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# “Selling Sin” in a Hostile Environment: A Comparison of Ukrainian and American Tobacco Advertising Strategies in Magazines

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Given that “sin” products must navigate different regulatory environments, it is important to compare cigarette advertising across cultures. Using text analysis, this study examined the message strategies and the ideological beliefs in cigarette advertising in American and Ukrainian magazines within the context of their different regulatory environments. The messages across the two countries differed in their use of creative appeals to ego, social needs, and sensory pleasure as well as their adherence to regulation. Many of the Ukrainian campaigns were reminiscent of earlier American campaigns and

offer unique comparisons of cultures that are at different places historically, economically, and ideologically.

### **“So You Think You Know Me? Come and Find Out.”**

These are the words of a mysterious-looking, dark haired beauty in a Virginia Slims ad in a Ukrainian woman's magazine (Figure 1). Nowhere to be found are the campaign slogans familiar to American women, such as: “You've come a long way, baby,” “Find your voice,” or “It's a woman thing.” In fact, Virginia Slims ads are nowhere to be found in current American women's magazines (Bercovici 2002), though they are plentiful in Ukrainian women's magazines. Clearly, there are cultural and perhaps regulatory differences that prohibit a standardized advertising strategy (de Mooij 2005) and therefore invite further investigation.

Tobacco advertising is controversial for almost all cultures. It promotes a legal product, but one that damages the health of users and is one of the leading causes of death. As one of five so-called “sin” products, tobacco takes its place among alcohol, pornography, firearms and gambling and navigates a hostile regulatory environment (Davidson 2003). More benign products are promoted in a positive environment where marketers can dream of having such successful campaigns that they take on a life beyond the ad itself; however, the marketers of sin products often find that success becomes a rallying point for critics (2003, p. 167). Therefore, the marketers of cigarettes have the added challenge of designing a campaign that succeeds in resonating creatively with consumers while staying below the radar of critics.

This environment begs for an investigation of how advertisers of cigarettes in the United States have met the challenge compared to advertisers in other countries. Ukraine provides an ideal country for comparison, given that it is not only at a different point in time for tobacco regulation but is also at a different historical point within the advertising industry. This study first compares the two countries from economic, cultural, and regulatory perspectives and then analyzes and compares strategies for cigarette advertising in Ukraine and the United States using text analysis as a method. Its goal is to show how

the ads attempt to connect with consumers by delivering culturally relevant messages that reinforce the ideology, all within a highly scrutinized regulatory environment.

## *A Comparison of the Economy*

According to *CIA World Factbook* (2007) information, Ukraine is a developing Eastern European country, which occupies a geographical area slightly smaller than Texas (233,090 sq. mi.). It has a population of 46 million people, which is 15 percent of the U.S. population of 301 million. Ukraine was under Soviet rule until it gained independence in 1991, although democracy has proven to be somewhat elusive. A legacy of state control and corruption are credited with stalling the efforts at economic reform, privatization, and civil liberties, although the Orange Revolution, a peaceful mass protest in 2004, overturned a rigged presidential election and became the impetus for other changes. Modifications to budgetary laws in 2005 substantially increased economic activity, but additional changes are called for to fight corruption, develop capital markets, and improve the legislative framework for business. After Russia, Ukraine is considered the most important economic component of the former Soviet Union, producing about four times the output of the next-ranking republic (*CIA Factbook* 2007).

A comparison of the economy of the United States and Ukraine shows a per capita GDP of \$43,500 and \$7,600, respectively, based on 2006 figures (*CIA Factbook* 2007). In terms of income and buying power for simple purchases, the average cost of magazines in Ukraine ranges from \$US 0.40 to \$US 2.00 for a single issue compared to about \$2.50 to \$7.50 in the United States. Although magazines are relatively inexpensive in Ukraine by American standards, they are out of the price range of the poorest members of the population, given that Ukrainian minimum wage for those who work 40 hours per week is \$US 74 per month (Visnyk Podatkovoyi Sluzhby Ukraine 2006) compared to \$US 824 in the United States (Department of Labor 2007 figures prior to the summer 2007 increase). Consequently, the items advertised in magazines tend to be targeted to affluent members of the country and for high-end brands.

According to *Advertising Age's* (2006) database for international advertising, the top 100 marketers spent \$98 billion globally on advertising. A total of \$47 billion was spent in the United States, making it the country with the largest expenditures, with \$30 billion spent in Europe. Further breakdowns of the top 10 marketers in each country show that \$103 million was spent in Ukraine compared with \$19.2 billion in the U.S. The highest ranking countries in the world for advertising (after the U.S.) are: Japan, China, the UK, Spain, Germany, Canada, France, Australia, Italy, and South Korea. Though the comparison figures show that the United States dwarfs Ukraine for advertising expenditures, the overall Ukrainian advertising expenses are expected to grow from \$US 1.5 billion in 2007 to \$US 3.6 billion in 2011 (Zakusylo 2006).

### *A Comparison of Cultures*

Culturally, Ukraine appears to differ from the United States on a number of dimensions. The Dutch social scientist Geert Hofstede (2001) identified certain cultural values that effectively differentiate countries based on data he has collected over several decades. Although Hofstede did not collect data for Ukraine, it is possible to make some tentative assumptions based on scores for other Eastern European countries that border Ukraine—Russia, Romania, and Poland. Hofstede measured culture on the basis of several major dimensions including individualism (IDV)—the extent to which members of the culture look after themselves and their immediate family versus belonging to in-groups that look after them; power distance (PDI)—the extent to which members of a society accept the unequal distribution of power; masculinity (MAS)—the extent to which the culture values achievement and success over relationship building and quality of life; and uncertainty avoidance (UAI)—the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty. The three Eastern European countries tend to cluster at opposite ends of the spectrum than the United States. For example, Americans are highly individualistic people who value equality in power relationships. They prioritize achievement and success over relationship building and are fairly comfortable in taking risks, whereas Romanians and Russians are collectivistic people who have learned not to expect equality in relationships of power. They prioritize relationship building over achievement and are

uncomfortable with uncertainty. Poles are somewhat mixed; they value achievement as do Americans, but are closer to Romanians and Russians on the other three dimensions. Ukrainians are more likely to share these cultural dimensions with other Eastern Europeans than with Americans. See Table 1 for actual scores.

A factor that can affect the extent to which the members of a culture endorse cultural values is diversity. The racial/ethnic composition of the two countries shows that Ukraine is a much more homogeneous, less diverse country than the United States. In Ukraine a cultural value such as collectivism is likely to be shared and supported fairly evenly among the population. In contrast, individualism is likely to be strongest in the United States for white, non-Hispanic Americans. African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians all have origins in collectivistic countries (Hofstede 2001).

Statistics show that in Ukraine, 95 percent of the population consists of Ukrainians and Russians (78 percent and 17 percent, respectively) with the remaining 5 percent divided primarily among Hungarians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Poles, Belarusians, Moldovans, and Crimean Tatars (*CIA World Factbook 2007*, citing 2001 Ukrainian census data). Racially, Ukrainians are white, and the homogeneity of the population is the result of a number of factors. For example, during the 12th to 15th centuries, many Ukrainians living in the Eastern part of the country relocated to the North in order to escape invasions by wandering tribes from the Far East. These displaced Ukrainians typically married Northern Ukrainians and remained in the North until they could safely journey back to the East, bringing their Northern Ukrainian family members with them (Smirnov 2006). However, other Ukrainians, particularly those who lived in the Eastern and Southern parts of Ukraine, mixed with Mongolian tribal members during the 13th to 15th centuries when Ukrainian lands were under Mongol rule, and their descendents have certain Mongolian features (higher cheekbones, darker skin tones, different eye shapes, etc.). Similarly, descendents of the Scythian tribes who lived in Eastern Ukraine in the 5<sup>th</sup> century exhibit differences in body hair length. Despite these physical variations, Ukrainians are considered a homogeneous nation of southern Europeans (Smirnov 2006; Garchev n.d.).

In contrast, the United States has a highly diverse racial and ethnic mix that is 82 percent white, 13 percent black, 4 percent Asian, 1 percent Amerindian and Alaska native, and 0.2 percent Hawaiian and other Pacific islanders (*CIA World Factbook 2007*, citing 2003 estimates). An entry for the Hispanic population is not included because the U.S. Census Bureau considers Hispanics to be people of Latin American descent who may be of any race or ethnic group (white, black, Asian, etc.). However, 2004 data from the Current Population Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau estimate the Hispanic population at 14 percent, making Hispanics the largest minority group in the United States.

### ***A Comparison of the Regulatory Environment***

As a developing country, Ukraine is in an earlier stage of establishing tobacco advertising regulations than the more developed countries such as the United States; however, recent debates in the Ukrainian parliament have called for better enforcement of regulations and tighter restrictions, which currently have many loopholes and are open to interpretation (Telekrytyka 2007). For instance, under parliamentary law messages cannot imply that smoking helps to build one's career or leads to success socially (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine 2006, article 22 #6), nor can they suggest that the majority of people smoke or drink (article 22, # 12); however, what cannot be said explicitly in words can be implied through visuals. Additional regulations forbid the use of models under 18 years of age in tobacco and alcohol advertising (article 22, #3) and require warnings to be at least 15 percent of the ad in a color that contrasts with the background (article 22, #7). Ukrainian warnings are also less threatening (e.g., "Smoking *may* cause lung cancer") than American warnings, which explicitly state the effects of smoking.

The prevalence of smoking among Ukrainian men is among the highest in the world at 67 percent, although the rate for women is much lower at 20 percent (International Centre for Policy Studies 2005). In Ukraine, the mix of gender, education, and income reveals other unusual trends. Among men, smoking prevalence is highest for those with the lowest education and income levels whereas smoking prevalence among women is highest among the best educated and

affluent members. For smokers in the United States, men outnumber women by a much smaller margin—23.9% of men versus 18.1% of women—and smoking rates are highest for those with the least education and for those living below the poverty level regardless of gender (*CDC Fact Sheet 2006*).

Because a large amount of revenue in the Ukrainian advertising market comes from international tobacco companies, any effort to limit or ban tobacco advertising in specific media is likely to be met with resistance by the tobacco lobby in Ukraine (Euromonitor International 2007). Television advertising of tobacco is already banned; however, Ukrainian law could enact bans on billboards within city limits by 2008 and in magazines in 2009. Furthermore, tobacco ads could be banned entirely in 2011 (Zakusylo 2006). These initiatives were proposed in response to charges of ineffective regulation of Ukrainian cigarette advertising, including warning labels that are blended into the design of the ads.

Lack of enforcement and weak regulations have been blamed for a 49 percent increase in cigarette consumption among Ukrainians over the twelve-year time span from 1992 to 2004, according to the Alcohol and Drug Information Center in Ukraine (ADIC 2006), which is a non-government, non-profit organization established to prevent drug and alcohol problems. This increase is all the more significant when compared to the 22 percent decrease in consumption in the United States for the same period, according to CDC figures from the *Tobacco Yearbook* (2005). Of interest is the fact that the legal sales figures in Ukraine only paint a partial picture of total consumption due to the smuggling of cigarettes to and from the country. When taking smuggling into consideration, actual consumption since 2003 is estimated to be even higher than the figures based on legal sales (ADIC 2006).

Although Ukraine is currently trying to limit exposure to cigarette advertising (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine 2003), the tobacco industry has a history of promoting cigarettes aggressively in countries that are less heavily regulated than the United States (Jackson 2007). The President and Chief Executive Officer of Philip Morris International Inc. noted in a 2005 press release that Ukraine has been one of PMI's



strongest growth markets since 2002, particularly for brands such as *L&M*, *Marlboro* and *Bond Street* (Calantzopoulos 2005). The Altria Group, the parent company of Philip Morris USA and Phillip Morris International and maker of Marlboro, has announced plans to spin off the international arm of the business, which analysts say will allow the company to expand even more aggressively abroad and operate unencumbered by fears of further litigation, threats of government intervention, and declining cigarette sales in the U.S. market (Martin 2007, B1).

The tobacco industry in the United States has battled its way through the regulatory environment for a longer time period than in Ukraine. Warning labels were first required in 1965 and were placed in small print on a side panel of every cigarette pack with the following message: "Cigarette Smoking May be Hazardous to your Health" (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services 1989). However, the Federal Trade Commission regarded this health warning as inadequate and argued for tougher labels (O'Hegarty et al. 2007). In response, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Smoking Education Act in 1984, which required the rotation of four black and white text messages on the side of cigarette packages: "Smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and may complicate pregnancy"; "Cigarette smoke contains carbon monoxide"; "Smoking by pregnant women may result in fetal injury, premature birth, and low birth weight"; and "Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health" (O'Hegarty et al. 2007, citing CDC information).

Cigarette advertising was banned from radio and television in 1970, which prompted the industry to redirect its advertising dollars to other media, particularly magazines and billboards (Davidson 2003). Still, the tobacco industry was able to continue to expose television viewers to smoking through indirect forms of advertising such as product placements in TV programs and movies. The use of banners at sports contexts, rock concerts, and other televised events allowed cigarette makes to further "subvert" the law (Davidson 2003).

Beyond the federally required use of warning labels and the ban from broadcast media, restrictions on tobacco advertising in the United States are largely voluntary. In 1964 the industry initiated the

Cigarette Advertiser's Code with nine principles related to youth appeals (Mazis et al. 1992). These principles included not depicting people who are or appear under 25 years of age; avoiding suggestions that smoking is essential to social prominence, success, or sexual attraction; avoiding suggestions that smoking leads to good health; and avoiding depictions of athletes or celebrities (R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company 2007).

The Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) of 1998 superseded other voluntary efforts and brought an end to outdoor advertising and most advertising in sports arenas, but only in the 46 states that are part of the agreement and with the six largest tobacco companies. Tobacco companies further agreed in the MSA not to advertise with cartoon characters such as "Joe Camel," sponsor concerts or other events with significant youth audiences, or advertise in magazines with a high percentage of youth readers (Hudson 2006).

As a recent voluntary measure, Philip Morris began curbing the presence of its Marlboro, Parliament, Virginia Slims, and Merit brands in American magazine advertising, and others companies have followed suit (Bercovici 2002). After withdrawing from billboard advertising, American cigarette companies have also shifted their advertising dollars to in-store advertising and displays (Join Together 2000).

## **Theoretical Models**

Given the scrutiny that tobacco advertisers face in both countries, it is all the more compelling to understand the message strategy. Two theoretical frameworks ground this analysis. The first is text analysis, for it offers a framework for deconstructing advertising-as-text by first analyzing the surface meaning, then identifying the advertiser's intended meaning, and finally uncovering the cultural or ideological meaning (Frith 1997). Like other interpretive approaches, the method relies upon the researcher(s) to find order and pattern in the data. Thus, the researcher becomes "the research instrument with all the inherent powers and weaknesses of the human mind" (Taylor 1994, p. 270).

Given that products gradually become cultural signifiers of lifestyle, and consumption of products allows consumers to express who they are, Frith explores the *surface meaning* by seeking an overall impression and listing the objects and people in the ad. Second, she looks for the *advertiser's intended meaning* of the ad by drawing upon the sales message that the advertiser tries to communicate. Third, she examines the *cultural or ideological meaning*, which "relies on the cultural knowledge and background of the reader" (p. 5). Typically, the ideological meaning is made up of the common sense beliefs widely shared by members of the culture. In the United States, commonly held values include independence, equality, democracy, etc. Ideology can also be defined as "ideas that buttress and support a particular distribution of power in society," and by definition are always political (O'Barr 1994, p. 2).

While deconstructing the advertising message and image, the process requires taking the ad apart, layer by layer of signification, and moving from the surface meaning to deeper ideological and social messages. Frith (1997) notes that stereotyping may be part of the ideology; thus, examining the roles of the people and their power relationships is important. One method of analyzing power relationships is to examine the interaction between characters and to exchange the roles of the key players in the ad (Frith 1997, p. 10). By reversing a man/woman, older/younger person, or black/white person, the narrative is likely to change. When the story takes on a different meaning, the reversal of elements alerts us to the ideology of the culture.

The second framework is a six segment advertising strategy wheel (Taylor 1999), which incorporates several creative typologies. Based on Carey's (1975) transmission and ritual model of communication, the ritual strategies include the ego segment, social segment, and sensory segment. Taylor characterizes the *ego segment* by several factors. First, the products that are advertised for this segment make statements about one's self; thus, the appeals within such messages are always ego related (vanity, self-actualization). Second, "the purchase decisions for these products are emotionally important to the consumer and allow the consumer to make a statement to him/herself about who he/she is" (Taylor 1999, p. 12).

The product does not hold any promise of transforming the individual. Instead, the product is simply a reflection of the individual. It acknowledges "I Am Me" regardless of "who I am." Jewelry and clothing are products that are frequently advertised with ego appeals.

The advertising of products and services in Taylor's *social segment* makes a statement to others rather than to oneself. Conspicuous consumption fulfills an important function, and ads for this segment often incorporate appeals directed at being noticed, gaining social approval, and engaging in the socially correct behavior. Clothing and shoes are products that typically fit into this category.

The key indicator of the *sensory segment* is the appeal to the senses of the consumer, and the ads do so by providing "moments of pleasure" (Taylor 1999, p. 13). Although sensory segment products appeal to the five senses (taste, sight, hearing, touch, or smell), this segment is considered the least emotionally involving.

The other three segments of the model use transmission communication strategies. In the *routine segment*, purchase decisions are based on habit as well as on rational buying motives (e.g., groceries and personal care products). In the *acute need segment*, purchase decisions are made hurriedly when consumers simply choose what is available (e.g., cleaning supplies and auto parts). In the *rational segment*, consumers make rational, deliberate decisions for products that require high involvement (e.g., cars, computers and household appliances).

Although Taylor did not anticipate a universal buying-decision process, he predicted that countries which share certain cultural values such as individualism may use similar strategies. For this reason, it will be of interest to see how American and Ukrainian ads differ in creative strategy. Since Ukraine and the U.S. differ in cultural values, some differences are expected in strategy.

## Method

### *The Sample of Ads*

A sample of ads for the text analysis was drawn from several types of magazines to obtain as broad a sample as possible. A total of 39 magazines were examined: 17 Ukrainian and 22 American publications, all selected from August 2006. The magazines were leading magazines for their content area and were chosen in order to cover a large number of topics including business, finance, men's interests, women's interests, health, entertainment, home, news, culture, and sports. They were also chosen for their ability to provide direct comparisons. For example, *Companion* and *Vlast Deneg* are Ukrainian business oriented magazines comparable to *Fortune* and *Money*; *Korrespondent* combines coverage of business and news similar to *Business Week*; *Komanda+* provides sports coverage comparable to *Sports Illustrated*; *Otdohni* covers music and entertainment topics similar to *Rolling Stone*; and both the Ukrainian and U.S. versions of *Cosmopolitan* and *Maxim* were selected. (See the appendix for a list of all magazines.)

The initial research goal was to examine advertising during a single point in time across two cultures with a broad set of magazines. However, it was soon apparent that American cigarette advertisements were scarce, and that it would be necessary to broaden the search in hopes of locating additional ads. Additional issues of *Rolling Stone* and *Sports Illustrated* were later added from January to December 2006 as well as additional issues of *Otdohni* and *Komanda+* for balance. All cigarettes ads of one or more pages were included into the analysis. As a result of including every distinct ad in each magazine, the total sample included 47 Ukrainian ads and 23 American ads. No duplicates were included.

Among the Ukrainian ads, the following 12 brands were present: Camel, Davidoff, Winston, Virginia Slims, Marlboro, Murati, Sobranie, Pall Mall, Skyline, Chesterfield, Monte Carlo, and Esse. Among the American ads, the following four brands appeared: Camel, KOOL, Newport, and Djarum, which is an Indonesian brand. After scanning

every advertising page of 39 magazines and only encountering 70 distinct ads across the two countries, the product appears to be advertised less heavily than expected and with fewer brands, particularly in the United States.

## *Research Question*

A single research question guided this research to examine different ways that advertisers navigate the economic, regulatory, and cultural environment in the United States and Ukraine with messages that they believe will resonate with members of the culture. Specifically, we asked:

RQ: Given different regulatory environments, how does the strategy compare across the two cultures for cigarette advertising in magazines through surface characteristics, ritual versus transmission appeals, advertiser's intended message, and ideological meaning?

The comparison of cigarette advertising between the two cultures was enhanced by the fact that one researcher is Ukrainian and the other is American. They were able to elicit comments from other members of their respective cultures in cases of ambiguity and served as the ideological "authorities" for their respective cultures. True to the characteristics of the interpretive method, the researchers became the research instrument (Taylor 1994).

## **Findings**

*Surface Elements.* To answer the research question, we begin with a comparison of the surface details, (e.g., the presence of people, relationships between characters, settings, use of sensory elements, the presence of the cigarette itself in addition to smoke, presence of warning labels, etc.). The Ukrainian ads showed many people, often couples having fun and sharing romantic moments in attractive settings, such as splashing in the sea, riding in a boat, or dancing outdoors on a quaint and inviting street. A few campaigns showed men or women only, which seemed to identify the target market for the ad. The Marlboro ads, which appeared identical to ads seen previously in

the U.S., portrayed the rugged, free, individualist cowboy. Similarly, the Virginia Slims ads portrayed beautiful, enigmatic women as representations of attractiveness. All ads with people used young men and women who appeared to be in their twenties and white, attractive, affluent, and healthy. No variation in race or ethnicity was present except for the Virginia Slims model (Figure 1), who has certain Mongolian facial characteristics typical of Ukrainians from certain parts of the country. With the exception of ads that simply used a studio background, all settings were outdoors. The few ads that did not include people were extremely stylish, particularly one for Davidoff (Figure 2), which used red smoke swirling against a black background, and Camel, which used stylish photography to depict a camel-shaped constellation in the sky in one ad and car headlights in a city scene in the shape of a camel in another (Figure 3).

Fifteen of the Ukrainian ads contained warnings that were so integrated into the design that they were nearly impossible to read, even for Ukrainians. In other cases the warning was illegible because the letters were elongated or written at a 90 degree angle, from bottom to top such as the Davidoff ad in Figure 2. The warnings contrasted with the American ones, which were consistent in terms of typeface, legibility, and size.

The American set had other differences. Although the people were in their twenties, affluent, attractive, and healthy, they were more diverse, more frequently placed in indoor settings, and engaged in less social interaction than their Ukrainian counterparts. The single ad for Newport showed a white couple happily enjoying a day at the beach, but they lacked the emotional spontaneity and intensity of the Ukrainian couple in a Winston, "at the beach" ad (Figure 4). Further, the American couple was sitting on the sand taking photos of each other rather than splashing in the water, which diminished the sensory elements compared with the Ukrainian ad. (The Lorillard Tobacco Company denied permission to include the Newport ad in this article, and the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company denied permission for the KOOL and Camel ads to appear.)

The other American brand that cast people, either in groups or in solo shots, was KOOL. The people represented were almost

exclusively members of diverse groups, a strategy which is in keeping with the diverse target market for the brand, and they were most often placed in indoor settings associated with music including bars or music studios. They often looked at something in the distance instead of interacting with each other. Thus, the people in all ads across brands and across cultures were clearly attractive role models, but their actions invited different country-by-country interpretations and seemed to tell different stories, which are considered further in more depth.

Two other brands were advertised in the American sample: Djarum and Camel. The single Djarum ad for the Indonesian brand depicted a blond woman in a bikini on a motorcycle and was more reminiscent of soft porn than the advertising for American cigarette brands. Camel ads offered a direct comparison between the two countries given that it was the only brand advertised in both countries. However, the American ads promoted the sub-brands, which arguably might have accounted for creative differences in the feel of the ads between the two countries. The two Camel products—"Wides" and "No. 9"—used visual imagery but with design elements rather than the stylish photography of the Ukrainian ads. Camel Wides uses the slogan "big, fat, delicious" to promote the larger circumference compared to other cigarettes, and Camel No. 9 uses a hot-pink fuchsia color with the slogan "light and luscious" to promote the brand to young women (Elliott 2007; Winn 2007). Elliott claims that the name evokes women's fragrances like Chanel No. 19 and the romantic song, "Love Potion No. 9." Another association with "9" is "dressed to the nines, putting on your best," according to Brian Stebbins, senior marketing director at R. J. Reynolds (quoted in Elliott 2007).

*Advertiser's intended message and use of appeals.* Not only did the surface elements differ across the two countries, but the advertiser's message and the use of strategic appeals differed as well. All of the 70 ads fit the ritual side of the strategy wheel using either the ego, social, or sensory segments, but the mix between the three varied by country, as seen in Table 2. Through sensory ads, advertisers invite consumers to indulge themselves and luxuriate in a world where the fulfillment of sensory pleasures is paramount. Perhaps the most obvious were the Ukrainian Davidoff ad with the swirls of



smoke and the American Camel ads with their appeal to taste, (e.g., Wides are big, fat, delicious and No. 9s are light and luscious). Even the Indonesian brand used a strong sensory appeal with the slogan, "Enjoy the sweet taste of Djarum for all your pleasures." This strategy appeared in 15 percent of the Ukrainian ads and 30 percent of the American ads.

The contrast between ego and social appeals is perhaps the most difficult to differentiate and requires further explanation. As noted previously, classic social appeals tap into the need for social approval by making statements to others. The implicit story that the brand tells consumers is that the product can enhance them by making them more attractive to others, more successful, more alluring, etc. In contrast, ego ads tap into the need for self-assurance by making a statement to oneself. The advertiser's message is that by using the brand, consumers can show the world how attractive, successful, alluring, etc. they already are. How individual consumers interpret the ads—through ego versus social appeals—depends upon how they see themselves in relation to the brand. The researchers categorized the ads by which elements had greater emphasis and, therefore, were more likely to be interpreted in a particular manner.

Some primary examples of social appeals in the Ukrainian ads are for Virginia Slims, which invite the belief that smoking the brand makes an already beautiful woman even more alluring. The initial ad ("So you think you know me? Come and find out." Virginia Slims. "More than you can imagine.") is not a direct come-on, but one that plays heavily with the desire to capture the interest and understanding of men while also maintaining an air of mystery (Figure 1). She is everything that Ukrainian women want to be: beautiful, desirable, and mysterious. But since the most desirable Ukrainian men are those who understand women, most women want to find ways to draw their interest. A second Ukrainian ad for Virginia Slims shows a beautiful blonde woman who says, "I am everything you expect me to be, even more than you can dream of." Virginia Slims. "Even more than you can imagine" (Figure 5). Her words are spoken to an unseen man but the message to women is that by smoking Virginia Slims, they too can be this mysterious, desirable woman.

Another social segment example is the Ukrainian ad for Winston (Figure 4) in which a man and woman splash in the sea without inhibition. The fact that they are clothed instead of wearing swimsuits suggests they were overcome by impulse to jump into the water, which is reinforced with the headline that translates to "freedom, joy, life, no limits." Although there is an appeal to the senses, there is a stronger element of romance and enjoyment that brings pleasure to the viewer, who can identify with the couple and see that Winston is part of the good life. Since the woman in the ad faces the camera and the man faces her, the ad speaks to women with the message that those who smoke Winston can be part of this lifestyle and have an attractive, adoring man. Similarly, a Murati ad showed a very attractive woman dancing in the street with an adoring man clapping his hands to her flamenco-style dance moves. The message is that women who smoke Muratis are attractive and desirable to men.

The American ads relied much less on social appeals; only 4 percent of the sample used this approach, compared to 40 percent of the Ukrainian ads. The Newport ad depicts interaction between a man and woman in a beach setting similar to the Ukrainian Winston ad, although in a less dramatically involving manner. Likewise, a KOOL ad depicts an attractive man and woman and invites consumers to associate the brand with a certain social lifestyle. However, this ad also encourages an ego appeal and was coded for a combined ego/social strategy. The man looks away from the woman with an attitude that exudes confidence as though he believes he can have any woman he wants. He is unlikely to believe that a brand of cigarettes will enhance him; in fact, he may believe that he lends status to the brand. The woman is less secure, for she has her arm around the man in a possessive gesture.

Other KOOL ads support the contrast between the confident male and submissive female. One ad that mixes the social/ego strategy shows only a partial view of a central male figure, who enters a bar and sees an attractive woman glancing his way. This ad conveys that for men who smoke KOOL, attractive women are theirs for the taking.

Other ads with a purely ego appeal are quite visible in the remaining KOOL ads. One shows an African-American musician with the slogan "be authentic" while others use similar slogans: be true, be creative, be original, be passionate, be smooth, and be bold. The one ad with a lone female depicts a topless, tattooed woman seen from behind, dressed in leather and jeans. She is straddling a chair, provocatively looking up at the viewer with the message, "be bold." Interestingly, the ad was described in a chapter on gender representations in advertising with the caption that the model "assumes a submissive and sexually receptive posture in relation to the ideal spectator" (O'Barr 2006). All other KOOL ads depicted self-absorbed, confident men, who look thoughtfully into the distance.

Ukrainian ego appeals are best seen in the Camel ads. The brand represents westernization in Ukraine (as does the Marlboro brand), and all ads in the series are about new beginnings, typically the beginning of self-discovery and perfection along the path to self-actualization, which is the highest-level need in Maslow's Hierarchy (1954). The advertiser's message is that Camels are for those who are in the process of changing everything in their life. They don't need the cigarettes to make the change. Instead, the brand identifies them as self-actualizers—or at least those on the path to self-actualization. Figure 3 is a highly sophisticated ad that uses a headline that translates roughly to "the beginning of your new life." Ego appeals are prevalent in both cultures but were more prevalent in the United States. They comprised 32 percent of Ukrainian ads and 57 percent of American ads.

*Ideology.* There are several important messages that speak to the ideology of the countries; however, the larger number of Ukrainian ads in the sample and the depiction of more people allows for more in-depth insights into Ukrainian than American culture, particularly for messages about change, freedom, and independence. For example, the Camel campaign of new beginnings speaks deeply to the political and economic changes that have taken place in Ukraine since gaining independence from Soviet rule in 1991. The Winston ad further speaks to the importance of freedom with its message of "no limits," as do the Marlboro ads, which celebrate rugged individualism (Figure 6). The ability to run the identical Marlboro campaign in both countries at

different points in time demonstrates that the core value of individualism resonates in both places, even though it is a more recent idea in Ukraine and is less ingrained than in the United States. The American devotion to individualism (Hofstede 1991) has been an explicit part of the political landscape since the 17th century (Carey 1960) and is a common theme in U.S. advertising; however, most American ads that express the value demonstrate strategic ways for consumers to express their individualism rather than making the case for individualism itself (Wolburg and Kim 2000). The KOOL campaign in the American sample demonstrates this by showing some of the behavior and personality characteristics of the modern individualistic American (be smooth, creative, passionate, authentic, bold, true, and original).

Both sets of ads used role models who are young, attractive, healthy, affluent, and successful. Based on the difference between ego and social strategies, American ads flatter members of the culture with messages that imply they have already attained self-actualization, whereas Ukrainian ads invite members of the culture to take up the challenge. Ukrainians are encouraged to put an end to their struggles and reach their dream, broaden their horizons, and become the person they want to be. Ironically, this is reminiscent of earlier advertising in the U.S., such as the Army's former slogan, "Be all that you can be," which was regarded as one of the greatest advertising ideas ever—"self-actualization through discipline and esprit de corps" (Garfield 2004, p. 25). Perhaps the Army changed its slogan in later years to "An army of one" because so many individualistic Americans *already* believe they are all they can be.

The ads challenge Ukrainians to strive for something better, particularly women. They are encouraged to leave behind the Soviet woman of communist ideology and become the liberated woman of independent Ukraine. The most revealing campaign about the modern Ukrainian woman is for the brand, Sobranie (Figure 7). The revolving theme of freedom, whether financial, professional, or social, is constantly present; yet, the emphasis is not on who they are, but who they want to be. One Sobranie ad encourages a young, beautiful woman to reinvent herself as anyone she wants to be—even a professional diver or pool player—by joining the Sobranie club. Two

others feature attractive, affluent, well-dressed women with outstretched arms saying "all this can be mine." The barefoot woman in Figure 7 stands in front of a castle wearing an expensive-looking dress that is wet from the rain. Her shoes are scattered beside her, giving her a casual attitude toward materialism as though wealth is a given.

One might think that this campaign is reminiscent of the early Virginia Slims campaign message in the United States, "You've come a long way, baby," but there is a difference. The American campaign used messages about women gaining parity with men for the right to vote (and to smoke) at a time when some American women attributed their lack of success to gender inequality. In contrast, Ukrainian ads appeal to different needs. Ukrainian women are not reaching for political equality with men because they already have it. Under Soviet rule, men and women were equal, and there were no class distinctions—no rich versus poor. The freedom to become someone new is about affluence, career opportunities, and material possessions, which contrasts with the goals of their American counterparts.

The evidence of the differing gender roles in the two countries comes from several Ukrainian campaigns but only one American campaign (KOOL). Throughout the Ukrainian ads, women aspired to be successful, beautiful, and mysterious. Men strive to uncover the mysterious soul of their beloved, but if they succeed, they quickly become disinterested. Thus, Ukrainian women must find ways to be successful but enigmatic, or they will lose their hold on men. In contrast, the KOOL campaign has recurring themes across ads with ethnically diverse models depicting confident men and subordinate women who appear sexually available. These depictions of women are unlikely to represent the full range of gender representations available within American culture, but the consistent theme throughout multiple ads for the brand suggests that it resonates among a significant segment of the population.

A key difference between the two countries is that to attract women, Ukrainian men should understand them, while American men should impress them. This dichotomy is supported by Hofstede's dimension of masculinity and femininity, which puts greater emphasis

on success and achievement in the United States and on relationships and nurturance for Eastern European countries. Women hold a special place in Ukrainian history as friend and supporter. Even the word "druzhyna" can be translated not only as "wife" but "small army" or someone who helps in battle.

## **Conclusions**

This sample has provided a revealing look at the two cultures through the way they communicate ideology when promoting a legal but harmful product. Many of the Ukrainian ads conjure memories of American ads of the past, most likely because advertising in Ukraine has a shorter history than in the United States. Campaign strategies for brands that promised to enhance the user were commonly seen in earlier decades in the United States, but during the 1990s the strategy shifted to better reach young adults who were believed to be "jaded with traditional advertising, tired of the same old state images, and bored with and cynical toward advertising manipulation" (Kellner 1995, p. 254). The ego strategy was one way of getting past the social appeal in the United States but since Ukrainians have not been a target market for a prolonged time, they may be more open to messages that offer ways of enhancing them.

When evaluating the ideological messages that emerged from the ads, it's important to consider what impact the regulations of each country might have on advertising content. To begin with, the regulatory environments of the two countries vary as a result of the different sources for restrictions. Ukrainian parliamentary law (rather than voluntary measures) regulates the media outlets as well as the content, including warning labels, restrictions on the use of young models, and prohibitions against messages that promote career or social success. Loopholes have resulted in lax enforcement and illegible warning labels. No models appeared to be under 18; however, several brands disregarded the restriction on promoting career and social success.

American cigarette ads are bound not only by certain legal restrictions for warning labels and media bans but also by voluntary codes based on fear of further scrutiny by regulators and critics.

Ironically, self-regulation may place greater limitations than federal laws, which may account for the voluntary withdrawal of cigarette advertising from magazines by certain brands. Not only did American advertisers use fewer ads in the sample than Ukrainian advertisers, but they also fully complied with warning labels and used fewer people in the ads. The current Camel campaigns appear to be relatively safe from regulators and critics with its lack of people and cartoon characters altogether, which contrasts greatly from the controversial Joe Camel campaign of the past.

Further, the strategic use among American brands for sensory or ego appeals in favor of social appeals would seem to offer better protection from criticism, given the lack of code restrictions for promoting a brand that indulges the senses or makes an ego statement about consumers. However, American cigarette manufacturers only have to look as far as Canada to see tighter regulations on advertising. Currently, Canadian magazines can only carry cigarette ads if the readership is more than 85 percent adult and if the ads avoid marketing a lifestyle. Ads can show only the product (Robertson 2007). Similarly, the United Kingdom announced a decision to modify the warning labels by requiring pictures of diseased lungs and other graphic images on all tobacco products (Carlin 2007).

There is no doubt that the regulatory environment in the United States limits creative strategy; thus, the findings from this study must be interpreted within that context. Like all interpretive research, the goal is insight into a particular time and place rather than generalization across time and place. Despite the limitations on creativity from the regulatory environment, the study produced a number of insights.

Certainly, the variation in the regulatory environment and the different message strategies currently in use mean that standardized approaches will not work well between the two countries, except for brands such as Marlboro that can use a former American campaign in Ukraine. These findings also pose the interesting question of whether cigarette advertising in Ukraine will eventually encounter as hostile an environment as in the United States. If so, it may face tighter restrictions. Equally interesting is whether the advertising industry in

general and cigarette advertising in particular will eventually encounter a jaded consumer. If so, we may see a shift from social appeals to ego appeals in Ukraine. Magazine advertising for cigarettes is profitable and largely unregulated in Ukraine, but no one can say what will happen if the predicted regulations will go into effect in the future. Both countries bear further investigation as advertisers communicate their respective ideologies while navigating the constraints of a hostile environment.

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**Table 1.** Scores by Country on Hofstede's Dimensions

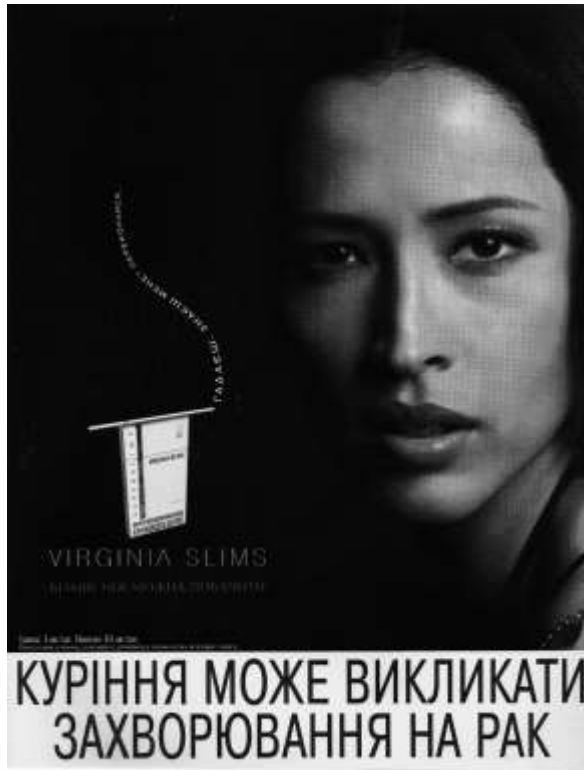
	<i>PDI</i>	<i>IDV</i>	<i>MAS</i>	<i>UAI</i>
Poland	68	60	64	93
Romania	90	30	42	90
Russia	93	39	36	95
United States	40	91	62	46

Source: Hofstede 2001 (PDI represents power distance; IDV represents individualism; MAS represents masculinity; and UAI represents Uncertainty Avoidance). Scores range from a possible 10-110 points.

**Table 2.** Appeals in American and Ukrainian Cigarette Advertising

	<i>Ukrainian Cigarette Ads</i>	<i>American Cigarette Ads</i>
Ego	15 (32%)	13 (57%)
Social	19 (40%)	1 (4%)
Sensory	7 (15%)	7 (30%)
Mixed Ego-social Appeal	6 (13%)	2 (9%)
Total	47	23

**Figure 1.** Virginia Slims



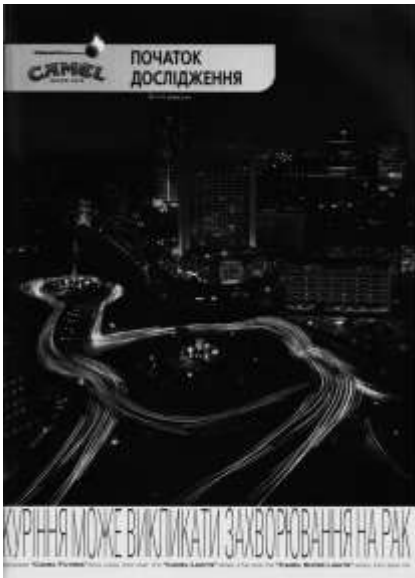
Virginia Slims. Ukrainian advertising campaign: "So you think you know me? Come and find out." Virginia Slims: "More than you can imagine."

**Figure 2.** Davidoff



Davidoff. Ukrainian advertising campaign. The page to the right, which delivered the warning written at a 90 degree angle, appeared on the back of the ad seen on the left.

**Figure 3. Camel**



Camel. Ukrainian advertising campaign: "The beginning of your new life."

**Figure 4. Winston**



Winston. Ukrainian advertising campaign: "Freedom, joy, life, no limits."

**Figure 5.** Virginia Slims



Virginia Slims. Ukrainian advertising campaign. "I'm everything you expect me to be. Even more than you can wish for." Virginia Slims: "More than you can imagine."

## Appendix A. Magazines

<i>Ukrainian Magazines</i>	<i>U.S. Magazines</i>
<i>Burda</i> (August 2006)	<i>Business Week</i>
<i>Companion</i> (August 2006)	<i>Cosmopolitan</i> (August 2006)
<i>COOL</i> (August 2006)	<i>EGO</i> (August 2006)
<i>Cosmopolitan</i> (August 2006)	<i>Entertainment</i> (August 2006)
<i>Ego</i> (August 2006)	<i>Esquire</i> (August 2006)
<i>Good Advice</i> (August 2006)	<i>Fortune</i> (August 2006)
<i>Karavan</i> (August 2006)	<i>Glamour</i> (August 2006)
<i>Komanda+</i> (2006)	<i>Good Housekeeping</i> (August 2006)
<i>Korrespondent</i> (August 2006)	<i>GQ</i> (August 2006)
<i>Malysh</i> (August 2006)	<i>In Style</i> (August 2006)
<i>Maxim</i> (August 2006)	<i>Living</i> (August 2006)
<i>Natali</i> (August 2006)	<i>MAXIM</i> (August 2006)
<i>Otdohni</i> (2006)	<i>Men's Health</i> (August 2006)
<i>Pink</i> (August 2006)	<i>Money</i> (August 2006)
<i>VivA!</i> (August 2006)	<i>O—Oprah magazine</i> (August 2006)
<i>Vlast Deneg</i> (August 2006)	<i>Parents</i> (August 2006)
<i>Za Rulem</i> (August 2006)	<i>People</i> (August 2006)
	<i>Redbook</i> (August 2006)
	<i>Rolling Stone</i> (2006)
	<i>Sports Illustrated</i> (2006)
	<i>Vanity Fair</i> (August 2006)
	<i>Women's Health</i> (August 2006)

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