together. The idea was to realize democracy in the workplace instead of using the old hierarchical organization model (Kortti 2003, 112-113). The non-hierarchical organization allowed more room for creativity.

Another 1960s development in Finnish advertising was internationalization. This trend began when Oy Liikemainonta Ab was sold to the American Interpublic group in 1966. By 1968 Oy Liikemainonta Ab was the fifth largest advertising agency in Finland by turnover (Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 163; Kortti 2003, 111).

⁵ Kortti 2003 21–40. English Summary pp. 443–445.

In the following we concentrate on four product groups – jeans, chewing gum, sunglasses and cigarettes – to describe the transformation of the emphasis in their marketing.

CASES 1 AND 2: JEANS AND CHEWING GUM – PROMOTING AN AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

There are interesting resemblances in the periods of “cultural evolution” between Finland and the United States. The progressive tone in nation building in both countries has reflected a type of “new frontier” ideology.⁶ Jeans, for their part, have in many ways been representative of this ideology and image. A variety of American images have also been used in Finnish advertising, for instance in promoting the Finnish chewing gum brand “Jenkki” (i.e. “Yankee”) by Huhtamäki.

Jeans – Symbol of Hope and Freedom

In our previous research (Heinonen et al. 2002) we suggested that the bulk of promotional material today continues to emphasize the very same themes as proposed by the founders of the jeans business. Among these historical remnants in user and use representations⁷ are *a frontier spirit*, *hard work* and *utilitarian arguments*. More recent images (or signs) include those of *rebellion*: e.g. young vs. old, activism; *casual style*: e.g. boots, buckled belt, T-shirt, cow jacket, Stetson hat; and *eroticism* (Heinonen et al. 2002).

The leading Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat carried an article about the origin of Finnish jeans on 18.3.1985. According to the story, in 1954 a Canadian visitor entered a small clothes factory in Helsinki’s industrial and working class area close to the harbour for cargo ships. This visitor was a sailor who was short of money and wanted to sell his trousers to the factory’s managing director. The director, however, was not willing to buy what the sailor described as “the latest fashion in America”, but he grew interested in the product idea. He proposed to exchange the worn trousers for a new pair plus a jacket. The designer of the company was then asked to draw a pattern based on the old dirty jeans the sailor had left behind. This was the starting point in the process that led to the introduction of the first “Vaaksa” jeans to the Finnish public. In the beginning there was only one retail outlet that was willing to accept the new product into its shops – but soon there was a real jeans boom in Finland.

⁶ Johnson 2001, 95. According to a story by the Finnish author Väinö Linna, society and material well-being began when Jussi, a Finnish pioneer, took a shovel and went to the swamplands, transforming the soil into productive agrarian land. The strong frontier spirit of the settlers in the American West was equally typical of Finnish peasants clearing their own wilderness. The American values of freedom and democracy were well-suited to Finland, where no court or powerful nobility had ever existed – contrary to the case in so many other European countries. Finnish society has an egalitarian tradition, strong roots in her agrarian peasantry and a national unity which was tested in the 1918 civil war but was regained during the hardships of World War II. Therefore, it is no big surprise that the image of jeans fared well in the Finnish context.

⁷ A thorough theoretical discussion about consumer representations can be found in: Hall 1997; Stern 1998. We use the term *representation* here in two senses. First, to represent something is to describe it. Second, “to represent also means to symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for; as in the sentence, ‘in Christianity, the cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ’ ” (Hall 1997, 16). Jeans, thus, might be said to represent the American frontier spirit.

The origin of jeans could, however, be traced back a hundred years when a man called Levi Strauss⁸ arrived in San Francisco. The first pair of jeans made by Levi Strauss was cut from the patterns for a Genoese sailor's trousers (15.5.1853 in San Francisco). The fabric was especially coarse, as Strauss first intended to sell the brown tent cloth he had brought in his baggage to gold diggers: "The hardy (gold) prospectors, who had gone West with their heavy, warm, and fragile woollen clothes, were most in need of garments which could withstand very rough treatment. These early jeans were an instant success."⁹

Levi Strauss, founder of the Levi Strauss & Co. jeans factory, learned right at the start of his career as a peddler on the East Coast that denim was a suitable material for work clothes. This rough homespun cloth was used to make highly durable work garments for plantation slaves. One can say, therefore, that the first users of jeans came from the very bottom of society. From then onwards, various different consumer representations have been attached to jeans. In the 19th century, user images were mainly related to practicality and work: gold prospectors and miners, farmers, cattlemen and cowboys, lumberjacks, and travellers.¹⁰

The 1950s and 1960s witnessed the arrival of jeans to Europe – and to Finland, too – on a massive scale. Their image was forcefully American. Film stars strengthened this image, but they also changed it. James Dean and Marlon Brando used the kind of macho jeans inherited from the cowboys. But contrary to the old legends, these film star users were young and restless men, even rebels of a sort. The shift from work to leisure orientation was obvious. In the 1960s women started wearing jeans as well. Marilyn Monroe pioneered the era of eroticised jeans. A few years later, along with the hippie movement, jeans began to be coded as unisex clothes. Such changes were not always greeted with delight in companies with traditional values, such as Levi Strauss & Co. Despite that, "sinful" things like drugs, fast cars, dangerous motorbikes and a counterculture of civil rights advocates and political activity against the Vietnam War became increasingly integrated into the jeans culture. Companies had a hard time trying to muddle through the many controversial pressures.

From Rock'n'Roll Through the Wild West to Naturalness

In the Finland of the 1950s, jeans still represented something of a protest. They were rather expensive and not very easy to acquire until home market production was started. American rock'n'roll music was spreading among Finnish youngsters in the major cities. The American movie *Rock Around the Clock*, starring "Bill Haley and His Comets", premiered in Helsinki in 1956 and was very influential among the young public. Jeans gradually became a symbol of youth rebellion. The Finnish clothes manufacturer Mattisen Teollisuus started the production of jeans for the domestic market in 1958.¹¹

⁸ Levi Strauss was born on 26.2.1829 in Buttenheim, Germany. In June 1847, he left Bavaria to join his brother-in-law, who had settled in New York.

⁹ Graveline 1990, 3.

¹⁰ Even though the jeans market revolution took place in the United States, the invention, material, style and brand name of the product were of European (and Jewish) origin. One might say that the history of jeans is much the history of Levi's.

¹¹ Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 136; Ruuhonen 2001, 33.

Mattisen Teollisuus was one of the early sponsors of television programmes¹² with its jeans brand “James”. It sponsored the show *Nuorten tanssihetki* (*Teenage Dance Hour*) on Tesvisio¹³ – the first show specifically for teenagers on Finnish TV and a kind of a Finnish version of the American *Bandstand*. ‘James’ also sponsored the American series *Tab Hunter* on Mainos-TV (later to become MTV3).

James jeans were the first really American-style denims. The advertising man Oie Salo¹⁴ claims that he himself suggested that the model for James should be taken from jeans he had bought from American sailors at Helsinki harbour while shopping for cigarettes and chewing gum. The brand name, of course, was borrowed from the hottest film star at the time: James Dean. At first Mattinen, an elderly commercial counsellor and head of the company, rejected the idea. But after Salo had taken the boss’s son, who was the executive manager of the factory, to see a James Dean film, the senior Mattinen also bought the idea. The copyright for the brand, initially “James Dean”, was purchased from Warner Bros. James jeans were an immediate success and continued as the biggest jeans brand in Finland until the mid 1970s.

Salo had grown up during the 1950s and belonged to the first real Finnish teenage subculture called “lättähätut” (“flathats”). They had a distinct dress code – specific style of suit, hat and “spitfires” – and they hung around together. Immediately after rock’n’roll began its invasion in 1956, the “flathats” adopted it as their own music. Salo later said that perhaps the main influences in his early career in advertising (and also his American accent in spoken English) came from American short films (cartoons, newsreels, etc.) which could be seen in certain movie theatres in Helsinki. They were called non-stops.

Many of the early rock’n’roll and pop stars in Finland performed on tours sponsored by James, and some of them like Kaj Lind, Timo Jämsen and the Norwegian(!) Jan Rohde also played in James commercials. After the mid 1960s, the referent system¹⁵ for James advertising was usually the mythical American Wild West – the “birthplace” of jeans. Beside being their place of origin, the Wild West was an organic element in jeans advertising, and Western themes were particularly popular in other media as well. The mythology of the Wild West has been widely utilized in Finnish advertising ever since the 1950s. Besides films and American TV series (like *Bonanza*, *The Virginian*), influences were also taken from pulp fiction and cartoons (*Pecos Bill*, *Tex Willer*). In the late 1960s the share of American TV series of all television programmes in Finland was particularly prominent: almost 50 percent on Yleisradio and even over 90 percent on MTV3. In

¹² Finland was among the first European countries to introduce advertising on TV. Sponsored programmes were the predominant feature of the first years of Finnish commercial television. These shows were also mostly made by advertising agencies. Sponsored shows formed the basis of the whole television business in the ‘Golden Age of Television’ in America (1940s and 1950s), but Finland was the first country in Europe to allow this kind of broadcasting. Sponsored programmes were often live shows, so it is no longer possible to review them. Sponsoring ended in the mid 1960s when the commercial TV company Mainos-TV took over the making and production of all its programmes. Sponsoring only came back into Finnish TV as late as the 1990s.

¹³ Tesvisio was the first, independent, and commercially financed TV company in Finland. It was founded by students of technology and started in 1955. Tesvisio sent the first commercially financed television programme in Finland in spring 1956 sponsored by the cigarette brand Boston. The story of Tesvisio ended in 1964, when national broadcasting company Yleisradio bought it after Tesvisio had encountered an economic crisis. Tesvisio was shown only in southern Finland – besides Helsinki it had a channel in Tampere. TV2, another of Yleisradio’s branches, was formed from this Tampere station in 1964.

¹⁴ Salo 2001.

¹⁵ ‘Referent systems’ are clearly ideological systems and draw their significance from areas outside advertising. See Williamson 1988 (1978), 17, 19.

other words, altogether 67 percent of Finnish TV programming was American and in 1963 it exceeded 70 percent. The two most popular series in the late 1960s among youngsters – the main market segment for jeans - were the American Western series *Bonanza* and the Finnish show *Spedevio* with its regular Wild West parodies.¹⁶

The James advertising film¹⁷ *Karjapiha* (*Stockyard*, 1966) shows teenagers wearing James outfits and dancing on a Wild West set complete with wagons, horses and hay bales. The sound track plays banjo-led Western-style music. The lyrics go something like this in English: “The Wild West arrives / With the man from the West / And something new arrives / With the man from the West / He wears Wild Western James jeans / Soon you’ll be wearing them too / He fires three shots (*background chorus, excitedly:*) Bull’s eye! / Come on to James’ horse stables / In the style of the Wild West / Come on and wear / James jeans in every kind of weather”. The film ends with the cowboy blowing the smoke from the barrel of his revolver and smiling at the camera. This “Westerner” was played by the popular Finnish singer Viktor Klimenko, who later became known as “The Russian Cossack”(!).

The same song, only slightly modified, was used two years later in another jeans commercial, *James kultakuume* (*James Gold Rush*). Now the set is Klondike with people panning for gold at a stream. This time the Westerner is a gold prospector who resembles the Wild West characters of Spede Pasanen¹⁸. In one sequence, the Klondike man fires his gun at the camera, and with every shot a beautiful girl model pops up by the stream. The models’ outfits, however, look like they are from Carnaby Street, London’s 1960s fashion street – not the Wild West.

In the 1960s, Finnish advertising agencies and marketing people started to use the phrase “youth fashion”. Pop music at last made its breakthrough among the young Finnish audience. By 1967, pop music had established its position as the music style of youth and as a form of expression open to everyone young. Jeans became an important symbol of popular youth culture. An advertisement for Finnish James jeans, *King of the Road*, shows a young man wearing jeans – but no shirt.¹⁹ At this point in the 1960s, Finnish youth can be said to have finally become the target of serious marketing efforts.

Indeed, although the use of the Wild West as a set and a referent system can be regarded as lifestyle advertising, as an advertising code it was quite obvious and an old, much used myth. Encoding something modern – young, free and natural – into the product called for alternative, new types of codes. In a James commercial from the early 1970s, young people are horseback-riding on a beach. Waves are crashing onto the shore, splashing on the riders as well. In one sequence, we see a jeep following the riders with somebody filming the couple on the roof of the car. Lots of slow motion and fast editing is used. The commercial ends with the text: *Elä Jameksissa* (*Live in James jeans*).

¹⁶ Minkinen 1970, 12; Alaketola-Tuominen 1989, 42-43; Harms et al. 1970, 4,6,14.

¹⁷ This was not just a TV commercial since the film was in colour, which meant that it had been shown in movie theatres as well – Finnish TV was black-and-white until 1970.

¹⁸ Pertti “Spede” Pasanen (1930-2001) is the most popular personality – producer, director, scriptwriter, comic and actor – of all time in the Finnish entertainment business. He parodied the Wild West in many of his films and TV shows like *Spedevio*, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Later, he was the majority shareholder in the film production company Filmitalli, which produced commercials – especially jeans commercials – and was famous for its American-style advertising.

¹⁹ Frith 1988, 202, 220; Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 165.

Stars and Stripes – Naturally!

At the turn of the 1970s, the European enchantment with America began to crumble. Consumption and other “orgies”, as the French theoretician and philosopher Jean Baudrillard put it, were starting to cause a hangover for the first time. Especially the poorly justified Vietnam War – the first TV war – raised serious protests both in America and in Europe. The loudest demonstrations of protest came from the new youth culture: the hippies. The focus of their protest was American capitalism. In both the European and the American varieties of this counterculture, anti-capitalism and anti-Americanism meshed seamlessly together. The critique of what was seen as shallowness in American culture stemmed from a more general critique of capitalism. What capitalism had done to America, it would, it was feared, do to other cultures elsewhere.²⁰

The hippie movement and anti-Americanism were not as prominent in Finland as in other West European countries.²¹ Yet the atmosphere of international relations in the early 1970s was dominated by the Vietnam War, and there was an anti-American sentiment also in Finland because of the war. The Finnish peace movement, the strengthened political Left, and the rising student movement were particularly critical of the United States. Critical voices had been heard from the late 1960s onwards.²²

But how did all this affect advertising and jeans – an All-American image? Were there any signs of protest or the hippie counterculture? Yes indeed, the hippie philosophy and specifically its emphasis on naturalness can be found encoded into several kinds of products that were advertised in the early 1970s – in jeans ads as well. Alongside Wild Western mythology there was also a more “modern” Americana. Jeans advertisements now portrayed warm and peace-loving feelings of togetherness, like in the “Saints” jeans commercial of the Finnish clothing company Seppälä (1974). A group of young people are gathered together in a stable or barn. One of them is playing a guitar, another a banjo, yet another a harmonica. The singer (who resembles John Lennon) sings: “ We took to our wings (*a picture of a flying eagle*) / Along with the west wind / The views are changing / The clouds above, the earth below / The sky above / The earth below / Saints – a new brand of jeans / Saints – the colour of indigo / Saints – a whole new jeans idea / Saints jeans – they’re made for us.”

The “west wind” brings new freedom and new views, representing the whole idea of jeans. The message in this commercial is a kind of anti-anti-Americanism. Although its lifestyle is relaxed and free, the picture we get of this type of American-based jeans ideology is something different than the capitalism critique of hippie ideology. The song is in country & western style, banjo-led, melodic and easy. The writer of the song, filmmaker Juha Tapaninen, was a student of the

²⁰ Kroes 1996, 27.

²¹ Nevertheless, as Marja Alaketola-Tuominen points out, anti-Americanism was basically an American phenomenon. (See Alaketola-Tuominen 1989, 76-116.) Also, Anti-Americanism was much less powerful in Finland than in Sweden, where the United States came under severe criticism from groups of young middle-class students, and eventually from the Swedish government. In 1968, Prime Minister Olof Palme marched in an antiwar demonstration together with the North Vietnamese ambassador to Sweden (O'Dell 1997, 14; Steene, 1998, 182.) On European Americanization see also: Epitropoulos, Roudometof 1998, 3; Bryn 1992, 26-28; Jørgensen 1998, 70; Gulliksen 1998, 117.

²² For example, the internationally well-known Finnish philosopher Georg Henrik von Wright wrote a long critical article that was published in many newspapers in the Nordic countries in November 1967. He was worried about the state of democracy and its future in the United States. A critical attitude towards the Vietnam War rose rapidly in the late 1960s among Finnish university students. The Finland-Vietnam Society was founded in 1971. (Bonsdorff 1986, 185-191.)

American-based folk movement in Finland in the middle of the 1960s.²³ Ten years later folk music experienced a revival and there was a sort of country & western enthusiasm – especially in 1976 with the United States’ bicentennial celebration.²⁴

The 1970s might be called the real “jeans decade” in Finland. Several new Finnish companies were founded which manufactured jeans, either of their own make or by licence. Mattisen Teollisuus had to give way in the face of tightening competition, which finally led to the bankruptcy of the company. Still in 1974, James held a share of 60 percent of all jeans clothes manufactured in Finland. Its biggest market was in the rural areas, whereas new jeans brands were already gaining popularity among the urban youth.²⁵

In many ways, the 1970s was the golden age of youth fashion and youth advertising in Finland. Seppälä specialized in young people’s fashion and began to expand its business. The firm created brands like “Jeans Machine” and “S-style”. Teinitalo was another important supplier and advertiser of youth fashion in the early 1970s.²⁶ Later on, new young people’s fashion shops (like Kluuvari and Mic Mac) were established. Jeans and long hair among boys and young men had become universal symbols of youth fashion in Finland as in the most Western countries.

Sex and nudity burst into advertising at the turn of the 1970s. This was more than just a reflection of the free attitudes towards sexuality and sexual relationships made possible by the revolutionary new contraceptive – the “pill”. A “Lee Cooper” commercial from 1974 starts with a picture of the butts of naked couples, followed by short clips of dancing feet. The ad-song goes like this: “Swingin’ fits / Lee Cooper, Lee Cooper, Lee Cooper, Lee Cooper / Fits your butt / Swings your thighs / Lee Cooper, Lee Cooper.” At the end there is a Lee Cooper logo with the text: “Live super”. Naturalness and sex were thus encoded into the world of new a jeans generation. Lee Cooper is a British brand, which was licensed to the Finnish Blueman Company in 1974. Lee Coopers were so-called “compromise trousers”, which were meant to fit both male and female users. Quite soon it became clear that this kind of jeans did not match the Finnish body shape – especially the female – and so they had to be refashioned to fit Finnish butts and hips.²⁷

If anything, Americana gained more popularity as the advertising referent system for jeans in the 1970s. Jeans were also associated more and more with youth music. Linking jeans with the very commercial American-style editorial policy of the youth magazine *Suosikki* and the most popular rock band in Finland at that time, The Hurriganes (updated 50s rock’n’roll boogie), created a kind of “stars and stripes” fashion in Finland in the 1970s. The Hurriganes was sponsored by the Finnish jeans brand “Beaver’s”²⁸ and the band attracted a large following of fans in Sweden as well. Besides jeans and hair oil, The Hurriganes advertised Shell fuels in a rocking advertising film, *On the Road*, made in 1976. This was a short story about the hard road life of a rock band touring Finland in a wintry landscape, driving an American car and dressed in jeans and leather jackets, with a tight rock’n’roll boogie as the soundtrack.

²³ Tapaninen.2001.

²⁴ Bruun et al. 2001, 225.

²⁵ Vuorela 1976, 4.

²⁶ Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 229; Ruohonen 2001, 29; Salo 1999, 165.

²⁷ Vuorela 1976, 3.

²⁸ Bruun et al. 2001, 210.

The connection between the advertising industry and popular culture grew closer during the 1970s. After its breakthrough in Finland in the 1960s, television was becoming increasingly important also as an advertising medium. Colour TV broadcasts were started at the beginning of the 1970s, and television emerged as the principal medium for popular culture, youth fashion, musical styles, TV series, soap operas and movies.

Jenkki Chewing Gum – Healthy the American Way

Another product group that utilized lots of American images in its marketing in Finland was chewing gum. Chewing gum had been invented by Thomas Adams, a New York photographer and entrepreneur, in 1871. He was making experiments with chicle, a latex from the sapodilla tree, brought to the United States by the Mexican General Antonio de Santa Ana. The general wanted to find a commercial use for chicle, which Mexicans had been fond of chewing for hundreds of years. Thomas Adams added a liquorice flavour to the gum, and managed to commercialize the product. Real commercial success, however, was not attained until the launching of Wrigley's "Spearmint" and "Juicy Fruit" chewing gum in 1893 by Thomas Wrigley Jr. (Richardson 2002, 279-280).

Today, the unstoppable rise of sugar-free or dental-health promoting chewing gum is one of the main trends in the global sweets industry (Richardson 2002, 8). Dental- health promoting *xylitol* was invented by a Finnish scientist in the 1970s. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, the chewing gum business is exploiting new markets in Asia and Eastern Europe. In the decades following the Second World War, chewing gum was gradually transformed from a sweet sold mainly to children and youngsters into a health-promoting good for everybody.

The Finnish enterprise Hellas introduced its own brand of chewing gum, "Jenkki", in 1951. Hellas was part of the Huhtamäki group, which comprised several companies producing food products and pharmaceuticals in the 1950s. The head of the parent company had close contacts with the United States. The group's companies were quick to adopt new marketing methods and modern ways of packaging and distribution. The Huhtamäki group was one of the pioneers of consumer packaging in Finland. With its Jenkki chewing gum and some other branded sweets like "Skottitoffee" and "Pelastusrengas", Hellas did rather well during the 1950s and 1960s in an increasingly keen competition with its main competitor Fazer.²⁹ Hellas used collecting cards to market its sweets. Chewing gum packages contained cards showing pictures of interesting phenomena in popular culture or the consumer society – pop stars and new cars, for example. Collecting items and other by-products were used frequently as a marketing means in Finland in the mid 1960s.³⁰

Chewing gum was advertised in the 1960s with children and adolescents as the main target groups. The few advertising films ordered by Hellas, for instance, were cartoons.³¹ These were short stories with the leading idea that you could blow bubbles with chewing gum and make a snapping noise when you burst the bubble. In the course of the decade, however, popular youth culture and pop idols became more important also in chewing gum advertisements.

²⁹ Vesikansa 1995, 91.

³⁰ See also Kortti 2003, 276, 357–382; Onnela 1989, 73; Vihtonen 1986.

³¹ *Leijona (The Lion)* 1957, Biopta Oy; *Pankkirosvo (The Bankrobber)* 1964, Filmitalo; *Professori Hajamieli (The Absent-minded Professor)* 1964, Filmitalo.

Closer ties between the media, the movie industry, popular culture and the advertising business supported the various advertising efforts targeted at youngsters. In the 1970s, the use of pop idols, music groups, jeans and other youth fashions, motorcycles and big American cars was very popular in advertising aimed at youth. One of the most favourite Finnish pop idols at the time was Irwin Goodman. His hit song *Poing, poing, poing* was used in two Jenkki chewing gum commercials in 1972. In the other one Irwin himself sang and played guitar.³²

Jenkki advertisements, thus, made frequent use of pop groups and singers in the 1970s. A commercial produced in 1974 shows a hippie-type rock band playing at a party by a swimming pool, then running together in the snow. The film contained strong elements of lifestyle advertising: young people having a good time partying together. Two other Jenkki commercials in 1976 featured Maarit, one of the most popular Finnish female pop singers at the time.³³

Although stars and stripes were often used as symbols of Americanism, the flag of the Southern States became an even more powerful symbol to young people who idealized the rock'n'roll music of the 1950s. This 50s-style subculture called "diinarit" ("deaners", after James Dean) spread in Finland especially after the bicentennial anniversary of the United States in 1976.³⁴ "Deaners" used the confederate flag as their symbol, wore greasy hair and dressed like American youth in the 1950s.

Similar American influences in television advertising are seen perhaps at their strongest in the Jenkki commercial *Teddy Guitar* made in 1979.³⁵ At that time, "Teddy & the Tigers" was one of the most popular rock bands in Finland playing 50s-style music. In the commercial the band plays a rock-a-billy song and drives big American cars in uniform outfits and greasy hairstyles. They look like any American rock-a-billy group in the 1950s. *Teddy & the Tigers* was, in fact, the figurehead for the "deaners" subculture.

Menthol and fruit flavours were added to the traditional spearmint and peppermint flavours of Jenkki chewing gum in the 1970s (sugarless Jenkki was launched in 1974). These flavours were presented in two commercials with clear lifestyle encoding. They depict young, sporty and fashionably dressed people spending leisure time together: driving a big American car, dancing, doing sports, sleigh-riding and taking a ride in a hot-air balloon.³⁶ All these are obvious elements of lifestyle advertising: leisure, sports and togetherness. Both commercials had the same theme song.

At the beginning of the 1970s Huhtamäki and its biggest competitor, Fazer, made a deal about the division of labour in the Finnish sweets business. According to the deal, Huhtamäki's Hellas acquired the production of chewing gum in 1973.³⁷ A couple of years later, in 1975, Huhtamäki began to use a new ingredient, *xylitol*, in the production of chewing gum. The development of this ingredient was based on research conducted by professor Kauko Mäkinen and doctor Pauli Isokangas, and it was patented by Suomen Sokeri (later Cultor) in 1974. These Finnish scientists had proved that the regular use of xylitol chewing gum reduces the risk of dental caries considerably. The new "Xylitol Jenkki" gradually grew into a success brand. In 1977 the production process was patented in the United States. Xylitol research continued in the 1980s under the leadership of professor Mäkinen. Finally, in 1988

³² *Maalarit (Painters)* 1972, Filmteam Kotkavuori; *Irwin* 1972, Filmteam Kotkavuori.

³³ *Supermint* 1974, Filmteam Kotkavuori; *Maarit* 1976, Filmitalli; *Maarit/Competition* 1976, Filmitalli.

³⁴ Bruun et al. 1998, 209, 266-269; Kortti 2001, 75.

³⁵ *Teddy Guitar* 1979, Storyfilmi.

³⁶ *Kelkkailu (Sleigh-ride)* 1977, Filmitalli; *Kuumailmapallo (Hot-air Balloon)* 1978, Filmitalli.

³⁷ Vesikansa 1995, 175-176.

Huhtamäki and the Finnish Dental Association signed an agreement on cooperation in the marketing of xylitol chewing gum. The Finnish Dental Association issued a recommendation on the use of xylitol which was used in the advertising of Xylitol Jenkki.³⁸

Although Xylitol Jenkki was essentially a health-promoting product, its “functionality” was not in the foreground in the commercials. Instead, the distinct lifestyle element and the influence of popular culture in the symbolic language of the ads grew stronger in the 1980s. Huhtamäki group embarked on an internationalisation strategy (especially after 1983), buying three American companies, including Leaf. The goal was to gain a foothold in the international sweets business.³⁹ In the 1980s, most of the Jenkki commercials were filmed in the United States.

The Jenkki chewing gum commercials of the 1980s were full of Americana – American cars, motorcycles, beautiful young women, American policemen, or Indians, gasoline stations, Greyhound buses and modern-day drifters in cowboy clothes, wearing sunglasses and chewing on Jenkki.⁴⁰ The stories were mostly about people spending leisure-time together, travelling and enjoying themselves.

In the 1990s, although American symbols still continued to be important, other elements were now gaining ground: popular sports like sailing, water-skiing and snowboarding or new ethnic themes of globalisation. At the same time, Huhtamäki made the decision to start producing its advertising material elsewhere than in the United States, for example in India and Australia. The reason was simple: it had become too expensive to produce films in the “country of great promise”. The themes of the commercials also changed toward an emphasis on multiculturalism and diversity of ideals and idols. How much this shift was due to financial considerations and how much of it had to do with a new ideology, remains an open question.

We picked sunglasses as the third kind of lifestyle product to be examined here. It is a known fact that Arctic inhabitants, for instance, have for centuries used natural aids to protect their eyes from the glare of sunlight on ice by wearing a thick fabric of woven animal hairs over the eyes. What happened when these natural aids were replaced by the innovation of sunglasses as protection from the sun?

CASE 3: SUNGLASSES – FROM UTILITY TO IMAGE

In ancient history, when people wanted to protect their eyes, the dominant reason was a functional need. The earliest mention of sunglasses dates back to Roman times. Emperor Nero used to protect his eyes from the glare of sunlight with an emerald. The Chinese blackened the lenses of their spectacles with soot already before the mid 15th century. However, they did not blacken the lenses for sun protection but to hide their emotions. It was customary for Chinese judges to wear spectacles with smoke-blackened quartz lenses in court to hide the expression of their eyes. Whether the judge found the evidence laid before him plausible or fallacious was to remain concealed until the end of the trial. Later on the Chinese

³⁸ Vesikansa 1995, 272-273.

³⁹ Vesikansa 1995, 237-249.

⁴⁰ For example, *Matkalla (On the Road)* 1981, StoryFilmi; *Cinnamon* 1982, StoryFilmi; *Greyhound* 1982, StoryFilmi; *Jenkkilässä (In Yankeeland)* 1984, StoryFilmi; *Intiaani (The Indian)* 1989, StoryFilmi; *Cowboy* 1989, StoryFilmi; *Cadillac Ranch* 1989, StoryFilmi.

did discover the benefits of blackened lenses as a protection from glare as well. (Andressen 1998)

Sunglasses became fashionable on a massive scale in Europe during the 1920s: “When outdoor sports like tennis, sailing, mountain climbing, and ultimately sunbathing became socially acceptable in the 1920s, dark glasses began to become widespread as symbols of athletic prowess, healthy living, success and youthfulness” (Andressen 1998, 178). Also “high-speed” car driving made it necessary to replace parasols and hats by dark glasses as protection from the sun. However, it was not until the 1950s that sunglasses were also recognized as a way of presenting oneself in an attractive light. Fashion finally took over. (Andressen 1998,182)

When Hollywood celebrities of the 1950s – stars like Elke Sommer, Peter Sellers and Anita Ekberg – were shown wearing “Foster Grant” sunglasses, these obviously acquired an extra function as a sign of identity. Sunglasses became *chic*. In the 1960s, brand names added value to the lives of ordinary men. “Porsche Carrera”, “Jaguar” and “Alan Delon” sunglasses underscored a tough guy image. Women in the hippie age wore jumbo-sized sunglasses with multicoloured frames. Dior was one of the first couturiers to include huge sunglasses in their collection. (Andressen 1998)

In the 1970s and 1980s, modern men and women increasingly discovered the mysterious aura that sunglasses could lend them. Sunglasses were used as a fashion accessory even when the sun was not shining, worn pushed back on the head. In the 1980s, it became fashionable to hang the glasses from a neck cord.

The United States military had made an important contribution to the development of sunglasses. In the 1930s, the Army Air Corps had commissioned the Bausch&Lomb optical company to make high-quality lenses to protect the eyes of pilots from the glare of the sun when they were flying at high altitudes. Pilots received these new glasses, which were very soon on sale for everybody under the trade name “Ray Ban Pilots’ Glasses”. (The dark green glasses absorbed light in the yellow range of the spectrum – therefore: Ray Ban.) This was the first time that sunglasses were launched as a brand name. In 1952 Bausch&Lomb introduced a new model, “Wayfarer”, which became as much of a cult object as the pilots’ glasses. It was Peter Fonda who made Ray Bans a similar cult object in *Easy Rider* in 1969 as Marilyn Monroe had made Wayfarers some time earlier.

Sunglasses came to Finland on a massive scale quite late. The years of *Easy Rider* were important in spreading their use. The advertising campaigns of the oil distributor Shell illuminate both the rise of the “sunglass culture” and the need transformation required for the diffusion of a new product.

Shell – “After-marketing” Sunglasses⁴¹

In the mid 1960s Shell Finland introduced so-called “after-market” marketing: the oil company began to advertise different items that could be bought at Shell gas stations. At first, most of these products were directly associated with motoring, including items like snow spades or hawsers. Towards the end of the decade the products advertised for the purpose of increasing gas sales had little to with cars any more – among them were items like mothproof bags, bobsleighs and beach balls.

⁴¹ This chapter is mostly based on Kortti 2003, 365–382 (English Summary pp. 447–449).

The idea of after-marketing in the oil business had been originally conceived in Finland, but it was so successful that it spread all over Europe. Shell Finland's after-marketing campaign in the late 1960s and early 1970s was called the "super-offer" campaign. Television was its main advertising medium.

Already before the actual super-offer campaign, the prefix *super* was already associated with products marketed by Shell. The campaign was launched in 1965 and the *super*-prefix was used for Shell gasoline and motor oil. Slogans like "My man is a *Superman*" and "*Super Gasoline for Supermen*" were used. The campaign certainly aimed at being suggestive, and it was addressed to "men and women alike", as the spokesman for the advertising agency behind the campaign wrote in the trade magazine.⁴²

The first TV commercial of the super-offer campaign advertised sunglasses. The commercial shows drivers in their cars being blinded by the slanting rays of spring sunlight. The narrator speaks (loose translation): "Spring sunshine. One-eyed Pete. Squinting Simon. Superman and sunglasses. The super-offer in March: polarized sunglasses. For a special price. At Shell gas stations." The commercial ends showing the "Superman" wearing sunglasses.

The primary purpose of sunglasses, the product advertised in the commercial, was to make driving easier. Although sunglasses were connoted to the Superman, the marketing images are quite "pure" and the emphasis is on use value: sunglasses facilitate driving. This was also how viewers reacted – and marketing professionals as well. The columnist "Vilkkusilmä" applauded the spot in the trade magazine *Mainosuutiset (Advertising News)*: "... it does a great deal for traffic safety."⁴³

Quite soon after this, Shell Finland's advertising campaign changed radically. The "creative revolution" had found its way into Finnish advertising as well. The team behind Shell's marketing (the company's open-minded marketing manager; SEK, the most creative advertising agency at the time with its copywriters and art directors working in a team; and Crea-Filmi, a new, rapidly growing film production company) was modern, creative and efficient – their synergy really worked. Shell Finland is not, however, a typical example in the context of Finnish advertising in the 1960s, because its marketing language differs distinctly from the rest, both in a marketing and a cinematic sense. One might say that Shell Finland's advertising in those days was quite unique.

The new campaign was personalized by the "Supergirl", performed by top model Seija Tyni. The Supergirl soon became associated with Shell and eventually meant the same thing. As a product personalization, the Supergirl created the image of the whole company. She was a modern action character, incorporating influences from popular fiction characters like James Bond and Modesty Blaise in her outfits and lifestyle. In each spot, the Supergirl had a new role. She was seen, for example, as a boxer, a soldier, a rally and motor-cross driver, a karate player, etc. The campaign was perhaps not "pure" lifestyle advertising in the sense that the use of the advertised product was indicated⁴⁴, but it certainly presented a new way of life. The many roles of the Supergirl can also be seen as a sign of a new type of subjectivity. The meaning of a subject and subjectivity was changing along with the modernization of Finland. The individualized subject became more important. It was no longer a question of a complete self, but a fragmented being with many selves or identities. The culture of consumption – especially as realized in advertising – now offered more possibilities for different identities and images.

⁴² Silvennoinen, *Sektor* 3/65.

⁴³ Pen-name Vilkkusilmä, *Mainosuutiset* 4/66, 4.

⁴⁴ Leiss et. al. 1997 (1990), 292.

Sunglasses were launched again in 1967 in connection with the Supergirl – only one year had passed from the previous campaign. The style was totally different, however. Now the Supergirl is a teacher, sitting behind the teacher’s desk and looking down at the watch she wears on a chain around her neck. The loud tick-tock of an old grandfather’s clock is heard in the background. Then suddenly the school bell rings. The unmistakable, very low bass voice of the narrator (voice-over was an organic element in Shell Finland’s commercials until the 1990s and was imitated in numerous contemporary commercials): “Suddenly it is 3 p.m. Polarized sunglasses. Now for 12:80. They change your whole world. For a special price. At Shell.” During the speak, the Supergirl removes her spectacles and puts the sunglasses on. At that same instant her hair falls down and the topknot hairdo changes into a glamorous coiffure. The last scene shows a race car curving away on an icy road.⁴⁵

This kind of self-transformation is one of the variants in so-called personalized ads. These are advertisements in which people undergo a change – usually for the better – as a result of possessing or using the advertised product. Consumers are invited to imagine themselves in a more idealized state.⁴⁶ In the Shell ad, the conventional teacher is transformed into an aggressive Supergirl.⁴⁷

The manner in which sunglasses were now advertised was totally different from the ad just one year before. The new style of advertising no longer emphasized the utility value of the product. The connotations created a new concept or myth⁴⁸ for it. Sunglasses now signified a modern, dynamic, fast lifestyle rather than a means by which to make driving easier. They began to represent the same kind of things that we are used to nowadays.

CASE 4: CIGARETTES – PURE LIFESTYLE

Another business – besides oil companies – that was in the vanguard of modern marketing in Finland in the 1960s was the tobacco industry. Although there were only a few companies, they had many different brands of cigarettes on the market. Especially in the first years of Finnish television, these companies were perhaps the most important advertisers. The tobacco company Amer, for example, was the most important sponsor of Tesvisio, Finland’s first TV broadcasting company. The selection of sponsored programmes was wide, ranging from quiz shows to ballet. Overall, with their large amount of capital, tobacco companies were imposingly engaged in the development of television advertising, until public opinion and legislative action began to restrict tobacco advertising on television. A total ban came into effect in 1978.

Tobacco had arrived from America to Europe with Columbus about 500 years ago. Smoking soon spread all over the old continent with sailors and travellers. To Finland tobacco came in the 15th century, and the Finnish tobacco industry was set up in the 18th century. Cigarettes then arrived in the mid 19th century from Russia and their manufacture in Finland started in 1856. When the manufacture of cigarettes was mechanized, smoking grew explosively. The cigarette was a commodity of the modern mechanical age: fast, short, standard, and easy to use.

⁴⁵Supergirl’ was featured as a rally driver in another sport of the campaign and Seija Tyni, the model who played her was actually a rally driver for Renault in real life.

⁴⁶ Leiss et al. 1997 (1990), 254.

⁴⁷ The transformation implies intertextual references to American “superhero” comics in which an ordinary man is transformed into a superhuman like Superman, who saves the world or at least overcomes evil.

⁴⁸ See Barthes 1973 (1957).

The two World Wars and other international conflicts were significant in spreading cigarette smoking. Later on in the 20th century, factors like growing urbanization, improved mobility, the media, and the radical replacement of traditional values further increased smoking. Finnish women began to smoke on a larger scale along with their (sexual) liberation in the 1960s (the “pill”, the women’s movement, etc.). Smoking was also associated with the so-called “wet generation” – Finnish baby-boomers with new, more liberal drinking habits. Moreover, the post-war rise of popular culture had an enormous impact on smoking for both sexes. The Finnish tobacco industry flourished in the 1950s and 1960s.

From Glamour and Luxury to Danger and Action⁴⁹

For the above reasons, tobacco commercials were a distinctive feature of advertising in the 1960s. Not only do they tell us about the development of Finnish advertising and the evolving regulations, but also about the first years of television broadcasting as a whole in Finland.

Tobacco commercials have, in fact, been able to preserve something unique about the turning point of Finnish society in the 1960s, especially with respect to signs of lifestyle advertising and product images. The industry used images of glamour, luxury, wealth, success, romance, pride, individuality, relaxation, adventure, danger, action, freedom, pleasure, happiness, friendship, style, sportiness and youth in its advertisements. Many of these are, as such, elementary features of modern life.

Modern lifestyles were in focus, for example, in the 1962 commercial for Bristol cigarettes by Amer. Although lifestyle advertising often implies suggestive, unconscious elements, this commercial does not leave much room for them. The spot starts by the narrator talking to the camera: “Why does a man like you smoke Bristol? A man seeks success. That’s why he chooses Bristol. Bristol carries the mark of success. It is so successful that you get Bristol at the old price but in a new, modern package. It’s longer and more stylish.” The set shows a picture of modern city, either a painting or really meant to create the image of a modern urban milieu (in the latter function it is quite artless). The next scene shows the “painting” in full size, with a woman posing in front of it like a mere object. Closer to the camera, a man holds a pack of Bristol cigarettes in his hand, lights one and inhales the smoke. The narrator goes on to say: “Get to know success. Pay less – and say: Thanks... but I prefer Bristol.”

The settings in the cigarette commercials of the 1950s and 1960s often told about success, luxury and glamour. “Menthol Meil” was the first menthol cigarette in Finland, launched by Amer in 1959. Its commercial from 1961 shows scenes from an airport, an alpine skiing resort and a sailing club. These may no longer sound so glamorous today, but at the turn of the 1960s Finland was still a poor post-war country and very few had an opportunity to visit places like that. Besides suggesting luxury and glamour, the scenes describe the freshness of a new kind of cigarette taste. Voice-over: “There’s a new wind blowing across the world. In it you can feel the fresh aroma of menthol cigarettes.”

Scenes like this were popular in American cigarette commercials in the 1950s and 1960s. For example, a commercial for “Parliament” cigarettes features a couple in a sailing boat, and in an “Oasis” cigarette spot a couple is water-skiing. Oasis, too, was a menthol cigarette: “Freshest Taste in Smoking.”

⁴⁹ This chapter is mostly based on Kortti 2003, 326–352 (English Summary pp. 447–448).

A comparison of the tobacco business to the oil business is relevant also in the sense that both included global as well as national companies. Yet, this did not automatically mean that the international companies held total control over the marketing of their subsidiaries. Although the oil business was as global as the tobacco industry in the 1960s, its marketing was perhaps more independent at the national level – this was, at least, the case with Shell Finland. Shell Finland's marketing ideas were devised and made in Finland, but they soon spread internationally. On the other hand, the giant tobacco company Philip Morris had fairly strong control already in those days over the marketing of its products by local manufacturers.

A 1962 Finnish “Marlboro” commercial follows the American pattern quite faithfully. The scene is a jetty by a lake or a sea. Water skis are resting against the railing and there is a transistor radio on the table. The camera zooms back and we see a woman lying in a chair, singing in lip synch (in English). The tune is “The Marlboro Song”, a well-known, classic jingle extolling the virtues of Marlboro's filter, flavour and flip-top box (the American singer Julie London sang it in a Marlboro commercial in the early 1960s). While singing the woman opens a pack of Marlboros. She takes her eyes off the pack and looks down the lake where a man, tanned and dressed in white, is waving at her from a boat. He drives to the jetty, jumps off the boat and approaches the woman. He kisses her shoulder while she hides the pack of Marlboros behind her back. The man takes a cigarette from the pack she is holding, lights it, inhales, blows the smoke and lies down on the jetty (“Why not settle back and enjoy a full-flavoured smoke?”, as the lyrics to “The Marlboro Song” go). The attentive viewer notices the Philip Morris logo tattooed on the back of his hand.

The man with the tattoo was part of Marlboro's “masculinity campaign” in the early 1960s. The tattoo was supposed to suggest toughness and a romantic past. This was not a long-lasting campaign, however. Eventually Marlboro returned to the cowboy, a campaign originally launched in 1955. The cowboy seemed to be the answer when Leo Burnett, the new agency for Marlboro, started to promote Marlboro filter cigarettes for Philip Morris and was looking for the most masculine type of man. Filter cigarettes were regarded as effeminate in those days, so the problem was to sell Marlboro as a brand that a man could smoke without shame. The package was changed from a mild white design to a bold red with an assertive V-shaped pattern.⁵⁰ In the late 1960s the Finnish agency for Marlboro, Markkinointi Viherjuuri, also had to take the cowboy into their campaigns, although it had just launched “The Finnish Marlboro Man” who had been discovered as a result of a contest.

Masculinity was also highlighted in the campaigns of other Finnish cigarette brands during the 1960s. This was partly a reaction against the new restrictions on tobacco advertising on TV. As early as 1963, Mainos-TV⁵¹ had set its own regulations for tobacco advertising and, among other things, restricted the use of human images in the ads, allowing only one (male) arm to be shown. These restrictions naturally challenged the advertising people to invent new, creative solutions.

Take a TV commercial for “Strong” cigarettes by Amer in which the main character is a truck driver. All you see of him is his hand on the wheel, holding a

⁵⁰ Fox 1984, 222.

⁵¹ The still active commercial TV company, today known as MTV3, which had the monopoly for advertising sales within the national broadcasting company YLE network from 1964 (after YLE had bought Tesvisio) to 1993. At the same time, MTV3 was subjected to YLE's regulations and control.

cigarette. The slogan goes (loosely translated): “Men who go ahead, who do things and see things, prefer a strong smoke.” In another spot by Amer, a car falls to pieces when a man smoking “Boston Red” cigarettes steps out. One sees his feet and the cigarette pack: “Watch where you smoke Boston Reds. Not all can take the power of these cigarettes. Boston Red. For strong men only.”

In the late 1960s, there was no longer a need to use connotations of modern, luxurious leisure time in cigarette advertising and marketing. Tobacco, especially filter cigarettes, had already diffused among Finns, who were becoming affluent at top speed. The final times of tobacco advertising on Finnish TV were more segmented. Commercials emphasized individuality more than before, as typical of advertising in the late 1960s. The 1970s also introduced a brand marketed specifically for women. Then in 1978, tobacco advertising was totally banned in Finland. At first, smoking did not diminish at all – women’s smoking, in fact, increased after the total ban.

Many of the professional marketing people working for tobacco companies in the 1960s considered them the most important clients in regard to creativity, marketing and – above all – resources. Their advertising campaigns served as a kind of marketing school for Finnish advertising people in the 1950s and 1960s, together with the creative detergent campaigns of the multinational corporation Unilever.

Besides its role in advertising, the film industry was also a significant player in promoting smoking. Modern life, as presented in films, often featured smoking and cigarettes. For women in particular, the cinema offered powerful images of smoking as part of their leisure time.⁵² If advertising introduced tobacco as a leisurely way of spending time, then the film industry normalized its use and helped to integrate it into the lives of ordinary consumers. Since 1950 – and, more recently, at the turn of the millennium – the medical profession together with various campaigns and legislative actions have done their best to do away with these kinds of images.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

New commodities are rarely responses to basic human needs. We can find various kinds of metamorphoses of goods through history: products have transformed from “toys” to “instruments”, from “luxuries” to “necessities”, from “pleasure” to “comfort”, or from “sensation” to “routine”. Jeans seem to have moved from the sphere of utilitarian use by miners and sailors into the sphere of identity-formation and self-expression for ordinary people (“*standardization*”).⁵³

Similar transformations have taken place in the case of chewing gum, sunglasses and tobacco. Sunglasses were initially a utility product used by aircraft pilots and drivers to protect their eyes. After the Second World War sunglasses increasingly became items of fashion. Popular culture and its movie stars and idols played an important role in this transformation. Sunglasses changed from a functional product to an aesthetic one (“*aesthetication*”).

The new “need” for sunglasses or jeans was not just about protecting your eyes or your skin. In the case of chewing gum, the story is almost the opposite. A

⁵² Since the interwar period, smoking became essential part of the personal glamour of many film stars: Marlene Dietrich, Mae West, Bette Davis and, perhaps most spectacularly, Lauren Bacall. (See e.g. Hilton 2002, 321–322.)

⁵³ Douglas & Isherwood 1978; Graveline 1990; Levinson 1977; Löfgren 1990; Scitovsky 1976.

rebellious product used by teenagers and young kids transformed into a utility item for mouth hygiene (“*hygienization*”).

Chewing gum was first marketed to young people like sweets. Interestingly, the 1955 advertising campaign for “Kippari” bubble gum also offered advice and rules for newcomers into the realm of bubble gum. It warned not to swallow the gum: it told children that it was “dangerous to sleep with a gum in your mouth”. The text on the wrapping ended with a final piece of advice: “Don’t give anybody a reason to say that you’re an unskilled gum user!” (Chymos, 1955). Twenty years later, adults replaced youngsters as the objects of chewing gum advertising: “Do you know how useful xylitol is for your kids’ teeth?” (Xylitol-Jenkki, 1977).

Xylitol chewing gum commercials, too, initially stressed leisure and youthfulness: they showed fashionably dressed young people spending time together, either doing sports or generally having a good time. Health benefits gradually began to gain ground as a marketing message after scientific research on xylitol had produced favourable results.

In tobacco marketing, the emphasis shifted from lifestyle aspects, freedom and fashion to different marketing segments: masculinity in ads aimed at men, lightness in ads targeted at women. After tobacco manufacture was mechanized, it became a product for everybody – also women. Smoking meant a modern way of living. Images of luxury, wealth and success were highlighted in Finnish cigarette commercials addressing both sexes up until the mid 1960s. In the last years of tobacco advertising before the total ban in 1978, the representation of individualism, action and even aggressiveness increased. This was partly a reaction to the tightened restrictions on tobacco advertising. But the means of marketing had also developed in the course of the 1960s. The lifestyle images of cigarettes were becoming more segmented and individualistic. Finns – including female baby-boomers – had already learnt to smoke; now they only had to be persuaded to switch their cigarette brand.

TABLE 1: Rooting of lifestyle products.

	Lifestyle normalization	Lifestyle integration	
Sunglasses	1945-1965 Aesthetication	Cars, sport, beach life, hollywood, rock and roll,	
Jeans	1956-1970 Standardization	Cowboys, rock and roll, guitars, pop and rock stars, American flag, (American) cars, motorcycles, horses, young people, free time, togetherness	
Chewing gum	1945-1980 Hygienization	Young people, fun, sports (sailing, snowboarding, water-skiing), American cars, motorcycles, American policemen, American young beautiful women, cowboy style vagabond, sunglasses, American city milieus with skyscrapers, gasoline stations	
Tobacco	Pathologization	Glitter, luxury, wealth, success, romance, pride, individuality, relaxation, adventure, danger, action, freedom, pleasure, happiness, fellowship, friendship, style, sportiness	

Based on our empirical findings we repeat the suggestion that lifestyle products mean three different – although related – things. First of all, lifestyle products are *purposefully created for specific lifestyles by explicit marketing efforts*, for example by using specific “segmentation criteria” and “lifestyle categories”. Secondly, they are the *historical outcome of normalization processes* as a result of consumer-producer interaction. The original needs for and function of products change when products become widely diffused. Thirdly, a lifestyle product tends to *integrate different practices, actors and material objects with one site and place (or product)*, both at the micro level of an individual household and the macro level of society.

One important passage point through which product meanings move from producers to consumers (and occasionally from consumers to producers) is the *mediasphere*, in which both consumers and producers “learn” about the modern lifestyle. Particularly after the Second World War, some products or product groups (such as jeans) captured the role of an emblem, a symbol of the era. A similar shift towards a cult object also happened with sunglasses.

We stress that it is only occasionally that consumption practices and desires follow the lines and scripts set down in marketing schemes. Lifestyle is always a contested terrain. One important reason why normalization and diffusion processes of lifestyle products are hard to control has to do with the fact that the original functions of products change as soon as they enter the sphere of ordinary people and everyday life.

The historical cases dealt with here suggest that needs arise and transform in use, and that products become integrated with others. The well-known technology

historian George Basalla is correct in saying: “The artefacts that constitute the made world are not a series of narrow solutions to problems generated in satisfying basic needs but are material manifestations of the various ways men and women throughout time have chosen to define and pursue existence.”⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Basalla, 1988, 14.

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