

Dedications

To our families

To our friends

To all our beloved ones

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Abstract

The current dissertation is concerned with the stereotypical representation of gender roles in both Algerian and American billboard advertisements. This work is a corpus-based study, which consists of twelve pictures taken from Google images (six from the Algerian context, and six others from the American one) that include men and women separately. This research is centered around two objectives. First, it attempts to investigate the way men and women are depicted visually in the selected billboard advertisements in the two aforementioned contexts. Second, this study strives to compare between the Algerian and the American visual depiction of gender in billboards advertisements by adopting the Social Semiotic theory 'Visual Grammar' proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) relying on the Representational and the Interactive Metafunctions and the Social Semiotic Approach developed by Goffman (1979) as a tool for decoding gender behavior and roles. To reach these aims a qualitative method is adopted. The findings reveal that gender images are stereotyped in both contexts (Algeria and the USA) in the billboard advertisements by making use of various semiotic resources such as: process types, gaze, point of view, social distance, feminine touch, function ranking, family, ritualization of subordination and licenced withdrawal. Moreover, the comparison has shown that both genders in the aforementioned contexts share some similarities and slight differences in their visual portrayal. It can be concluded from the results that females are represented in passive roles and they are considered as decorative objects, subordinate, powerless, and vulnerable, while men are presented in dynamic and active roles, dominant and powerful.

Key words: *Advertisements, Billboards, Gender roles, Social Semiotics.*

List of Abbreviations

Ads: advertisements

Hp: Hypothesis

Q: Question

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▪ Statement of the Problem

Media are the most pervasive and one of the most powerful tools in our daily lives. All forms of media carry significant notions of cultural norms and values in the society and have a powerful role in constructing and reinforcing gendered images of women and men. Despite the Women's Liberation Movement (1970) which has a significant impact on the role and status of men and women, media continue to present both women and men in stereotyped ways.

Advertisement is one branch of media, which has attracted the interest of many people around the globe, since they are exposed to the advertisement process wherever they are. Hence, advertisement is seen as one of the mirrors that reflect gender stereotypes. For this reason, advertisements are often accused of perpetuating stereotypes through their visual depiction of genders.

Stereotypical representation of men and women are present not only in print and electronic media, but also in outdoor media in the form of billboard advertisements. In addition, the representation of both women and men in advertising differs from one culture to another. Therefore, the present research is concerned with media stereotypical representation of gender roles in the outdoor billboard advertisements in Algeria and the USA at the visual level.

The research sets out to investigate the way gender roles are stereotyped visually in the selected billboard advertisements in the two concerned nations. The investigation of these visual representations relies on the Social Semiotic Approach introduced by Kress and Van Leeuwen named 'Grammar of Visual Design'(2006), in addition to the theory of Ervin Goffman (1979) in Gender Advertisement.

An overview of the literature reveals that many researchers in different settings across the world have examined gender roles and stereotypes by shedding light on their visual depiction in advertisement. In the western context, Courtney and Lockeretz (1971) have analysed women roles in magazine advertisements. Through the use of content analysis, they have looked at over 700 advertisements from eight magazines that are appealed to both genders. The results from this study have shown that women are portrayed only inside the home as decorative and more associated with domestic products. Additionally, they are far less in occupational roles in comparison to men.

In Germany, Döring and Pöschl (2006) have investigated gender stereotypes in advertisements for mobile communication systems. Their investigation is based on Goffman's framework. They have found a wide use of stereotypes like feminine touch, while other variables were less frequent like functional ranking.

In the United Kingdom, Plakoyiannaki and Zotos (2009) have conducted a content analysis to analyse female portrayals in print advertisements (magazines). The results of this study have revealed that the majority of the magazines in which women are stereotyped explicitly by objectifying their bodies, show them as domestic workers and linked to their submissive position.

In the Algerian context, Hami and Hadjeb (2016) have analysed gender representation in the advertisements of two magazines: Dzeriet (women magazine) and Dziri (men magazine). For the analysis, they have adopted Kress and van Leeuwen's framework (2006) with the dimensions introduced by Goffman (1979). The study has analyzed 12 images (6) for women, and (6) others for men by adopting the Qualitative research method. The main findings of this study have shown that women and men are not pictured in the same way. To be more specific, women are presented as decorative objects and powerless, while men are depicted as being active, dominant and confident.

Although the representation of gender stereotypes in print media has been a subject of study for many researchers all over the world, very few systematic analyses in the Algerian context has focused on how gender roles are stereotyped visually through outdoor media on billboards advertisements. This lack of investigations on gender stereotypes in the Algerian billboards and the American ones and comparing their representations in order to sort out the differences and similarities between the two contexts, is the motive behind this study.

▪ **Aims and the Significance of the Study**

The aim of this research study is to investigate media stereotypical representation of gender roles in the selected billboard advertisements in Algeria and the USA. The objectives of the study are twofold. First, it aims to analyze the way men and women are visually represented in the selected images of billboard advertisements in two different contexts; Algeria and the USA. To achieve this aim, we have adopted only two Metafunctions introduced by Kress and Van Leeuwen in their book “Reading Images: Grammar of Visual Design” (2006), in addition to the semiotic approach of Goffman’s theory (1979) for the analysis of gender representation. Second, the present study strives to compare between the Algerian and the American visual depiction of gender in billboard advertisements.

The significance of the present research resides in the fact that it attempts to provide a humble contribution to the existing literature on gender representations in the media and the way these representations reinforce some stereotypes to a particular audience through the use of different semiotic resources in their visual depiction. Besides, this study may lead to raise people’s awareness about the reality of gender roles which are stereotyped through visual outdoor media advertising.

▪ **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

In order to find out how gender roles are stereotyped on billboard advertisements in Algeria and the USA, two research questions are raised:

Q1: What are the semiotic resources used in the images of billboards advertising to stereotype both genders in Algeria and the USA?

Q2: Are there any similarities and differences between the visual representation of gender in the selected Algerian and American billboards advertising?

In order to answer the research questions, the following working hypotheses are advanced:

Hp1: Several semiotic resources are used in combination in the representation of gender roles such as gaze, feminine touch, and body display.

Hp2: There are some similarities and differences in the visual representation of gender in the Algerian and American billboards advertisements.

▪ **Research Techniques and Methodology**

In order to answer the research questions of the study, the qualitative research method is adopted for the process of data analysis. The qualitative method allows us to understand how gender roles are represented at the visual level in the selected images of the Algerian and American billboard advertisements.

This study is conducted using social semiotic analysis relying on the framework introduced by Kress and Van Leeuwen as developed in their book “Grammar of Visual Design” (2006), and a gender analysis based on the framework of Goffman presented in his work “Gender Advertisements” (1979). The reason behind the choice of these two social semiotic frameworks as the analytical tools for the selected corpus is that they provide

us with the appropriate techniques to analyze visuals in order to highlight the visual differences in gender images.

The two approaches are applied to a corpus that contains twelve images of billboards advertisements taken from Google sources: six (6) from Algeria and six (6) others from America.

▪ Structure of the Dissertation

The overall structure of the dissertation follows the traditional-simple model, It is composed of four chapters in addition to a “General Introduction” and a “General Conclusion”. The first chapter is called “Review of the Literature”. It provides the theoretical background of our research. The second chapter is entitled “Research Design and Methodology”. It seeks to provide a detailed description of the research method, the procedures of data collection and data analysis as well as the corpus of this research. The third chapter is named “Presentation of the Findings”. It presents the main results gained for the examination of the visual representation of gender roles in the billboards advertisements under study. Finally, the last chapter is called “Discussion of the Findings”. This chapter allows us to discuss and interpret the results obtained from the collected data. It also provides answers to the research questions and confirms or rejects the hypotheses advanced in the “General Introduction”. This dissertation ends with a “General Conclusion” which summarizes the main points of our study and suggests possible areas for further research.

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the literature review. It is designed to account for the major works that the present study adopts to analyse how gender stereotypes are represented visually in the selected images of the Algerian and American billboards advertisements. It is divided into two parts. The first part introduces the main concepts in relation to advertising and gender. Then, it throws light on the representation of gender in advertising and reviews Erving Goffman's theory proposed in his "Gender Advertisements" (1979). The second part tackles the Social Semiotic Approach by highlighting some of its key concepts and the framework of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) entitled "Visual Grammar".

I. Advertising and Gender

1.1. Advertisement

Advertising is one of the major instruments used in promotion techniques, as an element of the promotional means. Bovee (1992:30) defines advertisements as *'impersonal communication of information about products, services or ideas through the various media, and it is usually persuasive by nature and paid by identified sponsors'*. That is, it is a type of convincing communication that is paid for and that takes advantage of mass media to reach target groups.

Russell and Lane also (2002) argue that advertising is an institution, not merely a means of disseminating information about a product. Therefore, advertisement has a great influence on how individuals perceive themselves, life and the existence, particularly concerning their qualities and deciding their ways of behaving (Foley, 1998). Jhally (1995:79-80), in this context asserts that *'advertising is the most influential institution of socialization in modern society'*.

1.2. Outdoor Advertisement

The media selection for promoters and their agencies is once dominated by television, press, posters, cinema and radio (Shankar and Horton, 1999). However, a new form of advertisement has emerged in recent decades known as outdoor advertisement. Koeck and Warnaby (2014) describe outdoor advertisement as a form of advertisement which takes place within the broader urban surroundings.

1.3. Billboards

Billboards are a useful part of this research, mainly in investigating gender issues in advertisement images. According to Outdoor Advertising Association (2016), billboards are defined as huge layout advertisement displays purposed for showing from extended distances, usually more than 50 feet. They are the most common type of outdoor advertisement, that exist and being used by many institutions, organizations and companies to publicize their goods, services and/or promotions to their intended audience throughout a period of time.

1.4 Social Construction of Gender

The notion of gender became common in the early 1970s. It has been best defined as being socially constructed (Butler, 1990; Brownell and Besnier, 2013). That is, gender is *'not part of one's essence, what one is, but an achievement, what one does'* (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003: 305). Thus, the differences between women and men are formed by social practices rather than biology.

In the same vein, Zimmerman (1987, cited in Cook, 2007: 61) defines gender as *'...the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category'*. That is, the construction of gender identity is the result of social arrangements which are, according to Cook (2007: 62), *'responsive to these differences'* and the result of these arrangements is the establishment of gender hierarchies where men positioned the superior while women the inferior. Furthermore,

Dominelli (2007) asserts that gender defines not only the socially constructed disparity between males and females, but also the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity.

1.5. Gender Role Stereotypes

Gender role stereotypes are traits of gender traditional portrayals that make distinctions between regular “feminine” behaviors from ordinary “masculine” behaviors in society (Baker and Raney, 2007; Coyne *et al.*, 2014; Mayes and Valentine, 1979). To put it in other words, these gender roles are described as the occupations that are distinctively suitable for males and females (An and Kim, 2007).

Gender stereotypes can be in the shape of qualities such as females are passionate and caring, while men are the powerful head of a family. Also, gender stereotypes can come in the form of occupational roles, for instance, women as medical caretakers, personal assistants, or childcare workers and men as being firemen, growers, or aviators (Wilbourne and Kee, 2010).

1.6. Gender Stereotypes in Advertising

1.6.1. Gender Representation in Advertising

Genders are often displayed in advertisements in distinguishable stereotypes. It has been argued that gender representation in advertisements underlines the ideology of the dynamic and public male and the inactive, subordinate, household female (Kilbourne, 1999; Williamson, 1986). Moreover, Serra and Burnett (2007:147) hold that ‘male supremacy and female subordination are often propagated through gender differentiation in advertising messages’.

Crouteau and Hoynes (2003) clarify some of these gendered stereotypes and state that advertisements portray men as dominant by depicting male characters in high-level occupations, they are less likely to be shown in the home, and they are more likely to engage in violence. Women, on the other hand, are frequently included in the media in secondary roles to men and they are most commonly shown as mothers, homemakers, and sexual

objects. In addition, the camera angles used on men and women are another technique that differentiates the two genders. The two scholars claim that television camera shots frequently capture women's whole bodies, while men's faces are more concentrated on close-ups. Therefore, this camera technique reinforces the thought that women's bodies ought to be focused on, instead of the product being promoted.

Luther *et al.* (2012) state that women are often portrayed in a notably feminine way in order to please the male viewer. This happens in advertisements through a range of strategies. Additionally, advertisements portray women only as body parts, submissive and defenceless, and as sexualized human beings with their legs or mouths fully opened, bending over, looking at the camera and the viewer (*ibid.*).

1.6.2 Goffman's Analysis of Gender Advertisements:

In his ground-breaking study "Gender Advertisements" (1979), Goffman examines the behavior patterns of men and women displayed in the advertisements by decoding and classifying them according to the portrayal of gender roles. It is acknowledged as one of the most influential surveys on understanding advertisement's role on socially constructed ideals of masculinity and femininity. By analyzing almost 400 advertising pictures, Goffman's study indicates that women are more often represented in family roles, subordinately, or being either in socially or physically in lower positions as opposed to men. Thus, advertisements mirror an unequal relationship between men and women.

1.6.3. Goffman's Categories of Decoding Behaviour

Goffman's gender display framework (1979) provided clues on how gender roles are enacted in advertisements, by focusing on subtle signs and gestures such as the use of hands, gaze, facial expression, and body positioning. All of which represented the subordination of women in relation to men. Goffman's study revealed that advertisements reflected an unfair relationship between men and women, which could be summarized in the dimensions below:

1. Relative Size

It is the tendency for men to be presented in a greater girth and height than women as a means to display male's usual superiority of status over female. Therefore the most common image is the taller male and the shorter female since male is the cultural ideal, but on very few occasions, women are shown taller than the men (Goffman, 1979).

2. Feminine Touch

It is the tendency for women to be represented profusely using their fingers and hands to touch and hold things softly, in contrast to men who are usually depicted as grasping and manipulating objects. Additionally, relying on Goffman's framework (1979) women can also represent self-touching, through touching their parts of body delicately; thus, communicating the idea of the female body as something precious and desirable (ibid).

3. Function Ranking

It is another subtle way in which women are visually subjugated. It is conveyed through the functional representation of man and woman when they collaborate on the same task. To be more specific, the male is usually cast in the role of the principal player while the female takes the subordinate and less meaningful roles (ibid).

4. Family

It is when parents are portrayed closer to their children. The fathers tend to maintain distance between them and their family members. The mothers, on the other hand, are shown as mingling and involved with their children or family members as a whole. Besides, it is reckoned by Goffman (ibid: 37) that there is a '*special bond between the girl and the mother and the boy and the father*'. In other words, parents are shown closer to their children of the same gender (ibid).

5. Ritualistic of Subordination

The tendency for women to be presented in inferior physical positions to reinforce the ideas of subordination and power between genders. This includes the following poses:

5.1 Lying Down

Women are frequently portrayed lying down in a weak position such as on the ground or on the bed, as opposed to men, who are predominantly depicted standing tall and upright. Goffman (1979) argues that the message conveyed by having the women lying down, sometimes even at the feet of a standing man, is that she is vulnerable and sexually available. Furthermore, the floor is associated with something less clean or pure, while being elevated may be indicative of high social ranking (ibid).

5.2 The Bashful Knee Bend

Another common pose for women in advertisements is when portrayed standing with one leg bent or off the ground, her weight or balance placed on her other foot. Yet again, this posits her vulnerability, as if she is not *'ready to react or respond to her surroundings and makes her appear out of balance'* (ibid: 45).

5.3 Head and Body Cant

Women are often depicted with their head tilted to one side, or with their entire upper bodies canted. This opposes the poses frequently stuck by men, who are holding their head high while looking down on directly at the viewer. This male's position of *'holding the body erect and the head high is stereotypically a mark of unshamedness, superiority, and disdain'* (ibid: 46). As a result, the titling of the head can portray the woman as uncertain and wondering, or it *'can be read as an acceptance of subordination, an expression of ingratiation, submissiveness, and appeasement'* (ibid).

5.4 Smile

A Smile, as stated by Goffman (1979), is a signal which can elucidate the acceptance and appreciation of others' actions when it is addressed to them. However, if a woman is looking to a man with a smile on her face, this means she accepts his acts to satisfy him. In relation to the context of advertisements, smiles are meant to exude a sense of seduction in which the represented women are invited to be desired by the audience (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006).

5.5 Childlike Guises

According to Goffman's analysis, females are commonly pictured infantilized through several positions like sitting on a male's knee, being shielded, or being lifted up in the air similarly as children. This implies that women are immature and disempowered (Goffman, 1979).

6. Licensed Withdrawal

It refers to the visual depiction of psychological disengagement. That is to say, women are mainly given the opportunity to withdraw from the scene around them through looking down, or away from the viewer, introvert, dreamy, or hiding their faces using their hands; since they were implicitly or explicitly under the protection of men. These poses imply that women are not paying attention to the world around them, leaving them disoriented and possibly dependent on the protection or goodwill of others (ibid).

In addition to the ritualistic exhibition of fear, discomfort, pity, grief, and unmanaged laugh, Goffman (ibid: 62) adds that women detachment from a situation is also usually detected by a certain type of gaze that presumes

turning one's gaze from another can be seen as having the consequences of withdrawing from the current thrust of communication, allowing one's feeling to settle back into control while one is somewhat protected from direct scrutiny", since turning one's gaze away is regarded as being psychologically distant from the social setting of the advertisement (ibid).

II. Social Semiotic Approach

2.1. Social Semiotics

Social semiotics is a recent branch of study in the field of semiotics. It has evolved from the framework of Michael Halliday called the Systemic Functional Model (1978) which views language as a system serving functions in the real world rather than as a fixed linguistic system. This new branch is further elaborated by many scholars such as Kress and Van Leeuwen in studying visuals. Its purpose is to investigate human communication (visual and verbal) in particular social and cultural contexts and understand meaning-making as a social practice. In this regard, Hoge and Kress (1988: 261) state that '*social semiotics is primarily concerned with human semiosis as an inherently social phenomenon in its sources, functions, contexts and effects*'. According to Van Leeuwen (2005), social semiotics is an approach to communication that attempts to understand how individuals communicate via several means in particular social settings.

All in all, social semiotics is basically concerned with the study of meaning making in society either verbally or visually. Since outdoor advertisements are considered as one type of visuals which constructs and conveys a social meaning, this theory of semiotics provides us with a necessary tool to analyse the visual representation of gender in the Algerian and American billboards advertisements and their significance and meaning.

2.1.1. Semiotic Resources

"Semiotic resource" is a concept which is originated in the work of Halliday (1978: 192) who states that '*the grammar of language is not a code or a set of rules for producing correct sentences but a resource for making meaning*'. Thus, social semioticians prefer to use the term 'semiotic resource' rather than using 'sign' to refer to a means for meaning making in social context.

Additionally, Van Leeuwen (2005: 4) defines semiotic resource as:

The actions and artifacts we use to communicate, whether they are produced physiologically with our vocal apparatus; with the muscles we use to create facial expression and gestures, etc or by means of technologies-with pen, ink and paper, with computer hardware and software; with fabrics, scissors and sewing machines, etc. Traditionally they were called ‘signs’.

2.1.2. Mode

Bezemer and Kress (2008: 171) define mode as *‘the socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning’*. In other words, a mode is a socially established and organized set of semiotic resources to construct meaning. Furthermore, Kress (2003) states that modes are created through social process; they are subject to change - not autonomous. According to Halliday (1978), a mode is a set of resources used to articulate content matter (ideational meaning), construct social relations (interpersonal meaning) and create coherence (textual meaning). Speech, gestures, writing, facial expressions, and colors, are all instances of modes.

2.1.2.1. Visual Mode

After the considerable progress of the digital era at the end of the twentieth century, the visual mode has emerged as a prominent aspect used in nowadays communication, where current life has become “visual culture” (Lister and Wells, 2001: 62). That is, visual mode is the most prevalent within the press, magazines, television, and computer. In this regard, this particular mode does *‘not only represent the world..., but also plays a part in some interaction...’* (Jewitt and Oyama; cited in Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001: 140), which implies that the visual mode is not only restricted to be used just as a decorative element but rather to execute specific communicative functions.

2.2. The Grammar of Visual Design

The grammar of visual design provides ways for describing how the depicted elements of the pictures are combined meaningfully to convey meaning. Following Semiotic theory to

language metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal and textual) identified by Halliday (1978) that language has to fulfil, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) have applied the same metafunctions to the analysis of the grammar of visuals and renamed them as representational, interactive and compositional. Thus, these metafunctions are adopted in this study to examine the selected images in order to reveal the way both genders are represented visually in Algerian and American billboards advertisements.

2.2.1. The Representational Metafunction

The first metafunction has to do with the patterns of representation, which refers to the way experience is encoded visually. Objects or elements that appear in the image (people, places and objects / things) are referred to as “participants”. In fact, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) identify two main categories of processes “narrative and conceptual processes”.

1. The Narrative Process refers to *‘when participants are connected by a vector, they are represented as doing something to or for each other’* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:59). Besides, vectors are defined as *‘actions and lines of motions which are formed by the represented participants’* (ibid: 75). That is, the narrative process serves to present represented participants as doing something to or for each other. There are three types of actions within the narrative process:

First, **the transactional** is when *‘a participant (actor) performs an action to another participant (goal)’* (ibid: 50). Goal is *‘the participant at whom or which the vector is directed’* (ibid: 64).

Second, **the non transactional action** has only one participant that is usually called an actor.

Finally, **the reactional action** refers to *‘a situation where a given participant reacts in the image and this by gazing to another participant or phenomenon’* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 67).

2. The conceptual process, on the other hand, does not represent actor(s) doings, but instead the represented participants are shown *'in terms of their generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure, or meaning'* (Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001: 141). It has further classified into; analytical, classification and symbolical processes.

First, **the analytical process** relates participants *"in terms of a part-whole structure"* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 87). It has two types of participants: the carrier which is the whole and its possessive attributes which are the parts.

Second, **the classificational process** relates participants to one another *'in terms of a kind of relation, taxonomy'* (ibid: 79). In this type of process, the participants are represented as belonging to the same overarching category, i.e., showcasing different kinds of something.

Third, **the symbolic process** tells *'what a participant means or is'* (ibid: 105). In other words, this process is connected to the symbolism or messages conveyed by the participant in the image.

2.2.2. The Interactive Metafunction

This metafunction is related to the interaction between the viewer and the represented participants (places, things, and people) which are depicted in the image. Interactive meanings in images have three dimensions: contact, distance, and point of view.

1. The gaze is related to the gaze direction of the represented participants, which can be directed at the viewer (demand) or not (offer).

a- Demand is *'When the participants look directly at the viewer, they demand that the viewer enter into some kinds of imaginary relation with them'* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 118). In other words, when the represented participants are gazing directly at the viewer, as they are demanding something by establishing an imaginary relation with the viewer.

b- Offer is when the represented participants are gazing elsewhere. That is, *‘when the represented participants are presented to the viewer as items of information and as objects of contemplation because their gaze is taken away’* (ibid: 119).

2. Social Distance is related to the different relations that the distance between a represented participant and the viewer can suggest. These social relations are realised by the choice of a type of shot from a continuum of shots techniques which derive from cinematography and photography.

- **Dimensions in which social distance is visually depicted**

Social distance	Field of Vision	Relationship between participants and viewers
Close shot	Head and shoulders of the participant	(intimate or personal)
Very close shot	The face or the head only	(Intimate distance)
Medium-close shot	From the waist up	(far intimate distance)
Medium-long Shot	The whole figure	(close social distance) impersonal
Long shot	The full figure with space around it	(far social distance)

Table 1: Dimensions of Social Distance (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006)

3. The Point of View or ‘perspective’ is the last dimension of the interactive metafunction. It is related to the angle from which participants are depicted. There are two types of angle: the horizontal angle and the vertical angle.

- a. The Horizontal Angle** refers to whether the depicted participants are seen by the viewers from the side or the front. This type of angle is associated with involvement and detachment. In other words, when the depicted participants are viewed from the frontal angle, this implies involvement. However, in case where the represented participants in

the image are seen from the oblique (side) angle, this indicates detachment between the viewer and participant.

b. The Vertical Angle means whether the viewer sees the participants from below, above, or at eye-level. This angle establishes a relation of power. Therefore, *'power is maintained on viewers through high angle and is given to the represented participants through low angle'* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 139-140). That is to say, when the represented participant is photographed from a high angle, it means that the power belong to the interactive participants. It is just the opposite, if the viewer is 'looking up' to the represented participant who is pictured from a low angle, it puts the interactive participants in a place of weakness. Besides, 'The eye level angle represents equality between both sides' (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996: 146). It means that, in case the picture is at eye level, the relationship between the participant and the viewer is one of equality.

Conclusion

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, within the aim to investigate how billboards Advertisements portray and stereotype women, the main frames and principles developed in the two theories encountered in our field of research were reviewed to give more insight about the topic. Kress and Van Leeuwen's Social Semiotic Analytical framework (2006), revealed that Social Semiotics Analysis is a helpful tool in order to analyse the hidden meaning and messages, whereby each and every element depicted in the advertisements has a certain meaning (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). However, the use of this framework alone cannot be conclusive on its own; consequently, to achieve a full interpretation, there should be a reference to the relevant social theories. As such, in this

study, the Goffman's theory of gender advertisement (1979) is adopted to complement the use of Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotics.

Introduction

This chapter is methodological and deals with the research design of the present study. It describes the techniques used in the analysis of our corpus in order to investigate stereotypical representation of gender roles in the selected billboard advertisements in Algeria and the USA, and answer the research questions that are stated in the General Introduction. In this chapter, we have identified the Research Method, which is the qualitative research used in order to analyze and compare the way gender roles are stereotyped in the Algerian and American billboard advertisements. Then, it describes the corpus which consists of twelve (12) billboard advertisements images, that is six (06) in each of the abovementioned countries. This chapter ends with a description of the procedures of data analysis based on the framework provided by Kress and Van Leeuwen in their book “Grammar of Visual Design” (2006) and on Goffman’s work “Gender Advertisements” (1979).

1. The Research Method

Since the aim of this study is to investigate the way gender roles are stereotyped visually in the selected Algerian and American billboard advertisements, a qualitative research method has been adopted. A qualitative research method is a type of social science research that seeks to understand the social aspects of life. In this context, this research method is defined as any research that is *‘linked to in-depth exploratory studies’* (Biggam, 2008: 86), and involves studying *‘things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them’* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, cited in *ibid*). The reason behind the choice of the research method is to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Therefore, the qualitative method is used to investigate the visual stereotypical representation of both genders in the selected billboard images of the two concerned contexts

relying on two metafunctions of “Visual Design”, in addition to an analysis of gender representation based on the theory proposed by Goffman in 1979.

2. Procedures of Data Collection

This section is concerned with the representation of the procedures of data collection. This study is based on a visual analysis of Algerian and American billboard advertisements images. The corpus of this study is collected on the internet, using Google as a search engine. Then, twelve (12) billboard advertisements images are selected to be analyzed. That is, six (6) images belong to the Algerian context and six (6) others to the USA.

3. Description of the Corpus

As a sample for the analysis, we have selected twelve (12) images from different advertisements in Algeria and USA representing both men and women. That is, from the Algerian context, we have selected six (6) billboard advertisements images: shampoo (Sunsilk), Smartphone (Oppo Reno2F), cheese (Chef, Kiri), baby diaper (Molfix), toothpaste (Signal), and the six (6) other advertisements images are from the American context: women’s perfume (Black Opium), men’s watch (Omega Speed master), a stage musical (Waitress), mental health clinic (Williamson Health & Wellness Center Inc), family fun center (Sahara Sam’s), allergy medication (Allegra). These advertisements are from the years 2018 to 2020. There are eleven images which include one single gender separately, and a last one image (the twelfth) which involves both genders. Seven of the advertisements contain a female participant and four of them contain a male participant.

4. Procedures of Data Analysis

This part is devoted to the procedures used to analyze the collected data. To transform the gathered data into meaningful findings, the collected billboards are interpreted and analyzed using two analytical tools. The theory of Kress and Van Leeuwen of ‘Visual Grammar’ (1996, 2006) is the first analytical tool used to conduct a social semiotic analysis of

the selected images of the visuals. Goffman's theory of decoding behavior (1979) is the second analytical framework used in the analysis of gender representation.

The Qualitative Research Method is adopted to analyze the selected advertisements images, in relation to the components of the metafunctions underlying 'Grammar of Visual Design' in which each image is examined and interpreted separately. Thus, the analysis is carried out using the two metafunctions of the visuals: the Representational and the Interactive metafunctions. Within the Representational metafunction, we have analyzed the narrative and conceptual processes. The second metafunction is the interactive one where the focus is on the gaze of the participants, social distance and angle.

The qualitative research method is also adopted to analyze and interpret the selected advertising images according the identified dimensions of Goffman's theory (1979). However, we are not replicating the six dimensions of Goffman's work to analyze the billboards images. Therefore, the analysis is carried out according to the dimensions that are manifested in each image to stereotype gender and gender roles. Goffman's six dimensions to the analysis of gender representation are: Relative size (women tend to be depicted smaller or shorter than men), The feminine touch (women who delicately touch objects or their own body parts in an unnatural way), Function-ranking (men are portrayed in professional and functional roles, while women are often appearing in domestic and secondary roles), Family (women as mothers close to their children), Ritualization of Subordination (women are more likely to be portrayed performing submissive or appeasement gestures such as lying down, head or body canting, bending one knee inward, smiling, clowning and acting less seriously), and Licensed withdrawal (women are pictured physically or mentally removed or withdraw from the social situation).

Conclusion

This methodological chapter has involved a number of steps that are followed in this study to investigate the research issue. It has first outlined the research method used in this study, which is the qualitative method research. Then, it has described the procedures of data collection followed by the description of the corpus underlying the study. Afterwards, it has described the procedures of data analysis which consists of the principles introduced by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) within the framework of Grammar of Visual Design, in addition to the classical work of Goffman introduced in his book of “Gender Advertisements” (1979). The presentation of the findings is the main concern of the next part of this research.

Introduction

This chapter displays the findings gained from the analysis of the pictorial stereotypical representation of men and women in the Algerian and American billboard advertisements in the corpus under study which consists of twelve images. These images are analyzed using Kress and Van Leeuwen's framework of 'Visual Grammar' taking into account the representational and the interactive metafunctions. Additionally, Goffman's framework (1979) is another semiotic approach used to analyze gender representation in images as it takes gender roles into consideration. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two sections. Section one reports the findings of the visual analysis of gender representation in the Algerian and American contexts, whereas section two presents the results obtained according to Goffman's analysis of gender representation in the selected advertisement images.

1. The Visual Representation of Both Genders in the Algerian and American Billboard Advertisements Images

This part presents the findings of the social semiotic analysis of the twelve images under study which appear in Appendix one and two. They are analyzed relying on the representational and the interactional metafunctions underlying the theory of Visual Grammar.

1.1. The Representational Metafunction

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) recognize two sub-categories within the representational system: narrative and conceptual processes. The former has to do with dynamic processes, whereas the latter refers to the static features of visual elements. In the following tables, we show the results obtained from the analysis of the Algerian and American billboard advertisements images.

1.1.1. Images of Both Genders in the Algerian Billboards Advertisements

	Gender	Process Type: Conceptual Vs Narrative
Image 1	Female	The picture presents a young woman and a hair care product that is placed in the center of the image. She is putting her right hand on her shiny and silky hair and gazing directly at the viewer with a wild smile. Hence, a conceptual meaning is expressed as there is no action.
Image 2	Male	The picture depicts a man celebrity ‘Mohammed Hamaki’ who is wearing a black suit and standing confidently. He is holding a smart phone and looking directly To it with a slight smile on his face. The picture represents a narrative process, since there is an actor participant (the man) and the goal (smart phone).
Image 3	Female	The picture displays a woman and a cheese product which is shown on the right side. The woman is slightly tilted her head down and looking toward the Bourak dish with a smile and a very concentrated expression on her face. The process here is narrative, because there is an action as the woman is using her right hand to add the final touch to the meal.
Image 4	Male	The left side of the picture presents a male doctor and a baby. A product (baby diapers) is displayed in the right part of the image. The man is in a slight lowering body position opening his arms wide open and looking to the baby who is taking steps toward him him. It is a narrative presentation since the male participant is doing an action (inviting a baby to come to him)

<p>Image 5</p>	<p>Female</p>	<p>The picture depicts a woman hugging her daughter from behind. The daughter holds a toothbrush in her right hand and an oral care product is presented on the bottom of the image. They are smiling to each other and neither of them is looking at the viewer. The woman is not performing an action; thus, the image generates a conceptual meaning.</p>
<p>Image 6</p>	<p>Female</p>	<p>The picture portrays a woman with two children and a cheese product which is placed in the center of the image. The mother is wearing a red t-shirt lying down on the grass with her daughter and son, who hold a slice of bread in their hands. The woman is gazing at the camera with a gentle smile. It is a conceptual image since the woman is static, which means that the presented participant is not performing an action.</p>

Table 2: Representational Metafunction in the Selected Images of the Algerian

Billboards

It is shown in table 2 that the images (1, 5 and 6), which contain female participants, are all involved in the representation of the conceptual process, since the presented participants are static (except image 3). As for the images (2 and 4) that include males are involved the representation of the narrative process, because the depicted participants are pictured performing an action.

1.1.2. Images of both genders in the American billboard advertisements

	<p>Gender</p>	<p>Process Type: Conceptual Vs Narrative</p>
<p>Image 1</p>	<p>Female</p>	<p>The picture depicts a woman celebrity ‘Zoe Kravitz’, who is holding a perfume bottle in her left hand close to her neck in order</p>

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		to show the product to the audience and putting her right arm on her waist. The image, thus, reflects a narrative process. In addition, her posture is directed to the right side and she is looking directly at the viewer with a mysterious gaze and no smile on her face.
Image 2	Male	The picture presents the American actor and filmmaker ‘George Clooney’ on the night and a men’s watch on the left side. He is riding a motorbike by putting his hands on the handlebars. He is looking away from the viewer and smiling in a comfortable pose. This image is narrative since the represented participant is doing an action (riding a bike).
Image 3	Female	The picture portrays a young brunette woman from the head to the shoulders wearing a blue waitress uniform. She is holding a pen and a notepad in her hands and looking away from the camera with a soft smile on her face. This picture presents a conceptual process, since there is no action performed by the woman.
Image 4	Male	The picture displays a male doctor with a stethoscope around his neck, holding a baby in his arm, and looking toward him with a smile. He seems fondling the child using his index finger to touch the infant’s little fingertips. This image is narrative as the represented participant is doing an action.
Image 5	Female	The picture depicts a woman standing with her son and daughter in an overflowing joy. She is not gazing at the viewer, but she is looking up with a wide smile. The process here is conceptual, i.e.

		there is no action performed by the presented participant.
Image 6	Male and female	<p>The picture portrays a man and a woman in a drophead and a drug product placed in the left side of the image. The man is smiling and putting his left hand confidently on the steering wheel, while looking away from the viewer. Hence, he is represented in a narrative process, since there is an action performed by him (driving a car).</p> <p>The woman is represented in the passenger’s seat next to the male driver lifting her hands up in the air. This one also generates a narrative process as the represented participant is performing an action with her hands to express her overflowing happiness. She is looking up away from the viewer with a big smile on her face.</p>

Table 3: Representational Metafunction in the Selected Images of the American Billboards

Table 3 reveals that male and female participants who are presented separately in the images (1, 2, and 4) and in the image (6) which includes both of them are represented in a narrative meaning since the depicted participants are actively performing an action. Images (3 and 5) containing female participants are shown in a conceptual process because they are static and inactive participants.

1.2 Interactive Metafunction

The findings of this metafunction are presented in the tables below in order to highlight the relationship between the participants in the image and the viewers.

1.2.1 Images of Both Genders in Algerian Billboard Advertisements

Images	Gender	Social distance	Point of view		Gaze
			Horizontal	Vertical	
Image 1	Female	Close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	demand
Image 2	Male	Close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 3	Female	Close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 4	Male	Long shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 5	Female	Medium close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 6	Female	Close shot	Frontal angle	High angle	demand

Table 4: Social Distance, Point of View, and the Gaze Direction in the Algerian Billboards

From the analysis of social distance, table 4 has revealed that women are depicted in a close and medium close shots in the images (1, 3, 5 and 6), which reflects the intimacy and closeness of the represented women with the viewers. Men, on the other hand, are depicted from a long shot where the whole figure with space around is represented. This suggests a far social distance with the viewer.

When analyzing the horizontal angle, it is shown that all the represented participants are portrayed from a frontal angle (all the images including men and woman separately). This is, then, a confirmation of the involvement of the participants in a relationship with the viewers.

Concerning the analysis of the vertical angle, it has revealed that women in the images (1, 3 and 5) are portrayed from the eye level angle (except image 6), which suggests an equality of power between them and the viewers. Men are pictured from the eye level angle (image 2 and 4) as well. This type of angle suggests equality in the power of the represented participants with the viewers.

With regard to the gaze direction, the represented men in images (2 and 4) are looking away from the viewer (making an offer). Women, however, are making a demand by looking to the viewer in images (1 and 6) and making an offer by looking away in the images (3 and 5).

1.2.2 Images of Both Genders in the American Billboard Advertisements

Images	Gender	Social distance	Point of view		Gaze
			Horizontal	Vertical	
Image 1	Female	Medium close shot	Oblique angle	Eye level angle	demand
Image 2	Male	Medium Close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 3	Female	Close shot	Oblique angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 4	Male	Close shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 5	Female	Medium long shot	Frontal angle	Eye level angle	offer
Image 6	Male and female	Close shot	Oblique angle	Eye level angle	offer

Table 5: Social Distance, Point of View, and the Gaze Direction in the American Billboards

From the analysis of social distance, table 5 has shown that men and women participants in the images (1, 2, 3, and 6) are depicted in a close and medium close shot (except image 5). This is likely to express the feeling of warmth and closeness.

In terms of the horizontal angle, it is found that most of the women are photographed from an oblique angle. The images are (1, 3 and 6) except for image (5). This means that women are detached from the viewers. Men, however, are portrayed from a frontal angle. Accordingly, this signifies the sense of involvement in which the participants are involved in a relationship with the viewers.

Concerning the vertical angle, women are depicted from the eye level angle in the images (1, 3, 5 and 6). Men images (2, 4 and 6) are seen from an eye level angle as well. This type of angle is associated with equality. Here, both men and women are represented as equal in power and they are put in an equal position.

With regard to the gaze direction, it is shown that all the images (2, 3, 4 and 5) including either a man or a woman, and both of them in the image (6) are offer images (except image 1).

2. Gender Analysis in Relation to Goffman's Framework

2.1 Images of Both Genders in the Algerian Billboards

Images	Gender	Description
Image 1	Female	A young woman is shown delicately touching her voluminous hair, emulating Goffman's (1979) display of feminine touch. She is also imitating the ritualistic of subordination by displaying a big smile.
Image 2	Male	The picture shows a man who is smiling, holding his body straight up, while firmly grasping a smart phone in his hand. This is meant to exude a sense of man's power and authority.

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Image 3	Female	This image is set within the category of function ranking, as the woman is given a domestic role: preparing a meal.
Image 4	Male	Unlike the woman in image (3), the man in image (4) is portrayed in a professional job as a doctor.
Image 5	Female	Family, which is the fourth dimension in Goffman's framework, is presented in this image. This is viewed here through the special mother–daughter bond as the woman is pictured hugging her daughter with a lot of tenderness.
Image 6	Female	This picture also shares Goffman's (1979) dimension of family by portraying the woman with her children as a caregiver. Her lowering down on the grass and smiling also fit into Goffman's stereotype of ritualistic of subordination.

Table 6: Goffman's Analysis in the Algerian Billboards Images

Table 6 reveals that feminine touch, function ranking, family and ritualistic of subordination are the prominent dimensions in the analysis of the Algerian billboards images. The feminine touch is illustrated in image (1), as the woman is touching her hair in a delicate way, indicating a form of subordination. Men, on the other hand are shown grabbing objects with force as it is exemplified in man image (2), implying a men's power. In regards to function ranking, men are shown in more professional jobs like the man in image (4), whereas women are portrayed in less professional jobs as the woman in image (3). Concerning the dimension of family, women are depicted in mother roles in the images (5 and 6). None of male image is presented in the family dimension. Women are also portrayed in aspects of ritualistic of subordination in the images, like the lowering position in image (6) and smiles in images (1 and 6).

2.2 Images of Both Genders in the American Billboards

Images	Gender	Description
Image 1	Female	In this picture, the woman is shown with the feminine touch, as she is touching a part of her body (waist) and barely holding a perfume bottle. In addition, her body positions are showing aspects of the ritualistic of subordination, as she is displaying head and body cant.
Image 2	Male	Unlike the woman in image (1), the man in image (2) is shown riding a motorbike and firmly holding the handelbars. Thus, it is easy to notice the difference between men and women in touching objects.
Image 3	Female	Function ranking is one of the dimensions which is recognized in this image, as the woman is shown in a less professional job like a waitress. In addition, she is withdrawn by looking away, imitating Goffman's (1979) display of licensed withdrawal. Furthermore, her facial expression indicates also a ritualistic of subordination since she is smiling.
Image 4	Male	Unlike image (3), the man is depicted in a professional job as a doctor.
Image 5	Female	The woman is displayed with her two children having fun together, which is according to Goffman's model, indicates a mother role in the dimension of family. Moreover, she is photographed turning her gaze up and a big grin (a smile) on her face, which imitates both licensed withdrawal and ritualistic of subordination.
Image 6	Male and Female	The picture displays a man who is driving a drophead, performing an executive role, while a woman is shown in the passenger's seat in a passive role as she is just accompanying the male driver. This representation imitates the dimension of function ranking. The woman is also depicted smiling, which according to Goffman's (1979) framework on gender display, indicates ritualistic of subordination. Moreover, the dreamy expression on her face and looking away also fit into Goffman's category of licenced withdrawal.

Table 7: Goffman's Analysis in the American Billboards Images

Table 7 indicates that five out of Goffman's six dimensions of gender displays are found in the image analysis of the American billboards. A woman is depicted within the

feminine touch in image (1), who is depicted gracefully touching a feminine object, rather than firmly touching objects like the man in image (2). The dimension of function ranking is present in the findings as well. This category is exemplified within the woman image (3) as the female is displayed performing a submissive role (waitress), whereas a man is performing an executive role (doctor) in image (4). Furthermore, woman image (5) is sharing the dimension of family, but no man image is found in this category. Women are also photographed within the ritualistic of subordination through their unnatural and manipulated smile, as it is illustrated in images (1, 3, 5 and 6) and the head and body tilted as in image (1). This signifies that women continue to be represented submissively and accepting the subordination of others. Finally, licensed withdrawal is especially evident in the women images (3, 5 and 6), depicting women as psychologically withdrawn from their reality in passive roles.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has represented the findings gained from the visual analysis of the stereotypical representation of gender roles. The visual analysis has been carried out relying on the social semiotic theory “Visual Grammar” introduced by Kress and Van and Leeuwen by adopting the representational and the interactive metafunctions, in addition to the results obtained from the analysis of the images in relation to Goffman’ framework (1979). The obtained results are going to be subject to interpretation in the following chapter labeled “Discussion of the Findings”.

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the present study. It is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the findings of the social semiotic analysis of the selected billboard images, while the second section discusses the results analyzed using the social semiotic approach developed by Goffman in “Gender Advertisements” (1979). Finally, the third section draws a comparison between the two contexts, namely the Algerian and the American contexts, in order to reveal the main similarities and differences between their depiction of men and women in billboard advertisements. This chapter further aims at providing answers to the research questions postulated in the General Introduction and testing the validity of the advanced hypotheses.

1. Discussion of the Results Obtained from the Visual Analysis of Both Algerian and American Images of Billboards Advertisements

1.1. The Representational Metafunction

The first metafunction underlying “Visual Grammar” is the representational metafunction, which is concerned with the represented participants (people, places and objects) portrayed in the advertising images. This metafunction is made up of two major processes, namely the narrative process and the conceptual process. The former has to do with dynamic features, whereas the latter refers to the static process of the visual participant as it is explained by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006).

Woman image (1) in the Algerian context is an example of a conceptual participant who is represented as an item of contemplation. It depicts a young woman who is represented as static individual (who is not performing an action), because she is just posing and looking directly at the viewers by making an image act or gaze. In fact, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 106) argue that a conceptual participant *‘usually posed for the viewer, rather than involved in some action...they sit or stand for no reason other than displaying themselves to*

the viewer'. A conceptual representation is generated in the American context in the female image (3), as well. The image depicts a woman who is looking away and 'not performing an action', and who is wearing a blue waitress uniform as a circumstance of means indicating her low class job position. Similarly, both women images (5 and 6) and (5) in the Algerian and American contexts respectively are all based on a conceptual presentation, since the presented women are not performing any action. They are only shown in a family scene with their children without any action presented in the images.

However, women images (3) in the Algerian and (1 and 6) in the American contexts are narrative images since the depicted women are acting. Image (3) presents a woman who is preparing a meal using the product advertised in the right side of the picture. She is performing an action as she is using her right hand to add the final touch to the meal, with her being the actor and the meal being the goal. This depiction indicates, perhaps, that the function of women in the society is just to stay at home for cooking. As for image (6), the participant is lifting her hands up expressing her happiness. Thus, here the narrative process is reinforced by 'a vector' which is formed by the participant's hands. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 59) *'the vectors may be formed by bodies or limbs or tools in action'*.

Besides, all men images (2 and 4) in the Algerian context and (2, 4 and 6) in the the American context generate a narrative representation since all the represented men are shown in performing actions. Men images (4) in the Algerian context and (4) in the American one are both depicting a men doctors wearing a medical uniform (see appendix 1) and a stethoscope (in appendix 2). They are acting (actors) with the others represented participants (goals) forming vectors with their hands. Therefore, the presented participants are depicted as active participants in order to show that men are portrayed in high social status and involved in the active roles. Similarly, Men in images (2 and 2) in both the aforementioned contexts are

depicted as actors since they are acting. Vectors are also present within the image by the participants' hands.

1.2. The Interactive Metafunction

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996: 4) '*any semiotic system has to be able to project the relation between the producer of a sign, or complex sign and the receiver or the reproducer of that sign*'. It means that, the interactive metafunction is concerned with the relationship between the represented participants of the image and the viewer. The three major factors help in realizing the interactive meaning of images which are: social distance, point of view and gaze.

1.2.1 Social Distance

It is the first factor to deal with in the interactive metafunction in which the relationships between represented participants and the viewer are determined. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:124) say '*the choice of the distance can suggest different relations between the depicted participants and the viewer*'. In the case of man image (4) in the Algerian context, it is shown from social distance (far social distance) far from the viewer. Kress and Van Leeuwen (ibid: 124- 125) state that '*the distance to which people move when somebody say 'stand away so I can look at you*'. That is, the represented participant here does not favor the interaction with the audience because he is not represented close to the viewer.

In women images (5) and (1) in the Algerian and the American context respectively, far personal distance, in which "we see the other person from the waist up" (Hall, 1964 cited in Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:125), is reflected. This results in a far intimate relation between the depicted women and the viewers. The aim behind this representation is to inform and show to the audience that women are in inferior and subordinate positions.

Algerian women in images (1, 3, and 6) and American men and women in the separate pictures (3, 6 and 4, 6) respectively, are depicted in a close personal distance (head and

shoulders) which suggests an intimate and a personal relationship between the represented participants and the viewers. Said differently:

to see people close up is to see them in the way we would normally only see people with whom we are more or less intimately acquainted. Hence, the depicted participants in close personal distance are shown as if they were close to the viewers; as if they were one of us (Jewitt and Oyama cited in van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001: 146).

1.2.2 Point of View

It is the second factor to deal with in the interactive metafunction where the angles of view are either horizontal or vertical point of view, which have different significations that are:

1.2.2.1 Detachment and Involvement in the Horizontal Angle

The horizontal angle is one way to represent social relations between the depicted participants and the viewer, which can be either frontal to suggest involvement or oblique to suggest detachment between the depicted participants and the viewer. Relying on the results from the analysis of the horizontal angle, we notice that in the Algerian corpus both men and women in all images are captured from a frontal angle which suggests maximum involvement between the depicted participants and the viewers. Therefore, the viewers are part of the participants' world. Likewise, the American men pictures are captured from a frontal angle where the viewer is involved with the represented participant, as the represented participants are part of the viewer's world. That is, it evokes a message of inclusion.

Women images (1, 3 and 6) in the American context are captured from a horizontal oblique angle where the viewer is detached from the represented participant. That is, the viewer is not part of the photographed image. The images evoke a message of exclusion that is the represented participant is not part of the viewer's world.

1.2.2.2 Relations of Power in the Vertical Angle

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the vertical angle is associated with power and status. It can be low and assign power to the viewer, it can be high to make the depicted participants have more power, or at eye level to realize a sense of equality. Hence, from the results obtained in this analysis, men and women images in both Algerian and American contexts are captured by medium vertical angle. In this type of perspective, the represented participant and the viewer are equal in power. None is more or less powerful than the other. Then, both of genders are equal in power in the two aforementioned contexts, that is, there is no power difference between the images and the viewer. However, woman image (6) in the Algerian context is taken from a high angle. This angle puts the interactive participants in a place of power and the represented participant in a weak position (ibid).

1.2.3 The Gaze

In relation to gaze, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:116) state that *'there is, then, a fundamental difference between pictures from which represented participants look directly at the viewer's eyes, and pictures in which this is not the case'*. In this sense, the gaze is an important semiotic resource whether it is demand or offer always influences the viewers.

Images (1) and (6) in the Algerian context, women directed their gaze toward the viewers by smiling to them, they are demanding images. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 118) suggest that a gaze with a gesture or a facial expression like a smile, asks the viewers *'to enter a relation of social affinity with them'*. Hence, the way this depicted woman looks at the viewers with a smile can be interpreted as an invitation to enter into a relation of social affinity. Likewise, picture (1) in the appendix devoted to the American context the represented woman looks directly at the viewers, thus, it is a demanding image. In other words, these participants use direct gaze to interact with the viewers and to say that there is a strong relation between the audience and the represented women. These demanding

images, where women stare directly at the viewers and not at the products, aim to convince the consumers to buy the products.

Men in the Algerian context, on the other hand, in images (2 and 4) they do not look at the viewer. Even though the represented participants are shown smiling, they do not have the same effect as the women. Instead, they are offered for the viewer to observe, without indicating a relation between them and the viewer.

Concerning women images (3, 5, and 6) and men images (2, 4 and 6) in the American corpus, the presented participants look away from the viewers. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:119) suggest that this type of gazing connotes an offer on which the participants are depicted as item of information and as objects of contemplation. This type of gaze suggests detachment from the world of the viewer.

2. Discussion of the Results Obtained in Relation to Goffman's Work in Both Algerian and American Images of Billboard Advertisements

2.1 Feminine Touch

As it is mentioned previously, the feminine touch is conceived by Goffman's gender display framework (1979) as an aspect to delegate women's inferiority and dependence. This aspect deals with the way females touch their surroundings daintily and softly. In this regard, Goffman (1979:29) argues that women in advertisement are tremendously posing while *'using their fingers and hands to trace the outlines of an object'*. Arising from the findings of the feminine touch analysis, the hand gesture depicted in the advertisement for "Black Opium" (Image 1) in the American context can be described as a feminine touch. The woman is likely drawing focus on the perfume bottle through the delicate display of her hand, as if this object is very precious and significant. As suggested by Goffman (1979), the subliminal message

conveyed by this particular representation is women's vulnerability, lack of self-reliance, and fragility since they are not able to hold things firmly and manipulate them.

Additionally, as it is asserted by Goffman (1979), this ritualistic touch of hands can also include self-touching, where women are softly touching or caressing themselves. To exemplify, the billboard for "Sunsilk" (Image 1) and "Black opium" (Image 1) of the two distinct contexts, revealed two women emulating the act of self-touching, through touching their body parts to convey an overall impression that female body is '*delicate and precious*' (Goffman, 1979: 31). Presumably women portrayed in such a weak position often indicates that they are objects of contemplation and sexual gratification, which is further determined by facial expression like gazing seductively and smiling to the camera as an element to capture the attention of the viewer to the women in the picture, and convince him/her to buy the product advertised.

When comparing these two above examples with the two distinct advertisements for "Oppo" in (Image 2) and "Omega" (Image 2) in the two contexts, we can easily notice the difference between man and woman in the relation to objects. Men hold things in a strong and dominant way and apparently act with a clear purpose in order to reveal their power and strength.

Considering these observations in connection to the attributes of gender stereotype, we can notice that the female portrayal in the two distinct contexts conformed similarly to the main feminine touch characteristics based on the delicate touch of hands, which reinforce their presentation according to Goffman (1979), as decorative protagonists, immature and less serious. However, males are shown in powerful positions as a means to exert a kind of control over females.

2.2 Family

Family is another dimension concerned in the analysis of our corpus of study, which consistently confined women to the subordinate position. It is assumed that women are purely portrayed in the advertisements as traditional mothers which is considered as women's destiny and their only career choice. It is further supported through highlighting the emotional tie between mothers and their children as part of their being warmhearted and affectionate. In this vein, as it is noticed in the billboards for "Signal" (picture5) and "Kiri" (picture 6) in the Algerian context, and "Sahara Sam's" (picture 5) in the American context, women are underrepresented in a stereotypical role as sainted mothers standing with their children in a more intimate way. As supported by Goffman (1979), this conveys the sense that women are domestic and inactive creatures who do nothing but care for the family members, while men are usually casted detached from the family circle to show protection. Regarding Family analysis, female portrayal of the two different counterparts revealed the same representation of women mingling with their children, which reinforces their roles as parents and caregivers.

2.3 Function Ranking

As for the function ranking category, which refers to the functional roles attributed to men and women, our analysis has reflected differences in gender occupations. On the one hand, the advertisements for "Molfix" (picture 4) and "WHWC" (picture 4) present two men as doctors casting the primary role with an expression of power and prestige. On the other hand, the advertisements for "Chef" (picture 3) and "Waitress" (picture 3) depict two women engaged in domestic and less meaningful roles as a cook and a waitress. Relying on Goffman's gender framework (1979), this connotes women's submissiveness and dependency. Additionally, in the billboard for "Allegra Allergy" (picture 6), we can observe the man on the steering wheel casted in the executor role and the woman in the passenger's seat marginalized in a decorative and meaningless role in relation to the one of the man.

Considering the results gathered, the evidence in this analysis indicates that this technique of representation plays a key role in reinforcing the idea of subordination and power between genders in both Algerian and American contexts, where men are prohibited from some specific tasks such as home holding activities and informal employments unlike women, because of the cultural convention, which sets place for gender role stereotype to exist.

2.4 The Ritualistic of Subordination

According to Goffman (1979), when advertisements are about ritualistic of subordination women are repeatedly depicted in subjugated physical positions such as lying down, bashful knee bent, and the titling of the head. Moreover, females are often represented precisely like children in many situations '*as a playful gesticulative device*' (Goffman, 1979: 50). In this respect, women pictures (1 and 6) in the Algerian context and images (1 and 6) in the American context have revealed women with puckish smile, lying down, titling the head, and in childlike guises respectively. The visual depiction of females in such inferior poses explicitly communicate that women are not serious, since they are depicted as powerless, immature, and vulnerable, as if they are totally not aware or ready to respond to their surroundings. In dealing with men's billboards advertisements, they are represented imposing their presence as authority figures through holding their body and head straight up. In this sense, Goffman (1979) asserts that men's position holding the body erect and the head high is stereotypically a mark prestige and supremacy. It also depicts them as aware and ready to respond to their surroundings, for the reason that men are the dominant and most powerful sex.

2.5 Licensed Withdrawal

Licensed withdrawal has to do with the visual depiction of psychological disengagement of women. In this respect, Goffman (1979: 57) argues that females are frequently pictured while '*engaged in involvements which remove them psychologically from*

the social situation at large'. As it is already explained in the review of literature relying on Goffman theory (1979), the demonstrated poses in images (3,5 and 6) of the American billboards advertisements as averting one's gaze and daydreaming, imply that women are not paying attention to the world around them, leaving them possibly dependent on the protection of the others.

All in all, the results of the visual representation of gender and their discussion indicate that billboards designers make use of different semiotic resources to represent men and women in advertisements in the two distinct contexts and the way in which process types, gaze, point of view, social distance, in addition to the feminine touch, function ranking, family, ritualistic of subordination and licensed withdrawal work within the image to achieve the communicative function. Thus, they throw light on stereotypes of gender roles which are represented in both Algerian and American context. In fact, women are shown as inactive participants, submissive, objects of contemplation and powerless. Men, on the other hand, are seen as active participants, powerful and dominant.

3. A Comparison of the Visual Representation of both Gender in Relation to Kress and Van Leeuwen's Metafunctions and Goffman's Framework in both Algerian and American Billboards

After performing a visual grammar examination of the selected billboards images, one can notice that both Algerian and American contexts have some points in common and differ in some others while depicting men and women. This confirms thus the second hypothesis suggested in the General Introduction.

To begin with, the analysis of the pictorial depiction of both genders in the selected images has shown some similarities between the two contexts (Algeria and the USA). First, on the representational level, in both contexts nearly all women images are 'conceptual' since they are not based on 'vectors' (except image 3 in the Algerian context and images (1 and 6)

in the American context). The aim of this depiction is to identify the represented participants in term of their roles in society as passive and inactive participants. Another common point between the two contexts is that all men images are presented in a narrative process. This type of representation is realized through vectors and showing the represented participants as active ones. Second, on the interactional level the depicted all men and women images of both contexts are seen from an eye level angle (medium) which suggests equality between them and the audience (except woman image 6 in the Algeria context). Thus, there is an equal distribution of power between the represented participants and the viewers. Another common point between the two contexts is that men images are captured from a horizontal frontal angle, which manifests a sense of involvement. Therefore, the viewer is involved with the represented men. Furthermore, the selected men image of the two distinct contexts, an offer contact is realized. To put it differently, there is no direct contact to the viewer.

As for the visual analysis of the selected billboards images in relation to Goffman's framework, the findings have revealed that the pictorial depiction of men and women in Algerian billboards advertisements coincide with the representation reported in the American counterpart, all in which gender stereotype was pervasive, considering Feminine Touch, Function Ranking, Family, Ritualistic of Subordination and Licensed Withdrawal. Within Feminine Touch, in image (1 and 1) in the two appendices, women are portrayed likely in the main typical feminine characteristics. They are profusely utilizing heir light touch of hands to hold and caress things which according to Goffman (1979) stands as a means to catch the eye of the audience to desire the women represented in the advertisement and incite him to buy the product advertised, with the result of women being somehow dehumanized and objectified. Under Family dimension, the cross cultural billboard advertisements (image 5 and 6 in the Algerian context and image 5 in the American context) show a more detached and unemotional view of males as fathers while females are represented in marital roles in

company of their children standing in a more intimate way, which reflects a pervasive stereotype against women. Regarding function ranking in Goffman's framework, men in advertisements are performing executive roles, while women are performing more submissive roles. In our corpus, in case of pictures (3, 4 and 3, 4) in the two appendices in relation to the Algerian and American contexts, women are represented active mostly within meaningless employments, which are not representative of women's diversity unlike men who appear in autonomous and prestigious roles. Thus, women are underrepresented in a stereotypical role as submissive in relation to men. Concerning ritualistic of subordination in billboard advertisements images (1 and 6) the poses '*can be read as an acceptance of subordination, an expression of ingratiation, submissiveness, and appeasement*' (Goffman, 1979: 46); thus, associate women as submissive and inferior in relation to men.

Although the images of the billboard advertisements under investigation share some similarities, the analysis shows that they differ in some aspects. The first noticeable difference between the images lies in the gaze. Women images in the Algerian context are demand pictures (except image 3 and 5) which depict participants who engage in a direct eye contact with the audience, whereas women pictures in the American context are 'offer' images which involve participants who look away from the viewers. Moreover, while women images in the Algerian context are based on a close shot (close personal distance) which establishes an intimate distance between the depicted participants and the viewers (except image 5), women images in the American context are based on different shots (medium close shot and medium long shot) which establish various relations with the viewers (except image 3 and 6). As far as the angle (horizontal) is concerned, all female images in the Algerian context are photographed from frontal angle in order to get the viewers involved with the represented participant's world. However, women images in the American context are taken from oblique angles which suggest detachment between the depicted participants and the viewers.

Conclusion

To sum up, based on the results of this research and their discussion which have uncovered the way men and women are depicted in both Algerian and American contexts, this chapter has answered the research questions already defined in the General Introduction and checked the relevance of the stated hypotheses. First, it has been shown that men and women are stereotyped in both context using different semiotic resources. Second, it has been revealed that the selected billboard images share some similarities and differences in the depiction of both genders in the two distinct contexts.

The present work has attempted to investigate the way media portray and stereotype gender roles. More precisely, it has dealt with the visual representation of both genders; men and women in images of the Algerian and American billboard advertisements.

The study has targeted two main objectives. The first objective is to shed light on how men and women are represented in the selected images. The second objective is to compare between the afore-mentioned contexts for the sake of revealing the points of convergence and divergence in the portrayal of both genders. To reach these objectives, the representational and the interactive metafunctions, constituting the framework of 'Visual Grammar' (1996, 2006) are adopted, in addition to the semiotic approach of Goffman (1979). The two frameworks are applied on a corpus consisting of twelve advertising images.

The qualitative research method has been used in the process of data analysis which allows us to interpret the findings which are collected from the social semiotic analysis of advertising images. This research method is adopted in order to answer the research questions and test the accuracy of the advanced hypotheses.

The social semiotic analysis of the images has revealed that the majority of the selected women images in both contexts (Algeria and the USA) are 'conceptual' since they are not based on 'vectors' and the represented participants are static. However, all men images in the two aforementioned contexts are based on a narrative representation, in which the represented participants are involved in actions. Concerning the interactional metafunction, the results have shown that gaze is absent nearly in all the selected American billboards containing either a male or female participant. It is not directed at the viewer in the Algerian context in all men images as well. This depiction is in order to offer information to the audience and in which women are offered as objects of contemplation. While, both demand and offer are reflected only in the female images in the Algerian context, which the former is meant to demand something from the part of the viewers. Another means that is

used for establishing imaginary relations between the depicted participants and the viewers is 'social distance'. In fact, far intimate, intimate and far social relations are established between the represented participants in the selected images and the audience. 'Point of view' or 'perspective' is the third system within this metafunction. It has two parts, namely; the horizontal and the vertical angle which are reflected in the selected billboard images. The former refers to whether the participants are seen frontally or obliquely. The frontal angle signifies involvement between the viewers while oblique suggests detachment between them. In women images of the American context, the oblique angle is reflected. As regards in the Algerian context, the frontal angle is used in all the selected images of both contexts containing either a man or woman participant. The vertical angle, on the other hand, relates whether the participants are viewed from below, above or at eye level. In fact, eye level angle (medium) is reflected in nearly all of the selected images in both contexts (Algeria and the USA).

As for the analysis based on Goffman's gender framework, the results have shown that the display of Goffman's feminine touch, function ranking, family, ritualistic of subordination and licensed withdrawal are present in the selected corpus of our study. Considering the display of feminine touch are found in some of the women images in the two distinct context to convey a sense of women delicacy, while utilitarian hand gestures such as a strong grasp or hold are evident in men's images. With regards the function ranking, men are given the role of principle player while women are portrayed in secondary or supporting role. Besides, women are also depicted within a family scene in company of their children, thus reinforcing a stereotypical role of women as caregivers. Additionally, the ritualistic of subordination is commonly used in women images. As a final point licensed withdrawal is also prominent within women pictures, by presenting them as psychologically withdrawn from their reality in passive roles.

Relying on the results of the pictorial representation of both genders in the selected billboards images that the present study provides, the findings confirmed that the hypotheses which were previously advanced in The General Introduction are accurate and valid.

Our study hopefully contributes to the field of Social Semiotics in analyzing billboards advertising visually in both distinct contexts (Algeria and the USA). In fact, we have dealt only with visual analysis, but in future studies one may deal with the representation of gender roles in the Algerian newspaper caricatures, considering both visual and linguistic analysis.

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Appendix 1: Algerian Billboard Advertisements Images

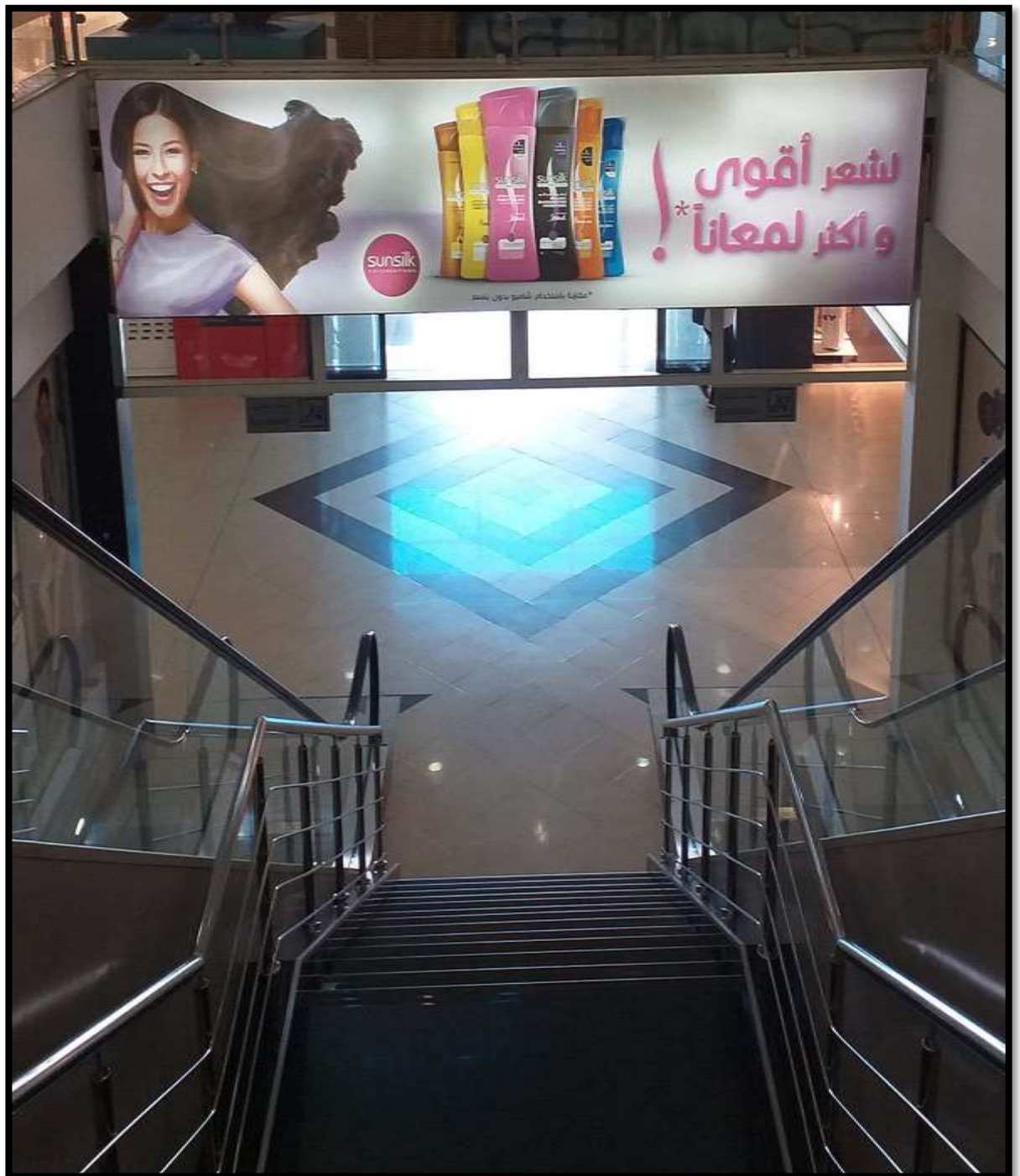


Image 1 : <https://www.facebook.com/PikassoAlgerie/photos/2538040502913378>

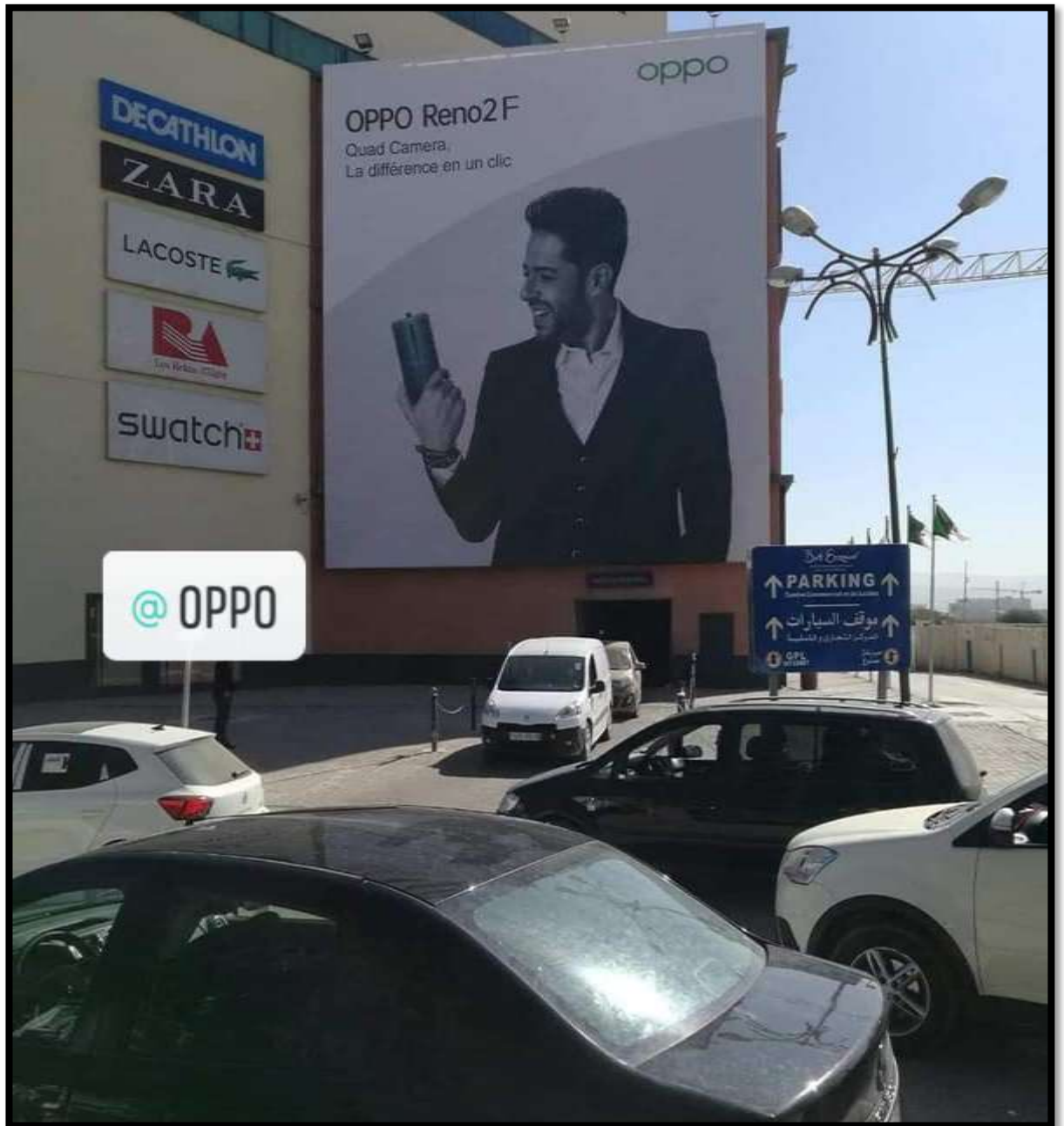


Image 2 :

<https://www.facebook.com/PikassoAlgerie/photos/pcb.2979742538743170/29797527854088>

[12/?type=3&theater](#)



Image 3 :

<https://www.facebook.com/PikassoAlgerie/photos/a.320483928002391/24370552https://gramho.com/media13011908/?type=3&theater>



Image 4 : <https://www.picuki.com/media/2007501484196719857>

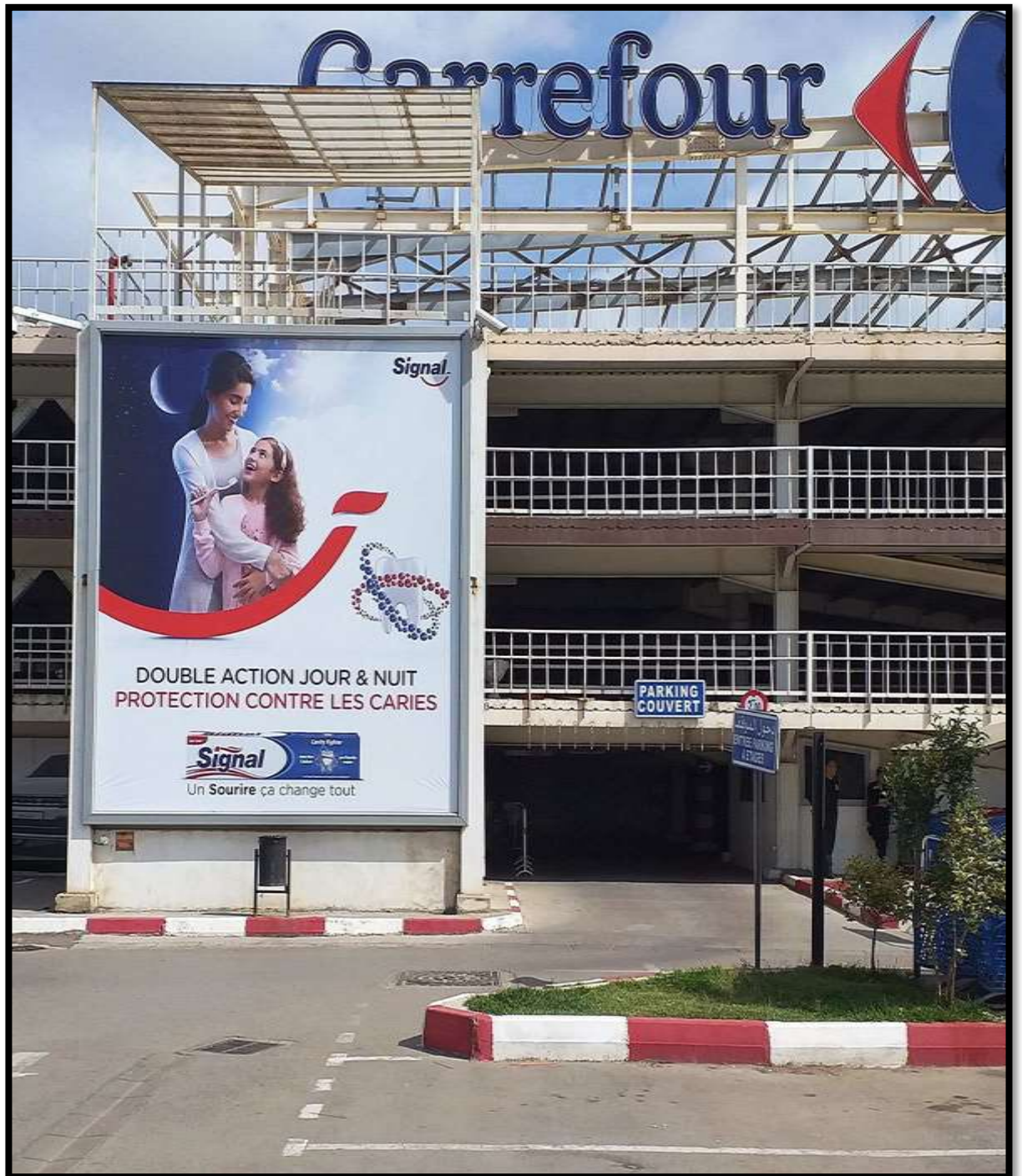


Image 5 :

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=2423557467695016&set=a.320483928002391>



Image 6 :

<https://www.facebook.com/PikassoAlgerie/photos/a.320483928002391/2776108285773264>

Appendix 2 : American Billboard Advertisements Images

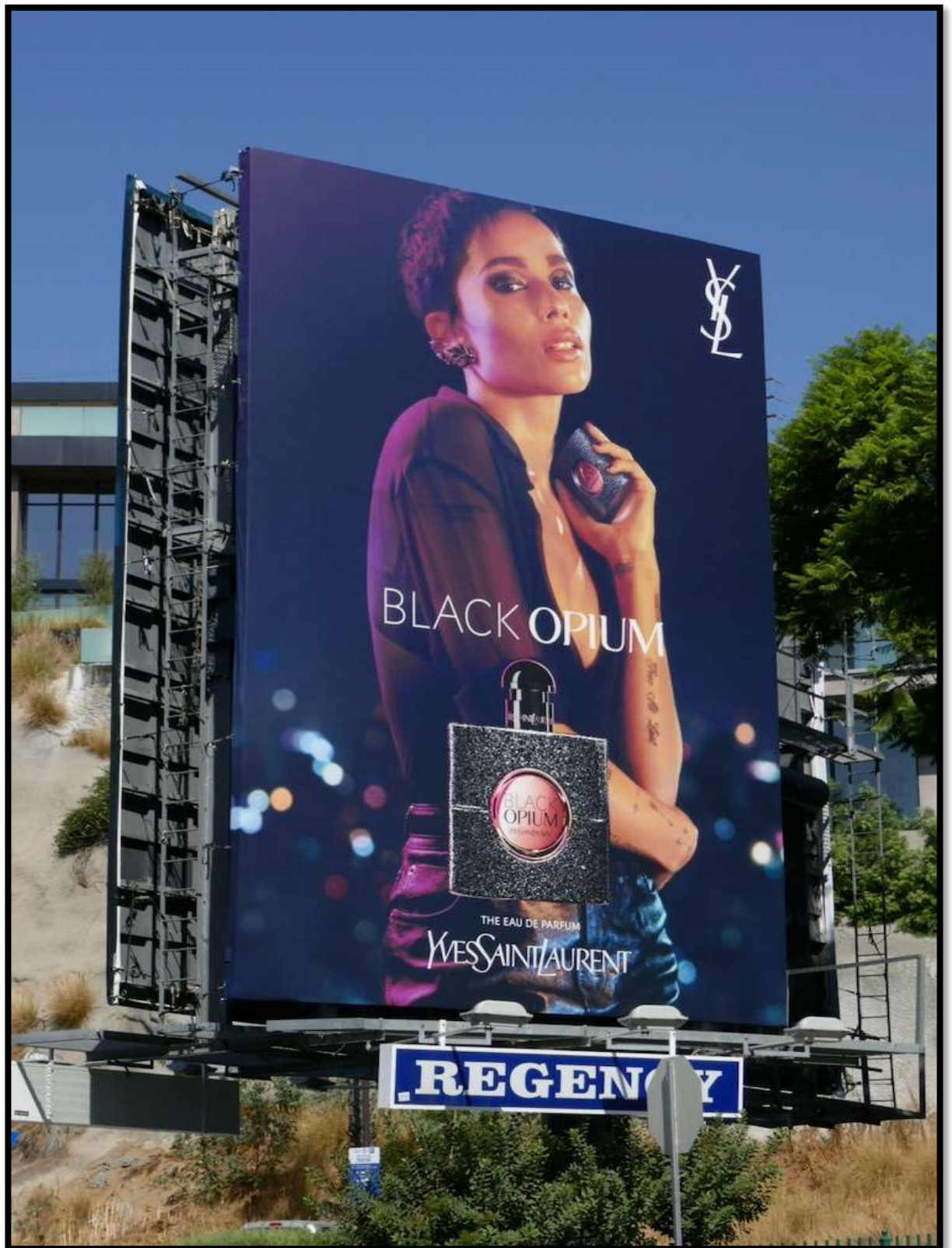


Image 1 : <https://www.dailybillboardblog.com/search?q=The+Black+Opium+billboard>



Image 2 : <https://www.dailybillboardblog.com/search?q=omega+watch>



Image 3 : <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/times-square-billboard-for-nicolette-robinson-making-her-news-photo/1026821790>



Image 4: <https://www.facebook.com/WVBillboardGal/photos/1596079543886876>



Image 5 :

<https://www.facebook.com/LamarNewYorkCity/photos/pcb.1197455237060127/1197455093>

[726808/](#)



Image 6 : <https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-allegra-pollen-count-billboards-0408-biz-20150407-story.html>