Gender Roles in Super Bowl Commercials: A Qualitative Longitudinal

Content Analysis From 2013-2022

by

Christa Loree Havenhill

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Communication and the Arts

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ABSTRACT

Although numerous studies have examined gender stereotypes in advertising, relatively few have investigated the communication of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials. The Super Bowl attracts the largest televised audience in the United States; thus, it holds the power to shape, influence, and reinforce attitudes and beliefs. Through a sociocultural lens, this qualitative study examines the communication of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials across a 10-year period from 2013 to 2022. Utilizing a longitudinal content analysis design, 279 Super Bowl advertisements from 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022 were analyzed. The problem addressed is how the depiction of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials has changed over the past decade. The purpose of this qualitative longitudinal content analysis is to understand and explore how gender roles have changed in Super Bowl commercials from 2013 to 2022. Four research questions guided the study in which seven primary themes and 12 subthemes emerged. Key results include shifts in sexuality, role types, and product categories. Although many shifts occurred to varying degrees, traditional couples and family units continue to be communicated through heterosexual narratives. A significant number of commercials utilize the role of celebrity, comedic appeal, and elements of competition regardless of product type. Theoretically, the mirror argument and the mold argument are both at play. Six suggestions for future research are presented.

Keywords: Super Bowl commercials, gender roles, gender stereotypes, qualitative method, content analysis, longitudinal design, TV advertising, mirror versus the mold argument, social learning theory, cultivation theory, sociocultural tradition

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my sister, Amy. Throughout our lives, she has supported me unconditionally. Recently, she has reminded me of the importance of voice and thought. We tend to take the simplest of things for granted until they are no longer accessible at will. I am so grateful that I was able to organize my thoughts and complete this doctoral journey. Thank you, Amy. You are an inspiration. You are truly a reflection of God's light.

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List of Abbreviations

Advertisements (ads)

Advertising (ad)

Applications (apps)

Celebrity, Comedy, and Competition (3Cs)

Generation Z (Gen Z)

Greatest Of All Time (GOAT)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning (LGBTQ)

National Football League (NFL)

Research Questions (RQs)

Television (TV)

United States (U.S.)

Voice-Over (VO)

Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Advertisements hold the power to mold attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs (Antoniou & Akrivos, 2020; Furnham & Lay, 2017; Pollay, 1986; 1987). Subsequently, advertising often reflects society's prevailing attitudes and cultural norms (Holbrook, 1987; Lysonski, 1985). Cultivation theory supports the idea that images seen on television cultivate a homogenous culture (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973). Because gender roles and stereotypes can change over time, it is important to examine gender depictions in mainstream media (Hatzithomas et al., 2016). Televised advertisements can provide significant insight into the state of mainstream culture while simultaneously providing an opportunity to consider the media's effects on society (Eisend, 2010). Analyzing commercials aired during Super Bowl broadcasts over the past decade can provide substantial insight into the prevailing attitudes and cultural norms of gender in the United States (Hatzithomas et al., 2016; King, 2012; Rockwell, 2016).

When devising marketing plans, companies must consider the potential reach of their advertisements. The Super Bowl consistently attracts the largest televised audience in the United States (Nielsen, 2022). More viewers tune in to watch the annual football competition than any other network broadcast. Traditionally considered a masculine event (Messner et al., 2000), women now make up 47% of the viewing audience (Graham & Young, 2020). Because of its extensive reach potential and diverse viewership, Super Bowl advertisements have become the most expensive commercials on television (Young, 2022). Costing upward of $7 million for 30 seconds of airtime in 2022, Super Bowl commercials have the potential to influence societal attitudes, perceptions, values, and beliefs (Eisend, 2010). For these reasons, further exploration of gender roles in Super Bowl advertising is needed.

Background

Gender Stereotypes in Advertising

Gender stereotypes in advertising have garnered much attention over the past 50 years (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Hatzithomas et al., 2016; McArthur & Resko, 1975). Early scholars studied gender images from the 1950s and 1960s in print ads and magazines and primarily focused on the portrayal of female stereotypes and feminism (Busby & Leichty, 1993; Catalano, 2002; Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Lysonski, 1985). Early studies revealed the prevalence of traditional feminine stereotypes in leading magazines and print ads. Women were most often depicted as housewives "dependent on a man's protection" or as sexual objects (Zotos & Tsichla, 2014, p. 446). Over the years, research shifted to television advertising as the new medium became mainstream (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; McArthur & Resko, 1975). Expecting considerable carryover from print ads to television commercials, Courtney and Whipple (1974) led their study of role portrayals in television commercials, which resulted in similar conclusions. Men led the category of voice-over narration at 85% and were seen as product beneficiaries, whereas women were depicted mostly as housewives and mothers performing domestic tasks (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; McArthur & Resko, 1975; Whipple & Courtney, 1980).

The following year, McArthur and Resko (1975) examined the portrayal of men and women in television commercials through a theoretical social learning lens. The authors coded 210 prime-time commercials that aired in 1971. The content analysis identified eight characteristics frequently associated with gender stereotypes in advertising: 1) sex, 2) basis for credibility, 3) role, 4) location, 5) arguments given on behalf of a product, 6) punishments threatened or incurred for not using the product, 7) rewards offered or reaped for using a product,

and 8) type of product. The research showed major differences in the way men and women were

depicted. For example, men were more likely to portray the role of authority, whereas women

were the product users or consumers with less knowledge. Further, as in other scholarship,

female characters were rewarded with the approval of family or husbands, whereas male

characters were rewarded with career advancement (Whipple & Courtney, 1980). Courtney and

Whipple (1974) and McArthur and Resko (1975) helped set the standard for studies examining

gender stereotypes in television advertising through content analysis (Bretl & Cantor, 1988;

Eisend, 2010; King, 2012).

Following a similar premise, Bretl and Cantor (1988) led their study of commercials in

1985 for which they designed similar coding categories to compare data with the work of

McArthur and Resko. The authors found that improvements had been made with the role

portrayals of women and fewer traditional stereotypes were exhibited. That said, there were still

significant gender differences in employment and credibility categories with the biggest

difference in voice-over narrations where men still dominated at 90%. Since then, numerous

scholars have continued to investigate traditional, gender-based stereotypes in mainstream

advertising from different perspectives (Furnham & Paltzer, 2011; Lysonski, 1985; Matthes et

al., 2016).

Super Bowl Advertising

The Super Bowl continues to draw the largest audience of any American televised

broadcast (Nielsen, 2022). Jacobs (2022) reported that 112.3 million viewers tuned in to Super

Bowl LVI, making it the most-watched show since the 2017 Super Bowl (Gough, 2021). When

the number of viewers from the televised broadcast is combined with viewers across streaming

platforms, Super Bowl LVI set the record for viewership at 167 million people (Jacobs, 2022).

Because of the incredible reach potential across demographics, advertisers are willing to pay

exorbitant amounts of money to promote their products during this event. Historically regarded

as a masculine event, with male players, male fans, and advertisements for male products

(Messner et al., 2000), women now represent 47% of the total viewing audience (Graham &

Young, 2020). For these reasons, airtime during the Super Bowl has become the most expensive

of all commercial advertising. In 2022, NBC sold out of inventory, charging as much as $7

million for a 30-second spot (Young, 2022).

Even though Super Bowl commercials make their official debuts during the televised

broadcast, it is important to note that their existence does not end when the game ends. Gameday

is merely a "launch pad for new products and services" (Gersema, 2022, p. 1). For many

companies, the Super Bowl kickoff initiates the kickoff to new advertising campaigns (Yelkur et

al., 2004). Once the game begins, commercial advertisements extend their televised reach to

include various social media and streaming platforms. In recent years, Super Bowl fans have

made it a practice to interact on social media during the game in real-time (Spotts et al., 2014).

Viewers discuss events of the game, the halftime show entertainment, and commercials.

In preparation for the big event, advertisers create short commercial previews, known as

teasers, to create buzz and excitement around a product (Burton et al., 2019). When considering

the pregame day teasers, advertisements during the broadcast, and online social media platforms,

the likelihood that viewers have been exposed to Super Bowl commercials more than once is

high (Gersema, 2022). The long-term carryover effect can produce millions of exposures every

year. According to Stoll (2021), adults spend an average of three hours and 17 minutes each day

watching television commercials. Although the amount of time watching traditional television is

steadily decreasing each year, the amount of time spent on mobile devices is rapidly increasing

across all age groups. According to Hootsuite founder Ryan Holmes (2019), the average

American is exposed to 5,000-10,000 advertisements per day through a variety of social media

and streaming channels. The content consumed pre-Super Bowl, during the Super Bowl, post-

Super Bowl, and across various platforms, therefore, holds the power to influence or reinforce

gender beliefs (Furnham & Lay, 2017).

Creatively speaking, Super Bowl advertisements employ the most prestigious advertising

agencies, production companies, and directors (Schad, 2020). High-dollar commercials that air

on the massive platform require extensive effort, creativity, and planning. "Super Bowl

advertising has been granted such social attention and legitimacy, it encourages the celebration

of advertising as a beloved form of mediated entertainment" (McAllister, 1999, p. 403). With the

impressive reach and influence potential, the opportunities for financial gain and creative praise

are immense. For industry professionals, recognition through awards instilled with bragging

rights is colossal. Prestigious awards, such as the Clio Awards, were established in 1959 to

celebrate "bold work that propels the advertising industry forward, inspires a competitive

marketplace of ideas, and fosters meaningful connections within the creative community" (Clio

Awards, 2022, p. 1). Super Bowl commercials have become so highly anticipated and praised

that those who score well on USA Today's *Ad Meter* garner added exposure on network morning

shows the day after the event (Battaglio, 2022). While the main objectives for ad agencies and

production companies are to increase revenues for their clients by successfully promoting their

products, they are also competing for bragging rights and critical praise.

Problem Statement

The general problem to be addressed is how gender roles are depicted in televised

commercials resulting in traditional stereotypes and unequal portrayals. Since the 1970s, scholars

such as Courtney and Whipple (1974) and McArthur and Resko (1975) have researched whether

advertisements promoted or reinforced traditional gender stereotypes. The debate over whether

televised commercials reflect or mold gender roles in society continues into the new millennium

(Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Lay, 2017). Moreover, questions as to whether advertisers create or

perpetuate gender stereotypes in mass media persist (MacKay & Covell, 1997; Oppliger, 2007).

If advertisers do create or perpetuate gender stereotypes in mass media, then gender roles

depicted in widely viewed advertisements may influence attitudes, shape society, and threaten

equality. Cultivation theory states that television is a homogenizing agent that cultivates a

common culture (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973). Current research on the depiction of

gender roles in televised advertisements frequently conducts content analyses using similar

coding systems to measure and yield quantitative data. While previous quantitative research has

been useful, there is an ongoing need for research to reflect the latest cultural realities. Therefore,

it is imperative to conduct new academic research and track trends over time to understand

current developments, shifts, and themes surrounding the roles of gender in the media. The

portrayal of gender roles in televised advertisements across product categories is an ever-

changing landscape (Hall & Kappel, 2018) that requires continual research to better understand

the connections between media, society, and cultural norms. Through a quantitative content

analysis, this study offers a more nuanced and experiential perspective to the exploration of

gender role depictions. The specific problem to be addressed is how the depiction of gender roles

in Super Bowl commercials has changed over the past decade.

Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative longitudinal content analysis is to explore how gender

roles have changed in Super Bowl commercials between 2013 and 2022. In this study, gender

roles, also known as sex roles, will be defined as the roles determined by an individual's sex and

the associated attitudes, behaviors, norms, and values (gender role, 2013). Using three

interrelated communication theories, the following four research questions will be investigated:

RQ 1: Has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over

the past decade?

RQ 2: How has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials

over the past decade?

RQ 3: How has the communication of gender roles changed across the top five product

categories in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 4: What gender-related themes emerge in Super Bowl commercials over the past

decade?

Theoretical Framework

The depiction of gender roles in advertising is important from a societal and cultural

perspective. The disciplines of social science and psychology state that gender stereotypes are

learned, shaped, and reinforced through a culture's dominant medium (Morgan et al., 2015). The

debate continues whether television molds or reflects gender roles in society (Eisend, 2010;

Furnham & Lay, 2017; Grau & Zotos, 2016; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987). Further,

scholars have not agreed upon one universal theory of inquiry for gender roles in advertising,

thus leaving a gap (Hatzithomas et al., 2016). Therefore, this study will utilize three interrelated

theories to provide insight and perspective as to the depiction of gender roles in advertising: 1)

social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986), 2) cultivation theory

by George Gerbner (1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973), and 3) the mirror versus the mold argument

(Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987). Each theory has been used independently in

a multitude of gender and advertising studies; this study will draw on aspects of all three.

Collectively, these widely used theories will guide the research by considering how social

behaviors are communicated through mainstream media rooted in American culture.

Social Learning Theory

In a pioneering study, Leslie McArthur and Beth Resko (1975) examined gender

stereotypes in American television commercials. The duo utilized social learning theory

(Bandura, 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986) and stated that television commercials provide ample

opportunities for viewers to observe sex roles while simultaneously reinforcing gender

stereotypes (McArthur & Resko, 1975). Social learning theory, as later developed by Bandura

and Walters (1977), states that individuals learn through observational and reinforced learning.

Individuals will adapt their behaviors to be accepted by the group. Through direct experience,

observation and modeling are regarded as primary learning tools in how and why people learn.

Although the theory may not account for the influence of biological components (McLeod,

2016), it does support the four primary steps for learning: attention, retention, reproduction, and

motivation (Bandura, 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986). Social learning theory was renamed social

cognitive theory (SCT) in 1986 to better describe how one learns from social experiences

(McLeod, 2016); however, for this study, it will be referred to as social learning theory.

Cultivation Theory

Scholars who study gender stereotypes in advertising are often concerned with the

influence that mass media has on societal attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs (Antoniou & Akrivos,

2020; Furnham & Lay, 2017). Cultivation theory supports the idea that images seen on television

cultivate a homogenous culture (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973). Sometimes referred to as

cultivation analysis theory, the theory states that television is such a dominating presence in

human life that it cultivates homogenized views across society (Gerbner et al., 1986; Littlejohn et

al., 2017). Images played over time have the ability to affect all groups and cultures. Theorists

today have extended this idea to prolonged viewing of other mediums such as online and social

media (Morgan et al., 2015). One could argue that with so many viewing options and channels,

Super Bowl commercials themselves have become a homogenizing factor. They have the power

to draw together diverse audiences. Although the theory has been criticized for assuming that

media viewers are passive, and not considering the genre of show (Vinney, 2021), it aligns with

the sociocultural communication theories because it concerns itself with rituals and socialization

in the contexts of culture and societal effects. Like social learning theory, cultivation theory is

concerned with how society learns.

Mirroring Versus Molding

The mirror versus the mold argument has a long history in gender advertising research

(Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987). Both sides provide contrasting yet

complementary views of how society is affected by gender stereotypes in advertising. The mirror

school of thought (Holbrook, 1987) argues that advertisements simply mirror existing societal

thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs, whereas the mold school of thought (Pollay, 1986; 1987) asserts

that advertisers are molding individuals because they are trying to influence social values and

opinions to sell products. The mold argument, sometimes referred to as cultivation theory

(Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Lay, 2017), has led to many studies focusing on gender stereotypes in

advertising (Barron, 2020; Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Taylor et al., 2019). Regardless of position,

both schools of thought, working in tandem, can influence society and produce unintended social

consequences (Pollay, 1986; 1987). Collectively, the mirror versus the mold argument,

cultivation theory, and social learning theory support this qualitative longitudinal content analysis of gender role depictions in the media.

Communication Traditions

In *Communication Theory as a Field,* communication scholar Robert Craig (1999) asserted that every communication theory can align with at least one of seven traditions: 1) rhetorical, 2) semiotic, 3) phenomenological, 4) cybernetic, 5) sociocultural, 6) sociopsychological, and 7) critical. Craig (1999) posited that socialization, identity, construction, and culture are key elements that underscore the sociocultural tradition. Because every individual is a product of society, social actions often have unintended effects. The sociocultural tradition focuses on the ways interactions and identities are established within the context of cultures and social groups (Craig, 1999; Littlejohn et al., 2017). Realities are "constructed through a process of interaction in groups, communities, and cultures" and one's "identity becomes a fusion of the individual self" and the group (Littlejohn et al., 2017, p. 43). In *The Social Construction of Reality*, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) described the influence of cultural groups in greater detail. Because the Super Bowl represents a large part of American culture, the sociocultural tradition underscores the exploration of gender roles in Super Bowl advertisements. Furthermore, the sociocultural tradition will aptly support the three interwoven theories in this study: social learning theory, cultivation theory, and the mirror versus the mold argument. When exploring gender roles in society, Super Bowl commercials hold the power to influence and reinforce cultural attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs.

Traditionally, studies examining gender stereotypes and gender inequalities have been rooted in the critical tradition because they recognize the dynamics of power and status (Ghavami & Paplau, 2012). When a study focuses on the emancipation of oppressed groups, the

critical tradition works the best (Craig, 1999). Often, feminist theories focus on the inequities

and imbalances of gender representation (Littlejohn et al., 2017). Traditional stereotypes of

women and minorities are often viewed through a critical lens to raise consciousness (Craig,

1999). Studies within this tradition often utilize intersectionality theory to examine the interplay

of gender and ethnicity (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). Intersectionality theory states that human

thinking is determined by the intersection of gender and ethnicity; the two cannot be separated

(Cole, 2009; Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). Although there is great value in critical theory when

studying the roles of gender and sex-based stereotypes, this study is more concerned with how

and why sex roles are constructed. Therefore, the sociocultural tradition is best suited to support

the guiding theories.

Similarly, gender studies in advertising can also be approached from the

sociopsychological tradition. Craig (1999) stated that the sociopsychological tradition aimed to

understand individual behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Psychology, as a discipline, ascribes

to the assumption that cognitive, behavioral, and biological components inform one's personality

(Bandura, 1999). If this study were to investigate consumer perceptions, emotions, or attitudes, a

sociopsychological lens would be the most suitable choice. Although the sociopsychological

tradition is a valuable and viable perspective, this study will focus on the cultural and societal

aspects of gender depictions in advertising rather than individual consumers' perspectives.

Situation to Self

As a professional actress and theatre arts educator, I have witnessed significant changes

in attitudes regarding gender within the industry and classroom over the past decade. Standard

practices in professional and academic theatre have progressed and become more diverse,

equitable, and inclusive (AEA, 2020). Collectively, attitudes and depictions of gender roles in

the entertainment industry have evolved and expanded. Casting breakdowns, which were once

rooted in traditional sex-based stereotypes, are now frequently open to casting either gender and

sometimes specifically seek nonbinary characters (Actors Access, personal communication,

January 10, 2022) or transgender individuals (Casting Networks, 2022).

  Over the span of 40 years, I have gained extensive industry experience as a practitioner.

What was expected of actors deemed Gen Xers, those born between 1965 to 1980 (Fry, 2020),

has drastically changed over the years. For example, characters in popular theatrical productions

written during the Golden Age of musical theatre were often stereotyped and binary in nature

(Adams, 2017). Many of the most-beloved American musicals of the 1940s and 1950s, such as

Annie Get Your Gun (1946), *Kiss Me Kate* (1948), *Guys and Dolls* (1950), and *My Fair Lady*

(1956) are rooted in traditional gender stereotypes (Wilson, 2019). As a woman, I learned how to

play these feminine roles to the best of my ability so I would get hired and have an opportunity

to do what I loved, perform. At the time, gender stereotypes were common, not challenged or

questioned as they are today. Newer musicals such as *La Cage Aux Follies* (1973), *Hairspray*

(2002), *Kinky Boots* (2012), and *The Prom* (2016) actively work to challenge gender stereotypes

through their non-traditional storylines and/or casting choices (Mulder, 2020). As perceptions of

gender roles have evolved in society, professional theatre productions and industry casting

practices have followed suit.

  Much like the world of theatre, advertising agencies in the entertainment industry have

begun to transition from traditional gender stereotypes to a more genuine representation of

society (Feng et al., 2019). The push within the theatre world and Hollywood to cast real,

authentic individuals has deepened over the past decade (Gray, 2022). Advertising agencies are

regularly seeking non-actors, often referred to as *real people*, to appeal to potential consumers

within their specified target audience. For example, two recent audition notices sent to me via email, requested real couples, mothers, and their children to fill the roles (Casting Networks, personal communication, March 9, 2022; Casting Frontier, personal communication, February 22, 2022). This shift in casting practices suggests to me that audiences and consumers are responding more positively to real people, and the appearance of real-life, authentic characters in contrast to traditional stereotypes and actor representations.

Further, this shift in casting aligns with Feng et al.'s (2019) assessment of femvertising as a growing marketing trend. Described as "female empowerment to encourage brand consumption," brands such as Dove have strategically pivoted away from traditional gender stereotypes to empower female consumers in alliance with their brand's messaging (p. 293). Some large companies have widened their scope of gender portrayals in the media to encourage positivity and more equitable representations. Likewise, this researcher, through direct, personal experience, has widened her perceptions and beliefs of gender in the entertainment industry and higher education.

Gaps in Methodology & Research

Much of the previous research focused on gender roles in advertising has taken a quantitative approach to content analysis (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Eisend et al., 2014; King, 2012) leaving methodological gaps. Shifting approaches from quantitative content analysis to a qualitative longitudinal content analysis will enable this researcher to discover more nuanced data over a longer period. Hatzithomas et al. (2016) conducted a longitudinal content analysis of commercials that aired during the Super Bowl from 1990 to 2009. Comparing the decade before the millennium to the decade after the millennium, the study aimed to measure quantitative changes and trends in gender stereotypes over time. The longitudinal design allowed the authors

to compare the two 10-year spans. Unfortunately, the study stopped at quantitative findings. A

qualitative inquiry, using the researcher as an integral instrument, can provide a thicker

description of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Combining a qualitative, longitudinal approach

with content analysis will provide an opportunity to discover holistic themes not traditionally

found in quantitative content analyses.

Another methodological gap resides in coding categories. To date, there is no consensus

on one systematic coding scheme for gender portrayals in advertising (Hatzithomas et al., 2016).

Eisend et al. (2014) addressed a previous gap in coding categories by including the role of

humor. They recognized that although gender stereotypes were present in some advertisements,

they could be portrayed humorously to make fun of the situation rather than being taken

seriously, which could offend viewers. This is especially true in Super Bowl commercials that

aim to make a memorable, often comedic, impression during the competition. Other scholars

have included the role of celebrity (King, 2012) and other types of appeals (Wirtz et al., 2018) in

their research. Recognizing the differences and gaps in coding categories, this study will take a

different approach. Since there is no consensus on the coding categories, any effort to borrow

from previous coding schemes could become confusing. Rather than continue to use previous

versions of outdated schemes, this study will start from a blank slate to avoid confusion. This

will allow for unique patterns and themes to emerge freely without bias.

Although scholars have been researching gender stereotypes in advertising for more than

50 years (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Hatzithomas et al., 2016), a

theoretical gap still exists. To date, there has been no one agreed-upon theoretical construct to

lead academic studies on gender portrayals in advertising. Depending upon researchers' focus

and discipline of origin, different theoretical approaches have been used. Some scholars have

cited role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), evolutionary psychology (Del Guidice, 2009; Ellis & Bjorklund, 2005), identity theory (Carter, 2014), intersectionality theory (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012), or feminist or critical theories. Most studies reference the mold versus the mirror argument (Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987) or cultivation theory (Barron, 2020; Gerbner et al., 1986; Taylor et al., 2019). Rather than select one individual theory, this study weaves together three intersecting communication theories: the mirror versus the mold argument, cultivation theory, and social learning theory. Together, the three theories provide a cohesive theoretical framework to explore cultural realities.

As in all areas of social research, there is an ongoing need to examine the latest cultural realities. Conducting new qualitative longitudinal research will help to understand current patterns, trends, and themes surrounding the roles of gender in media and society. Analyzing national Super Bowl commercials from the past decade provides a unique opportunity to understand trends and changes in gender portrayals within the context of the most expensive and widely viewed advertisements (Nielsen, 2022). Comparing data from past studies to new studies can be helpful by highlighting important differences and similarities. This study seeks to fill an ongoing need by conducting a qualitative longitudinal content analysis of Super Bowl commercials of the past decade, 2013-2022.

Nature of Study

This study used qualitative measures to explore the depiction of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials between 2013 and 2022. Expanding on quantitative content analyses by King (2012), Eisend et al. (2014), and Hatzithomas et al. (2016), this study qualitatively explores gender role portrayals through an exploratory design. This qualitative longitudinal content analysis provides the framework to discover new, more nuanced themes. As an emergent design,

qualitative inquiry holds the power to identify themes and patterns as they arise (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

A qualitative longitudinal content analysis design supports the purpose of the current study because it explores how gender roles have changed in mainstream media over the past decade as well as allowing space for emerging themes to arise. This study provides unique qualitative findings based on a cross-section of content from the past decade. A total of 279 unique Super Bowl commercials were viewed from the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. As a key instrument, this researcher draws on personal knowledge of the entertainment industry and lived experiences within the theatre arts community to interpret emerging themes and patterns. Conscious of bias, the position of this researcher helps shape the study without prohibiting its findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Definition of Key Terms

Several terms should be defined from the outset of this study to ensure there is a proper understanding of the researcher's meaning. For this study, the following terms will be defined as follows:

1. *Super Bowl commercials*, sometimes referred to as Super Bowl ads or spots, are those advertisements that aired nationally during the annual televised broadcast. Although some local ads may air during the Super Bowl, only national advertisements found on iSpotTV.com are used in this study.

2. *Gender roles, sometimes referred to as sex roles,* are described as the expected roles determined by an individual's sex and the associated attitudes, behaviors, norms, and values (gender role, 2013).

3. *Stereotypes* refer to socially shared conceptual attributes associated with members of a social category that describe their traits and characteristics (Amodio, 2014; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Wang et al., 2019, p. 1).

4. *Gender stereotypes* are defined as generalized views or preconceptions about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by, women and men (OHCHR, 2021).

5. *Gender role socialization* is the process whereby "children and adults acquire and internalize the values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with femininity, masculinity, or both" (O'Neil, 1981; Sipes, 2005, p. 12).

6. *Celebrity* will act as an umbrella term to describe any type of celebrity or famous person who is generally recognized by the public. Individuals may be famous for their athletic or artistic achievements in acting, sports, comedy, or music.

7. *Traditional family unit*, also known as a "nuclear" family, consists of two heterosexual parents (a mother and a father) and their children (LibreTexts, 2021).

Summary of Chapter

Chapter One introduced the problem that gender stereotypes depicted in mainstream media hold the power to shape, influence, and reinforce societal beliefs and attitudes (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987; Oppliger, 2007). Scholars, across disciplines, have studied gender stereotypes in the media for the past 50 years, (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; King, 2012; McArthur & Resko, 1975). As gender ideologies flex and change, it is important to understand gender depictions in mediated advertisements. For advertisers, Super Bowl commercials are an expensive, yet highly effective way of reaching potential consumers because the broadcasts garner the largest audiences annually in the United States (Gersema, 2022). Women now

represent 47% of Super Bowl viewers (Graham & Young, 2020); therefore, it is crucial to

examine how gender roles are represented. With the tremendous reach potential of Super Bowl

ads, it is essential to examine how gender roles are depicted. As society continues to consume

content on various social media and streaming platforms, it is estimated that the average

consumer is exposed to 5,000 to 10,000 advertisements each day (Holmes, 2019). Further, Super

Bowl commercials play long after their original air dates across platforms (Gersema, 2022). For

these reasons, gender depictions in high-profile commercial advertisements matter.

Chapter One also introduced the theoretical and methodological details of the current

study, including identifying gaps in previous research. Leveraging personal experience in theatre

arts education and the entertainment industry, this researcher conducts a qualitative longitudinal

content analysis from a sociocultural standpoint to identify cultural shifts and trends in gender

role portrayals. The qualitative longitudinal content analysis analyzes and explores 279 unique

Super Bowl commercials that aired between the years 2013 and 2022. Three commonly used,

interrelated theories provide the investigative framework to explore gender roles portrayals in

mainstream media: the mirror versus the mold argument (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987),

cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). Further,

this research is comfortably situated within the sociocultural communication tradition (Craig,

1999). Next, Chapter Two reviews key literature on gender stereotypes in advertising, elements

of the Super Bowl, and theoretical frameworks.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter reviews the literature associated with gender stereotypes in advertising, masculinity and gender studies in the Super Bowl, and theoretical frameworks. After a brief introduction, early research focusing on female stereotypes is examined. Then, content analysis and coding in relevant research are discussed, followed by an exploration of age and gender representation. Next, the chapter unpacks product categories and advertising appeals literature. Race, gender, and ethnicity, as it relates to stereotypes in advertising, is surveyed. Then, new advertising trends, such as femvertising, are explored. Next, the chapter shifts to the topic of the Super Bowl, where two areas are explored: 1) sports and masculinity, and 2) gender studies in Super Bowl advertising. After, the theoretical frameworks guiding this research are explained. These frameworks include three complementary theories: social learning theory, cultivation theory, and the mirror versus the mold argument through a sociocultural perspective. The final section identifies research and methodological gaps providing several possibilities for future studies.

Gender Stereotypes in Advertising

The concern of whether advertising reflects or molds societal values and beliefs "is a central concern" to nearly all researchers in the field (Furnham & Lay, 2017, p. 113). Advertisements can perpetuate or reinforce traditional gender stereotypes causing gender equality to erode (MacKay & Covell, 1997; Oppliger, 2007). Further, mainstream media has significant power to influence societal attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of gender roles (Eisend, 2010; McDonald et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand how gender depictions in advertising have changed or remained the same to ensure equity between the sexes. The selected

literature focuses on the changing roles of gender stereotypes and role portrayals in mainstream advertisements over the past 50 years.

Early Research & Focus on the Female

When gender portrayal research in advertising began in the 1970s, men and women were depicted in highly stereotypical roles with women being portrayed differently than their male counterparts (Kumari & Shivani, 2012). Many forecasted that advertisements in the 1980s would depict the sexes in more contemporary and non-traditional roles, though this did not come to fruition (McDonald et al., 2021). This was possibly due to the cultural lag between societal practices and media depictions (Grau & Zotos, 2016). In the 1990s, researchers "observed slight changes (less stereotypical stance) in gender stereotyping" particularly in the case of women, though overall, the findings were consistent with those of the previous decades (Kumari & Shivani, 2012, p. 57). Despite influential cultural movements that advocated for equal rights for women in the 1960s such as the women's liberation movement (Burkett, 2020), civil rights, and equal pay (McDonald et al., 2021), advertisements were still primarily promoting traditional gender roles of the 1950s.

Most of the early research in advertising focused on female stereotypes (Kumari & Shivani, 2012). The consensus of gender role stereotypes in advertising typically recognized women as being portrayed in the following ways: 1) being dependent on men, 2) needing men for protection, 3) not making important decisions, 4) as homemakers, (5) mostly represented in indoor home-settings, and (6) as sexual objects (Belkaoui & Belkaoui, 1976; Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Kumari & Shivani, 2012; Sullivan & O Connor, 1988). Over the years, newer categories for female stereotypes have evolved with less emphasis being placed on women as sex objects. Adapted from the Lysonski (1985) study on stereotypes in print ads, Hatzithomas et al.

(2016) explored eight similar female stereotype categories: 1) dependency, 2) housewife, 3) concerned with physical attractiveness, 4) as sex objects, 5) in non-traditional activities, 6) career-oriented, 7) voice of authority, and 8) neutral, shown equal to man. Although this updated version shows a slight change in terminology and aligns better with contemporary gender ideologies, traditional patterns remain.

Before the year 2000, few studies focused on male stereotypes (Kolbe & Albanese, 1997). In recent years, more studies have focused on male role portrayals and the influence of masculine ideals (Sipes, 2005). Similar to, though different from the female version, Hatzithomas et al. (2016) provided nine categories based on the Lysonski (1985) table for male stereotypes in advertising: 1) theme of sex appeal, 2) dominant over women, 3) authority figure, 4) family man, 5) frustrated male, 6) activities and life outside the home, 7) career-oriented, 8) non-traditional role, 9) neutral, shown equal to women. Most research shows that men dominate the categories of the voice of authority, particularly in voice-over narration, and are depicted as working outside the home in non-domestic environments (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Ganahl et al., 2003; McArthur & Resko, 1975). In contrast, women are portrayed more frequently inside the home in domestic roles and were less common in voice-over narration.

Content Analysis & Coding

Considerable gender role research in advertising has followed a content analysis design (Eisend, 2010; Ganahl et al., 2003; Hatzithomas et al., 2016). Though research has shifted mediums from print advertising in newspapers and magazines to television advertising (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; McArthur & Resko, 1975), content analyses persist. One of the first to compare the conclusions between print and television advertising was Courtney and Whipple (1974). As expected, their study of role portrayals in television commercials generated similar

conclusions previously identified in print ads. Utilizing a content analysis design, they found that

men led the category of voice-over narration at 85% and were frequently depicted as product

beneficiaries, reaping some type of reward. In contrast, women were depicted mostly as

housewives and mothers performing domestic tasks (Courtney & Whipple, 1974; 1980;

McArthur & Resko, 1975).

The following year, McArthur and Resko (1975) examined the portrayal of men and

women in television commercials. The female authors sampled 210 prime-time commercials that

aired in 1971 across three networks. Through content analysis, the authors coded eight

characteristics of the central character: 1) sex, 2) basis for credibility, 3) role, 4) location, 5)

arguments given on behalf of a product, 6) punishments threatened or incurred for not using the

product, 7) rewards offered or reaped for using a product, and 8) type of product. The study

utilized three raters to code the commercials and eight chi-square analyses were performed to

assess differences in the gender role portrayals. Through quantitative data, the study showed that

men were represented in commercials more often than women. Further, it documented

behavioral differences between the male and female models. The coding categories created by

McArthur and Resko (1975) laid the groundwork for other studies to follow.

Following a similar premise, Bretl and Cantor (1988) led their study of commercials in

1985 for which they designed similar coding categories to compare with the study by McArthur

and Resko (1975). The authors expanded the study by coding more than one character per

commercial, to include the second and third characters depending upon the amount of screen

time. To compare equal statistical data with McArthur and Resko (1975), they only reported the

coded data consistent with primary characters. Overall, the authors found that fewer traditional

stereotypes were exhibited, thus gaps were narrowing. Men and women were equally represented

in prime-time commercials although their roles were still different. The main difference resided

within the type of product. Women were more likely to promote products in the home versus

men who were more likely to promote products used outside the home. Furthermore, there were

still significant gender differences in credibility and employment categories although the greatest

difference was in voice-over narrations in which men still dominated the category at 90%.

Courtney and Whipple (1974) and McArthur and Resko (1975) helped set the standard

for content analysis studies examining gender stereotypes in television advertising (Bretl &

Cantor, 1988; Eisend, 2010; King, 2012). Although there is not one universal coding scheme,

scholars continue to investigate traditional, gender-based stereotypes in mainstream advertising

using content analysis (Furnham & Paltzer, 2011; Lysonski, 1985; Matthes et al., 2016). Many

researchers have utilized systemized coding frameworks to produce empirical quantitative data;

see, for example, Lysonski (1985) on British print magazines, Eisend et al. (2014) on the role of

humor, and Hatzithomas et al. (2016) on Super Bowl commercials over 20 years. Collectively,

these studies aim to understand the gender dynamics within advertising content. Other studies,

more concerned with consumers and their perceptions, have utilized a qualitative framework

(Clark et al., 2019; Ghavami & Peplau, 2016), though the majority still follow a quantitative

content analysis design (Barron, 2020; Taylor et al., 2019).

Age & Gender Representation

Advertisers understand that certain products speak to specific consumers. Hentges et al.

(2007) asserted that the nature of gender representation primarily depended upon the age of the

target audience. The authors found that commercials targeting school-aged children "were the

most disproportionate in representation, with significantly more males than females" (p. 55). In a

similar study of children ages 6-10, Kahlenberg and Hein (2010) analyzed more than 450

commercials that played on the Nickelodeon channel. The authors determined different degrees

of gender stereotypes depending upon the toy product being advertised. In addition, boys' gender

depictions were found to be more open and flexible compared to products that targeted girls.

Overall, the girls exhibited more cooperative behavior while the boys were more competitive.

Similarly, Powell and Abels (2002) researched sex roles in the popular children shows

Teletubbies and *Barney & Friends*. Through a qualitative content analysis, the authors asserted

that while portrayals had improved, and behaviors in boys' roles were becoming more varied,

girls' roles continued to reinforce old ideologies. These findings are important because as

children develop and leave preschool, personal attitudes and self-esteem may be negatively

influenced (Patterson, 2012). Chan et al. (2012) examined how adolescent girls perceived images

in advertising. Interviewing 20 girls from Hong Kong, the authors found that adolescent girls pay

close attention to "images about slimming, body image and physical appearance" (p. 357). In

both examples, children and adolescents can develop perceptions based on the presentation of

sex roles in advertisements.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are older characters. Elderly characters, though

generally underrepresented for both men and women in the media are "more acute for women

than for men" (Bauman & de Laat, 2012, p. 514; Furnham & Mak, 1999). The authors

recognized that underrepresentation alone is not necessarily a negative trait but the portrayal of

the roles being devoid of position, purpose, or usefulness were problematic (Bauman & de Laat,

2012). Traditionally, younger women have been depicted as wives and mothers, workers, and

sexualized characters though older women "do not emerge as serving any particular role" (p.

515). This age discrepancy may communicate a problem larger than mere underrepresentation

and points toward the cultural devaluation of older female characters.

Product Categories & Appeals

When exploring gender portrayals, it is important to consider the product type. Primary male and female characters are often associated with different product categories (Bretl & Cantor, 1988), and different product categories produce largely traditional gender stereotypes. According to Hatzithomas et al. (2016), the top five advertised product categories during Super Bowl broadcasts are: 1) food and drinks, 2) alcoholic beverages, 3) services, 4) auto and related products, and 5) financial services. The portrayal of gender roles in televised advertisements across product categories shows inconsistencies (Bretl & Cantor, 1988). Product categories are an ever-changing landscape that requires continual research to better understand the connections between media, society, and cultural norms.

Like gender stereotypes depicted in product advertisements for children, certain adult products have deep roots in masculine and feminine stereotypes. Hall and Kappel (2018) studied gendered behaviors in alcohol commercials and found that alcohol advertisements exhibited deeply gender-specific messages about social life. Hall and Kappel (2018) identified four standard ideal types of female characters: 1) hotties, 2) bitches, 3) losers, and 4) buddies. Later, the authors added four more nuanced types to their study: 5) the 007, 6) the prop, 7) the party girl, and 8) the worker. The portrayal of all eight ideals was shown to reinforce and define traditional stereotypical notions of gender and gender roles. Most concerning were women's "hypersexualized portrayals" and "lack of presence" in alcohol commercials (p. 573), which reinforced the connection between alcohol consumption, masculinity, and sporting events. Hall and Kappel (2018) revealed, "a steady annual increase in alcohol commercials during the Super Bowl" (p. 573), which supports the need for more research.

While some advertisements employ sexual or emotional appeals (Wirtz et al., 2018; Zheng, 2020), many within certain product categories employ the appeal of humor. Eisend et al. (2014) investigated how the role of humor influenced depictions of gender stereotypes in advertising. They recognized that although gender stereotypes may be present, they may be portrayed humorously to make fun of the situation. Humor "can provide positive reactions toward stereotyped advertising" while at the same time reducing negative perceptions (p. 268). This is especially true in Super Bowl commercials that aim to make memorable impressions amongst big-league competitors in a short amount of time. Further, stereotypes are a quick and easy way to tell the story because they produce familiar images. Chung and Zhao (2003) found that humor can positively relate to brand recall, which makes it a valuable tool for advertisers. Additionally, when a brand adds humor to a social or political issue, it can help demystify serious topics (Lopez-Medel, 2017). Overall, gender role stereotypes are perceived as "less serious" if the portrayals are used as a source of humor (Eisend et al., 2014, p. 268).

Race, Gender & Ethnicity

In addition to the product type, age of the consumer, and use of humor, race and ethnicity play influential components in gender stereotypes in advertising. Through multidisciplinary frameworks, scholars have approached gender stereotypes from different theoretical perspectives. Many argue that gender alone cannot tell the whole picture (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). Rather, the intersectionality of race and gender plays into the depiction of stereotypes. According to Coltrane and Messineo (2000), media stereotypes have traditionally been viewed through a White, heterosexual perspective that does not create a complete picture of a diverse nation. Many complexities are at play when it comes to race, gender, and ethnicity (King et al., 2012). Stereotyping does not always have to be blatant; it can exist in subtleties and reside under

the surface. For example, Coltrane and Messineo (2000) led a study that analyzed 1,699 television advertisements that aired during popular programming between 1992 to 1994 and found that depictions were different depending on the character's race, ethnicity, and gender. Collectively, the quantitative study showed that "White men were the most powerful, White women were sex objects, African American men were aggressive, and African American women were inconsequential" (p. 363). This clear delineation of race and gender promotes the continuance of blatant and subtle prejudices by exaggerating cultural differences.

In a qualitative study, Ghavami and Peplau (2012) used a free-response design to investigate the nuances of social perceptions. The authors applied intersectionality theory to explore how gender and ethnicity contributed to the construction of male and female stereotypes. In the same year, King (2012) considered race and gender in a longitudinal study of Super Bowl commercials between 2000 to 2010. The author asserted that content analyses of the portrayal of gender and race in televised commercials showed "a mixed record of progress" (p. 7). Collectively, the study determined that White males were the most represented characters across categories while women and People of Color were often underrepresented and stereotypically portrayed. Ghvami and Peplau (2012) summarized that scholars must simultaneously consider gender and ethnicity to create a holistic and complete description of cultural stereotypes. One without the other will only create a limited, simplistic picture. Future studies would benefit by using this model.

Femvertising & Recent Trends

In 2004, Dove launched *The Campaign for Real Beauty* to empower females by breaking traditional stereotypes of beauty (McDonald et al., 2021). Commonly referred to as femvertising, this "growing marketing trend" encourages brand consumption from a feminist value perspective

(p. 293). Companies such as Pantene and Always have joined Dove in the crusade to "celebrate women rather than objectifying them" (Grau & Zotos, 2016, p. 769). Recently, advertisers have extended female empowerment campaigns online for consumers to participate in the conversation (Feng et al., 2019). Social media, in particular YouTube, has opened the advertising space to include user-generated content (UGC), which is a valuable device for marketing directly to consumers.

Related to the female movement in advertising, Thompson-Whiteside (2020) stated that female creatives must also be empowered to change the gender narrative in advertising. Currently, men dominate roles in creative leadership, so campaigns are devised primarily from the male perspective. For gender role portrayals in advertising to shift, more women must be present in leadership positions within the industry.

To help provide a more holistic account of gender roles in advertising and fill research gaps, Zayer and Coleman (2015) recognized the need to research from within the advertising industry. The authors interviewed advertising professionals to determine their perceptions of how gender portrayals influenced their strategic and creative decisions (Grau & Zotos, 2016; Zayer & Coleman, 2015). The interviewees claimed that their decisions often mirrored society's dominant viewpoints. Similarly, Middleton et al. (2020) interviewed advertising creative practitioners in Brazil to determine their mental models of female stereotypes. The interviewees reported six stereotypes: 1) housewife, 2) trophy, 3) sexual object, 4) sexually powerful, 5) professional, and 6) object of beauty. By investigating the practices of advertising professionals, some research gaps shrink.

Although advertising campaigns have traditionally been rooted in gender stereotypes, a shift toward more equal gender portrayals appears to be on the horizon. In a study that analyzed

gender roles in award-winning original digital video advertising, Aramendia-Muneta et al. (2020) determined that women and men were equally portrayed in non-stereotypical roles and activities. Previous studies frequently depicted men with muscular physiques and in male-authored science roles and women as objectified, hypersexualized subordinates. However, no statistically significant associations emerged between gender and the main categories: 1) mode of presentation, 2) credibility, 3) role, 4) age, 5) argument type, 6) reward type, 7) product type, 8) background, 9) setting, or 10) end comment. Although the central figures were more likely to be men, the authors were able to document a major shift in gender portrayals within original online videos.

Super Bowl

The Super Bowl continues to draw the largest annual televised audience—more than any other American broadcast (Nielsen, 2022). Traditionally regarded as a masculine event (Green & Van Oort, 2013), women make up almost half of the total viewing audience at 47% (Graham & Young, 2020). Further, airtime during the Super Bowl has become the most expensive of all commercial advertising. In 2022, NBC sold out of inventory, charging as much as $7 million for one 30-second commercial (Young, 2022). Because of the incredible reach potential across demographics, advertisers are willing to pay exorbitant amounts to promote their products. Further, Jacobs (2022) reported that 112.3 million viewers tuned in to Super Bowl LVI, making it the most-watched show since the 2017 Super Bowl (Gough, 2021). Super Bowl LVI set the record for the most-streamed Super Bowl ever, reaching a combined total of 167 million viewers across all platforms (Jacobs, 2022).

Sports & Masculinity

American culture is deeply rooted in professional sports (McDonald et al., 2021). From the Olympics to the National Basketball Association (NBA) to Major League Baseball (MLB), Americans express a deep love for sports. For many players and fans, sports are an escape from the daily pressures of life (Messner, 1992). For those who love football, the National Football League (NFL) represents the pinnacle of American sports culture, and those who love the sport tune in each year for the season finale, the Super Bowl (Green & Van Oort, 2013).

In the 1970s, scholars debated the idea of sport as a social institution (Messner, 1992). With historical themes of dominance and control, masculine and feminine ideologies are embedded in sports. Thus, "modern sport is a gendered institution" (p. 16). Men within the system must follow heterosexual rules and exhibit masculine traits while women and traces of femininity are viewed as undesirable. According to Messner et al. (2000), the stereotype of men in sports is "grounded in bravery, risk-taking, violence, bodily strength, and heterosexuality" (p. 392).

Finding that 8-17-year-old boys were more apt to watch sports on television than girls, Messner et al. (2000) proposed a new formula that synthesized elements of gender, race, aggression, violence, militarism, and commercialism in the media: televised sports manhood formula. They authors discovered that even in advertisements for sports, men were featured in the foreground in most commercials while women were depicted as sexy props or prizes for male achievement. Further, they found than boys grow up watching more televised sports than girls and broadcasts employ more male voice-overs and men in successful leading roles. As an equally influential component, mainstream media dedicates more coverage of male sporting events than of female sports.

Although sports are enjoyable for many, Rasmussen et al. (2021) asserted that

"stereotypical depictions of sports role models could make sports seem like a more exclusive

space and discourage participation" (p. 1). The authors found that even companies that claim

they are socially aware of inequities and taking progressive steps to become more inclusive, such

as Nike, still produce sports product commercials that continue to treat sports as stereotypical

masculine domains. Therefore, as a result, female athletes and those who do not fit into

traditional gender binaries become marginalized. In sum, the relationship between sports and

masculinity proves culturally complex (Messner, 1992), and mediated sports continue to

construct and reinforce ideas of masculinity and femininity (Rasmussen et al., 2021).

Gender Studies in Super Bowl Advertising

Like other studies of gender portrayals in the media, content analysis emerges as a

leading design in Super Bowl advertising (Barron, 2020; Hatzithomas et al., 2016; Kim et al.,

2012; King, 2012; Rockwell, 2016; Taylor et al., 2019). Since the broadcast is an annual event, it

proves helpful to analyze multiple years to compare findings. In a longitudinal content analysis

of Super Bowl advertisements, King (2012) examined the roles of gender and race for a 10-year

period between 2000 and 2010. The author selected three years, 2000, 2005, and 2010, to

represent a cross-section that generated 203 commercials. The author investigated gender, race,

allure, setting, and celebrity of the central characters. Through statistical analysis, the study

concluded that women and minorities were portrayed differently than their male counterparts in

Super Bowl ads.

Similarly, Barron (2020) analyzed a cross-section of a 10-year period of Super Bowl

advertisements and focused on cultural shifts during the presidential inaugural years 2009-10,

2013-14, 2017-18. Using a random sample tool, the author selected 50 commercials from each of

the three broadcasts for a total of 150 commercials. One aspect of the research found that, in

comparison to men, women had less significant roles, which strongly supports previous research

(Furnham & Paltzer, 2011). Overall, the longitudinal approach helped establish the framework to

compare the years before and during the inauguration of Donald Trump.

In a recent key study, Hatzithomas et al. (2016) conducted a longitudinal content analysis

of commercials aired during the Super Bowl from 1990 to 2009. The study aimed to measure

changes and trends in gender stereotypes over time, comparing the decade before the millennium

to the decade after the millennium. Following a systematic coding process utilized by Lysonski

(1985), the authors found that women were underrepresented in Super Bowl commercials in both

decades. Further, data showed that the portrayal of male stereotypes was much more frequent at

90-92% than female stereotypes at 47-49%. The combination of findings suggests that even

though women make up almost half of the viewing audience (Graham & Young, 2020), the

Super Bowl is still considered male territory (Duncan & Hashbrook, 2002; Hatzithomas et al.,

2016) and presents frequent male stereotypes.

In contrast to earlier studies that required the recording of commercials to analyze them

(Ganahl et al., 2003; King, 2012), Super Bowl advertisements today can easily be viewed on

several websites. In addition to the social media mega-site YouTube.com, Adland.com and

iSpotTV.com have become major advertising hubs. Adland currently houses 50 out of the 55

Super Bowls, making it the largest collection in the world (Adland, 2022). The earliest

advertisements date back to 1969 for Super Bowl III, with Super Bowl LVI being the most

recent in 2022. For the past several years, researchers have utilized Adland.com to analyze

nationally televised commercials that aired during the Super Bowl broadcasts (Barron, 2020;

Hatzithomas et al., 2016; Rockwell, 2016). As a newer company, iSpotTV.com provides

analytical measurements for television advertisers. Currently, they house more Super Bowl

commercials for the years 2013 to 2022 than Adland. As a bonus, iSpotTV.com categorizes the

national commercials by time of airing within the game, for example, pregame, first quarter,

second quarter, halftime, third quarter, and fourth quarter. In addition, they separate commercials

that are considered previews, teasers, and extended play. Adland, iSpotTV, and YouTube are

invaluable online resources for scholars wishing to conduct longitudinal content analysis studies

because they have completed the time-consuming task of gathering, uploading, and organizing

the content.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Theoretical Frameworks</h3>

Because different scholars approach gender stereotype research from different

disciplines, there is not one universal framework used for analysis. According to Eisend (2019),

gender studies in advertising lacks a uniform theory of inquiry allowing for a variety of coding

processes and designs. Consequently, a few common theories have emerged. Scholars who study

gender stereotypes in advertising are often concerned with the influence that mass media has on

societal attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs (Antoniou & Akrivos, 2020; Furnham & Lay, 2017).

Stemming from cultivation analysis theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), researchers believe that the

more television individuals consume, the more homogenized mainstream viewpoint of the world

is cultivated (Furnham & Lay, 2017; Grau & Zotos, 2016). Scholars in the social sciences and

psychology state that gender stereotypes are learned, shaped, and reinforced through the

dominant medium of the culture. Thus, to understand society, it is crucial to understand what is

being depicted in advertising at any given time. Three theories frequently emerge in the study of

gender roles in advertising: social learning theory, cultivation theory, and the mirror versus the

mold argument. The following paragraphs will explain each theory in greater detail.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1962; 1965; 1973, 1974; 1977; 1986) can be interpreted as a fundamental sociocultural theory because it aims to understand how society learns to behave. The theory states that individuals learn through social observation, modeling, and reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). Social learning is defined as the behavior that "occurs due to the social processes of observation, imitation, and modeling" (Nabavi, 2012, p. 6). Observation and modeling are regarded as primary learning tools in how and why people learn (Bandura, 1977). Through direct experience, individuals will adapt their behaviors to be accepted by others in a group. Although the theory may not account for the influence of biological components (McLeod, 2016), it does support the four primary steps for learning: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1977).

In addition to scholars, McArthur and Resko (1975), others have applied social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) to their research. In *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change,* authors Singhal and Rogers (1999) explained how social learning theory was a foundational component of the development of entertainment-education (E-E). The authors described E-E as "the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, to increase audience members' knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, and change overt behavior" (p. 5). Put simply, Piotrow (1994) described the entertainment-education technique as a method that disguises educational messaging within mediated entertainment. Recognizing the power of drama to teach morals, Mexican producer Miguel Sabido utilized social learning theory "to develop the first enter-educate soap operas" (Piotrow, 1994, p. 1). As a communication strategy, E-E is intended to create behavioral and social change (Singhal & Rogers, 1999).

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory supports the idea that images seen on television cultivate a homogenous culture (Gerbner et al., 1986). Cultivation theory, developed by Gerbner in the 1960s, states that television is such a dominating presence in human life that it cultivates standardized views across society (Gerbner, 1973; Vinney, 2021). Originally focused on the effects of violence in television programming, the theory asserts that images played over time hold the ability to affect groups and cultures. The status quo is not challenged, which makes it easier to internalize the media's attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1970; 1973). Theorists today have extended this idea to prolonged viewing of other mediums such as online platforms and social media (Morgan et al., 2015). Although cultivation theory has been criticized for its lack of precision and institutional analysis (Vinney, 2021), it serves as a valuable framework because it concerns itself with rituals and socialization in the contexts of culture and societal effects. At the core, the theory examines the cognitive mechanisms of social learning (Rosenthal et al., 2014).

Cultivation, as a mass media theory, has drawn much support (Potter, 2014). Cultivation theory, also referred to as cultivation analysis theory, is one of the most important theories developed in the past 50 years (Morgan et al., 2015). It has helped scholars explain the social and cultural impacts of media by focusing on how television viewing is related to perceptions of social reality. Between 1956 and 2000, cultivation theory was one of the most-cited theories in mass communication research (Bryant & Miron, 2004). Today, a substantial amount of research continues under the canopy of cultivation theory (Taylor et al., 2019). Scholars such as Bretl and Cantor (1988), Taylor et al., (2019), and Barron (2020) have utilized cultivation theory to guide their research on gender portrayals in televised advertisements.

Mirroring Versus Molding

The mirror versus the mold argument or mirror and mold debate (Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987) offers contrasting yet complementary views of how society is affected by gender stereotypes in advertising. The mirror school of thought (Holbrook, 1987) asserts that advertisements mirror or reflect existing societal thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs, whereas the mold school of thought (Pollay 1986; 1987) states that advertisers are molding individuals' social values and opinions to sell products. The mold argument, sometimes referred to as cultivation theory (Eisend, 2010; Furnham & Lay, 2017), has led to many studies focusing on gender stereotypes in advertising (Barron, 2020; Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Taylor et al., 2019). Notwithstanding position, both schools of thought can influence society and produce unintended social consequences (Pollay, 1986; 1987). Courtney and Whipple (1974) best described the two concepts as residing on one continuum. Depending upon the circumstances, they may not be binary, independent constructs but rather work in tandem with each another to varying degrees.

Communication Traditions

As is the case in all social research, the depiction of gender roles in Super Bowl advertising can be approached through a variety of lenses. In *Communication Theory as a Field,* communication scholar Robert Craig (1999), devised a metamodel that compressed the field of communication into seven traditions: 1) rhetorical, 2) semiotic, 3) phenomenological, 4) cybernetic, 5) sociopsychological, 6) sociocultural, and 7) critical. He asserted that every communication phenomenon could fit into at least one of the traditions. Following the concept that reality is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1996), the sociocultural tradition aptly supports the three leading theories for this study.

Social Construct of Reality

Extensive sociological literature asserts that gender is learned through socialization (Carter, 2014). Concepts embedded in *The Social Construction of Reality* marked the beginning of a significant transformation in the sociology of knowledge and social theory (Vera, 2016). The classic sociology text *The Social Construction of Reality* by Berger and Luckmann (1966), contends that social construction is a philosophical worldview asserting that reality is socially constructed (Littlejohn et al., 2017). This ideological approach contrasts with the psychological perspective that believes that individual points of view achieved through life events creates meaning (Vera, 2016). For social constructivists, life is a combined product of cultural and group life because meanings can only develop in coordination with others. For individual realities to be valid, they must align with the shared realities of the group (Littlejohn et al., 2017). Moreover, "every group, community, and culture develop its understandings of the world" (p. 117). This concept supports the underpinnings of gender role depictions communicated within the framework of Super Bowl culture.

Sociocultural Tradition

Because individuals are ultimately products of their society, social actions can have unintended effects (Craig, 1999). In general, the sociocultural tradition focuses on the ways interactions and identities are established within the context of cultures and social groups. More specifically, the sociocultural tradition of communication pertains to the socialization, identity, construction, and culture of individuals and groups. For social constructivists, life is a combined product of cultural and group life because meanings can only develop in coordination with others (Vera, 2016). The Super Bowl, and American football in general, can be considered its own unique culture (Green & Van Oort, 2013). Sociocultural tradition aligns with this study because

it concerns itself with the construction of identity and cultural norms from a sociological

perspective (Craig, 1999). Modern sociocultural theorists concur that reality is produced through

communication (Apuke, 2018).

Other Perspectives

As previously discussed in Chapter One, the critical tradition would work best when a

study focuses on the emancipation of oppressed groups (Craig, 1999). Feminist theories

frequently focus on the inequities and imbalances of gender representation (Littlejohn et al.,

2017). Traditional stereotypes of women and minorities are viewed through a critical lens to

raise consciousness. Many studies in this tradition utilize intersectionality theory to

simultaneously examine how gender, race, and ethnicity intersect (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012).

Intersectionality theory states that the way humans think about others is determined by the

intersection of multiple factors; they cannot be separated. Traditionally, studies examining

gender stereotypes and gender inequalities are rooted in critical tradition because they recognize

the inherent dynamics of power and status.

Also mentioned in Chapter One, gender studies can be approached using a

sociopsychological framework. Craig (1999) stated that the sociopsychological tradition aims to

understand individual behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. From a psychological viewpoint, it is

assumed that cognitive, behavioral, and biological components inform personality (Littlejohn et

al., 2017). Further, the psychological perspective asserts that individuals achieve unique points of

view through life events (Vera, 2016). Combining psychological and sociological elements to

help explain how people learn, renowned psychologist Albert Bandura (1962; 1965; 1973; 1974;

1977; 1986) devised social learning theory. His scholarship melded the disciplines of sociology

and psychology to create a new socio-psychological approach (Allan, 2017). Sociopsychologists

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frequently investigate the relationships between stereotypes and social reality (Augoustinos & Walker, 1998). Collectively, they assert that "stereotypes are not the product of individual cognitive activity alone but are also social and collective products which function ideologically" (p. 629). Although the sociopsychological tradition proves a valuable and viable perspective, this study will focus on the cultural and societal aspects of gender depictions in Super Bowl advertising. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), and the mirror versus the mold argument (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987) will guide the exploratory study from a sociocultural standpoint.

Research & Methodological Gaps

The literature identifies several research gaps in the portrayal of gender roles in advertising and suggests a variety of future studies. From investigating consumer perspectives (Kim et al., 2012) to interviewing advertising professionals (Thompson-Whitehead, 2020), the suggestions are extensive. Across disciplines, the main suggestion for future research includes the interplay of race, gender, and ethnicity (Barron, 2020; Gary, 2012; Lydecker et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2019; King, 2012; Poggi, 2020). Ghavami and Peplau (2012) asserted that one must look at gender stereotypes from an ethnic, cultural, and gender perspective to understand the full picture. Historically, stereotypes have been examined strictly through a White, heterosexual lens (Hatzithomas et al., 2016), which does not account for the complete demographic spectrum in the United States. Likewise, Zotos and Tsichla (2014) suggested to expand coding schemes to include LGBTQ portrayals. As society expands its perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of gender, a more inclusive research approach is necessary to create a holistic view.

Research Gap in Ad Effectiveness

Rather than focusing on the role of the advertiser, Eisend (2019) suggested shifting the focus to the effectiveness of the ad. This move would help bring to light the connection between product sales and the consumer. Interested in how consumers would respond to commercials filled with informational cues, Kim et al. (2012) suggested that more research should be conducted from the consumer perspective to measure "consumer beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions" (p. 261). Similarly, Kumari and Shivani (2012) recommended examining the impact of gender stereotypes on marketing effectiveness through the emotional and behavioral responses to advertisements. The connection between ad effectiveness, consumers, and product sales presents new research opportunities.

Research Gap in Universal Coding Categories

Eisend (2019) claimed that media scholars have yet to establish a universal, global coding design for gender portrayals in advertising. This signifies a substantial gap in scholarship. Without a universal coding system or a standardized list of categories, replications or comparisons to previous studies become implausible. One reason why there has not been a universal coding system may be because gender portrayals change over time (Eisend et al., 2014), so new categories and descriptions within categories can emerge. For example, Green and Van Oort (2013) discussed the *lovable loser* in the 2009 Pepsi Max commercial where the buddies would get hurt and then reply with the phrase, "I'm good." The audience witnessed men failing repeatedly "after engaging in foolish activity," which presented a familiar, humorous narrative (p. 702). Further, Hentges et al. (2007) coded commercials across the ages from preschool through adult and tracked whether characters were product authorities or users. Ultimately, they determined that the age of the viewer played a major factor in the representation

and frequency of gender stereotypes. Later, Eisend et al. (2014) added a *humor category* to help

provide context for the use of gender role stereotypes in commercials. In addition, King (2012)

considered the role of celebrity, and Wirtz et al. (2018) incorporated types of advertising appeals.

Methodological Gap in Qualitative Inquiry

Another significant gap is a lack of qualitative studies. An abundance of quantitative

content analyses (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Eisend et al., 2014; King, 2012) leaves methodological

gaps. Modifying approaches from quantitative content analysis to qualitative content analysis

provides an opportunity to discover more nuanced data. Conducting a longitudinal content

analysis of commercials that aired during the Super Bowl from 1990 to 2009, Hatzithomas et al.

(2016) stopped at quantitative findings. A qualitative inquiry, using the researcher as an integral

instrument, can provide a thicker description of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Moreover,

focusing on qualitative elements of content analysis can help devise descriptive, holistic themes

not traditionally found in quantitative content analyses.

Theoretical Gap

In addition to methodological and research gaps, a theoretical gap exists. Although

scholars have been researching gender roles in advertising for more than 50 years (Bretl &

Cantor, 1988; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; Hatzithomas et al., 2016) there has been no one

agreed-upon universal theoretical construct to lead the research. Depending upon the discipline

and focus of each researcher, a different theory may guide each study. For example, some gender

studies cite role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), evolutionary psychology (Del Guidice,

2009; Ellis, 2011), identity theory (Carter, 2014), intersectionality theory (Ghavami & Peplau,

2012), or feminist or critical theories. Further, several gender and the media reference the mirror

versus the mold argument (Eisend, 2010; Pollay, 1986; 1987; Vierra, 2014) or cultivation theory (Barron, 2020; Taylor et al., 2019).

As presented, many gaps still exist in gender portrayals in advertising research. Hatzithomas et al. (2016) offered several suggestions for future studies: 1) product recall, 2) how stereotypes differ across product categories, 3) additional product categories, 4) redefine and expand definitions of gender stereotypes, 5) a universal systematic framework to identify various types of male and female stereotypes, 6) longitudinal studies to understand the evolution of gender role portrayals, and 7) replicate to other sports. Further, Grau and Zotos (2016) suggested shifting the focus from television advertising to online platforms and non-paid, user-generated content to keep up with the expansion of online and streaming platforms. As Americans spend more time on social media and streaming platforms, and less time watching traditional television broadcasts (Stoll, 2021), this suggestion is vital. The numerous gaps in gender role portrayals in advertising deserves academic attention.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter provides an overview of key academic literature, theoretical frameworks, and communication traditions associated with the portrayal of gender roles in advertising and the Super Bowl. The extant literature suggests that traditional gendered stereotypes have improved over the years, although further steps can be taken to improve representation and gender depictions in advertisments. Many elements such as the product category, age of the character, ethnicity, and type of appeal can contribute to the portrayal of stereotypes in commercials. The debate continues as to whether masculine and feminine ideologies are mirrored or molded into the fibers of media (Eisend, 2010), advertising (Furnham & Lay, 2017), and American sports (Messner et al., 2000). As societal norms flex and values change, continued research is necessary

to understand the current state of gender roles in American culture (McDonald et al., 2021). The

social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), and the mirror

versus the mold argument (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987) will guide the study from a

sociocultural perspective. Longitudinal content analysis designs help reveal changes and trends

over time. Employing a qualitative approach will help fill a methodological gap in the research

by providing a deeper understanding of gender depictions in Super Bowl advertising from 2013

to 2022. Next, Chapter Three explains the methodological approach to the research study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Introduction

Chapter One introduced the problem, purpose, and research questions for this study. The specific problem to be addressed is how the depiction of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials has changed over the past decade. Employing a qualitative method and longitudinal content analysis design, this study explores the portrayal of gender roles in Super Bowl advertising from 2013 to 2022. Filling a methodological gap, this study identifies patterns and themes through an emergent, qualitative design. Maintaining self-awareness through the process, the author—a professional actress and educator—has positioned herself within the study. Her unique perspective of the entertainment industry, theatre arts, and casting practices helps to provide more robust descriptions. Since gender roles depicted in televised commercials have traditionally been imbued with traditional stereotypes and unequal portrayals (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Manstead & McCulloch, 1981; McArthur & Resko, 1975), analyzing commercials aired during the most-watched televised broadcast provides substantial insight into the current state of gender roles, prevailing attitudes, and cultural norms in the United States (Hatzithomas et al., 2016; King, 2012; Rockwell, 2016).

Chapter Two discussed scholarship across disciplines in the areas of gender stereotypes in advertising, the Super Bowl, theoretical frameworks, communication traditions, and methodological and research gaps. The review of literature spans a wide cross-section of related topics, such as masculinity in sports (Messner et al., 2000), content analysis and coding (Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Eisend; 2010), and stereotypes across product types (Hall & Kappel, 2018). Lacking an agreed-upon universal theory of inquiry (Hatzithomas et al., 2016), this study cross-references three interrelated theories: social learning theory (Baudura, 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974;

1986), cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973), and the mirror versus the mold

argument (Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987). These theories collectively lay

the framework for the exploration of gender roles in a mediatized culture. Although gender

studies in advertising can be viewed through a variety of lenses, this study aligns with the

sociocultural tradition as presented by Craig (1999) which focuses on socially constructed

norms. Conducting a qualitative longitudinal content analysis of the most recent decade

simultaneously fills a methodological gap and a research gap.

      This chapter presents the research method, design, sample, theoretical construct, and

procedures. The first section discusses the necessary components of a qualitative longitudinal

content analysis method and design. The next section identifies the sample of Super Bowl

commercials housed on iSpotTV.com. The following section discusses how three commonly

used complementary theories align with the sociocultural tradition, qualitative research method,

and exploratory design. The final section explains the research procedures recorded in the data

management application Microsoft Excel.

Research Method & Design

Qualitative Method

      Rooted in cultural anthropology and sociology, the qualitative research paradigm is an

emergent design that cannot be tightly prescribed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Rather than

following a traditional quantitative structure that requires a hypothesis and relies upon validity

and reliability as key measures, the qualitative design seeks overall trustworthiness to learn about

the meaning of the issue (Terrell, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) utilized slightly different

terminology to represent qualitative studies: Credibility represents internal validity and

dependability parallels external validity. Rather than relying on numerical data, the researcher, as

the primary instrument, aims to produce descriptive results (Madisha, 2022). Qualitative studies

do not apologize for the perceptions or personal positions of the researcher, but rather, inquirers

utilize their backgrounds to help shape interpretations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This

reflexivity is meant to assist in the overall direction of the study by helping to create shape, not

to add bias. Intending to produce a complete, holistic account, qualitative researchers identify

emerging themes and patterns by enlisting inductive and deductive processes (p. 181).

To help understand the depiction of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials over a

decade, this study provides descriptive data and complex qualitative components. Previous

quantitative research in this arena has been informative and valuable, but there is a gap in

qualitative content analysis research. Applying a qualitative method in content analysis design

can provide a deeper, more nuanced analysis. According to Neale (2020), the qualitative

dimension of longitudinal research "opens up the potential to 'think dynamically' in creative,

flexible and innovative ways" (p. 1). In contrast, a quantitative method would simply provide

numerical longitudinal findings without investigating the complexities involved (Creswell &

Creswell, 2018).

Two recent gender studies in advertising utilized a qualitative approach to content

analysis. Chan et al. (2012) investigated the perceptions that adolescent girls had of themselves

in relation to advertising images in Hong Kong. Using a qualitative method, the authors were

able to produce seven key themes to help explain the role media plays in the lives of teenage

girls. Similarly, Zayer et al. (2020) conducted a study of male perceptions in advertising that

relied heavily on interviews with men. Using a qualitative method enabled the authors to learn

why men had certain perspectives rather than just what they thought about them. Due in part to

their exploratory design (Madisha, 2022), qualitative inquiry in content analysis design can provide deeper, more nuanced analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Role of the Researcher

While situating oneself in the research is considered an asset in a qualitative approach, it is important to understand that there are limitations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An inquirer's "personal background, culture, and experiences hold potential for shaping their interpretations" (p. 182). Reflecting upon these elements is called reflexivity. Researchers cannot become so biased that they ignore alternative explanations or unexpected information. Researchers must maintain self-awareness of their position and personal biases throughout the process. Ultimately, the background and culture of each researcher informs "the direction of the study" (p. 182).

From a personal stance, the author—a professional actress and theatre arts educator— approached this study with the assumption that societal behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs are learned directly from personal experiences and environment (Bandura, 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986). Having acted in theatre productions, commercials, and taught theatre in higher education, the author strongly relates to the theatre arts culture. Therefore, the author recognizes details in the advertisements that individuals outside the entertainment industry may not easily notice. The author accepts her unique position within the study as the primary research instrument, professional actress, and performing arts educator. She was able to utilize her perspective to help document unique themes and define character roles. Throughout the process, she remained cognizant of her implicit biases as to not ignore emerging themes.

Content Analysis

Content analysis design prevails as the leading design in research on gender roles in advertising (Eisend, 2010; Ganahl et al., 2003; Hatzithomas et al., 2016). While content analyses

often focus on quantitative components, they can also use qualitative designs (Terrell, 2016).

Most of the content research in gender advertising has primarily produced empirical quantitative

data through systemized, coding frameworks (Eisend, 2014; Lysonski, 1985; Hatzithomas et al.,

2016) and skipped or glossed over the qualitative components. While previous quantitative

studies were conducted with excellence and rigor, these studies were limited by their method and

concluded with discussions of quantitative findings that did not consider the position of the

researcher or identify emerging themes. Although a few gender studies in advertising have

utilized a traditional qualitative framework (Chan et al., 2012; Ghavami & Peplau, 2016; Zayer

et al., 2020), most content analyses have followed a quantitative framework and missed unique

qualitative opportunities embedded within the content analysis design. This study aims to fill that

methodological gap by applying a qualitative approach to the longitudinal content analysis

design.

The content analysis design has many strengths for quantitative and qualitative studies.

As a widely accepted quantifiable and generalizable approach, Hatzithomas et al. (2016) found

that content analysis was "a suitable method for reflecting cultural patterns" in Super Bowl

commercials (p. 894). According to Terrell (2016), content analyses help researchers "make

inferences based on the objective and systematic analysis of recorded communication" (p. 161).

Further, they can investigate both the apparent and underlying meanings of data.

Methodologically, quantitative content analysis studies focus on the sample, coding schemes,

and procedures. In contrast, qualitative designs in gender studies and advertising aim to identify

themes, based on feelings, often from the consumer perspectives (Chan et al., 2012; Zayer et al.,

2020). To summarize, Mayring (2000) stated that qualitative content analyses rely upon the

methodological strengths of quantitative studies but expand upon them to include qualitative

procedures through a systematic process.

Longitudinal Design

When investigating the changing depiction of gender roles in advertising, it is important

to examine content over time. A longitudinal design supports the investigation of emerging

trends and changes in a qualitative study because it looks at data and themes over a designated

period (Neale, 2020). In a recent study in applied health research, Sheard and Marsh (2019)

asserted that longitudinal designs hold the potential to capture large volumes of complex data

across multiple methods over time. Longitudinal qualitative research is expanding outside

traditional social research into new areas. However, analyzing large amounts of qualitative data

across methods presents practical challenges. To help synthesize longitudinal qualitative data in

the health sector, the authors created an adaptable analytic program called the Pen Portrait. The

analytic process "provides a useful framework to enable researchers to conduct a robust analysis

of multiple sources of qualitative data collected over time" (Sheard & Marsh, 2019, p. 1).

In the past decade, three studies explored gender in Super Bowl commercials from a

longitudinal content analysis design (Hatzithomas et al., 2016; King, 2012; Rockwell, 2016).

Communication scholar Barbara King (2012) led a longitudinal content analysis that measured

changes in images of gender and race in Super Bowl commercials in the years 2000, 2005, and

2010. Her study produced significant quantitative findings documenting an underrepresentation

of women and Latinos and differences among product categories. She suggested further

longitudinal inquiries that would "probe deeper" and arrive at "overarching themes or appeals"

(p. 18). Similarly, Hatzithomas et al. (2016) conducted a longitudinal content analysis that

compared two decades of Super Bowl commercials from 1990 to 2009. Primarily focusing on the

coding scheme and data, the study produced impressive longitudinal quantitative information but lacked nuanced qualitative components. For Rockwell (2016), analyzing Super Bowl commercials for every year between 2005 and 2016 generated extensive, complex data. Through a longitudinal content analysis of 665 commercials, the author found that gender narratives and representations had changed and improved over time. The author attempted to identify possible reasons for the shifts, yet further qualitative longitudinal studies are needed to explain the complexities.

To best understand the current state of gender depictions in mainstream media, it is important to recognize how they were previously depicted. Insight into previous depictions helps provide context. It is equally important to recognize the emergence of new trends, current shifts, and the degrees of change. Using comparative data over time will help address these queries by providing a contextual, more meaningful framework. Because Super Bowl commercials are rich with cultural content, a longitudinal content analysis design proves a suitable choice. This research follows a qualitative longitudinal content analysis to provide in-depth, thick description of the portrayal of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials over a decade from 2013 to 2022.

Sample

This study's sample included nationally televised Super Bowl advertisements for a 10-year period from 2013 to 2022. Following the example of previous scholars (Barron, 2020; King, 2012), this study employed a cross-section design. Super Bowl commercials were analyzed every three years for a total of four sample years: 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022 represented the cross-section of one decade. Following the examples of Bretl and Cantor (1988), Hatzithomas et al. (2016), and King (2012), this study excluded regional commercials and commercials played during the halftime segment. By excluding these two categories, the content analysis remained

focused on national advertisements aired during the first quarter, second quarter, third quarter, and fourth quarter.

This study utilized iSpot.tv as the primary source for locating, viewing, and analyzing the sample of Super Bowl commercials. In addition to providing a variety of services such as analytical measurements for television advertisers, iSpot.tv categorizes national Super Bowl commercials by the time aired, which other commonly used websites, such as Adlandtv.com, do not. For example, the company divides the advertisements into sections titled previews, teasers, extended play, pregame, first quarter, second quarter, halftime, third quarter, and fourth quarter. The pre-determined categories were helpful to understand exactly which ads were played at what time. The sample for this study focused on ads played during the first quarter, second quarter, third quarter, and fourth quarter, omitting all pregame spots and halftime ads. Additionally, iSpot.tv provides general information for the public, and the descriptive content helped identify celebrities, actors, and sports professionals who were unknown to the author. Without the descriptive information provided by iSpot.tv, the author may not have been able to identify the individuals featured or make sense of the cultural references being presented.

For this study, the sample of Super Bowl commercials aired in 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022 produced 279 unique, viewable advertisements. Originally, 282 ads were posted, but three had been removed by the advertisers for reasons unknown. The three removed ads were not included in the sample. In total, iSpot.tv housed 57 commercials for Super Bowl XLVII, 73 for Super Bowl 50, 74 for Super Bowl LIII, and 75 for Super Bowl LVI for a total of 279 advertisements. This sample selection spanning a decade provided ample content to explore, explain, and compare descriptive data.

For years, Adland.tv has been considered the premier online resource for Super Bowl commercials (Adland, 2022). With commercials dating as far back as 1969, Adland houses the largest selection of commercials worldwide. Multiple studies have utilized the website as their primary source of commercial content (Barron, 2020; Hatzithomas et al., 2016; Rockwell, 2016). However, the author chose to utilize iSpot.tv as the primary source because of its organized structure, accessibility, and additional production information.

Theoretical Construct

Although the qualitative research paradigm can align with several communication traditions (Craig, 1999), this study approaches the content through a sociocultural lens. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative studies are well-suited for complex social research because they are rooted in cultural anthropology and sociology. Berger and Luckmann (1966) asserted that gender is primarily learned through socialization, thus, enforcing the sociocultural perspective. Because the qualitative method is an emergent design that cannot be tightly prescribed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), it can flex as sociocultural themes related to identity, ritual, and socialization emerge (Craig, 1999). The longitudinal content analysis design can enable themes rooted in the social construction of reality to emerge in detail over time.

As mentioned in previous chapters, this study overlays three complementary theories to guide the research: social learning theory, cultivation theory, and the mirror versus the mold argument. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986) clearly resides within the sociocultural tradition. Bandura and Walters (1977) believed that individuals learn primarily through social observation, modeling, and reinforcement. In a pioneering study of gender role portrayals in television advertising, McArthur and Resko (1975) utilized social learning theory as their key theory. They asserted that observational learning was "the first step in the acquisition of

sex-typed behavior" (p. 209). At the core, their study was concerned with how sex roles were acquired. Thus, this study considers what social constructs are being taught through gender portrayals in the past 10 years of Super Bowl commercials.

Equally concerned about the societal effects of the media, Barron (2020), Bretl and Cantor (1988), and Taylor et al. (2019) understood that media played an integral part in the construction and reinforcement of cultural norms. Previous studies utilized cultivation theory as the leading theoretical framework. Cultivation theory supports the idea that images played over time influence all groups by cultivating a homogeneous culture (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1973; 1986). At the core, the theory examines the process of social learning (Rosenthal et al., 2014), thus connecting cultivation with social learning theory and the sociocultural tradition.

A close cousin to cultivation theory is the mirror versus the mold argument. As first introduced by Holbrook (1987) and Pollay (1986; 1987), and later explained by Eisend (2010), the debate offers contrasting yet complementary views of how society is affected by gender stereotypes in advertising. The mirror school of thought (Holbrook, 1987) believes that advertisements simply mirror or reflect existing societal thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs, whereas the mold school of thought (Pollay, 1986; 1987) asserts that advertisers are molding individuals because they are trying to influence social values and opinions to sell products. The mold argument (Manstead & McCulloch, 1981; Pollay, 1986; 1987), sometimes referred to as cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1973), has led to many studies focusing on gender stereotypes in advertising (Barron, 2020; Bretl & Cantor, 1988; Taylor et al., 2019). In sum, both schools of thought, working in tandem, can influence society. Grau and Zotos (2016) and Zotos and Tsichla (2014) asserted that the two arguments best exist as a hybrid model, residing on a continuum rather than being independent, bipolar components.

Collectively, social learning theory, cultivation theory, and the mirror versus the mold argument guided this research to help address the following four research questions:

RQ 1: Has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 2: How has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 3: How has the communication of gender roles changed across the top five product categories in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 4: What primary themes emerge in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

Although this study utilized three interrelated theories to guide the research, it was important to stay open to alternative explanations. As a professional actress and theatre arts educator, it was important for the author to maintain self-awareness throughout the process so that personal bias did not distort authentic themes and patterns that emerged.

Procedures

The initial step was to create a digital spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel to record the findings as they emerged. Utilizing Excel helped create an organized and systematic approach to tracking information. In addition to organizing extensive data, the research software helped to identify emerging themes and patterns based on descriptive data and developing categories. The application assisted in recognizing patterns and trends over the 10-year period as well as providing a digital record of each advertisement by quarter and year. Documenting each commercial allowed the researcher to track the product category and discover rankings by year and decade. Historically, according to Bretl and Cantor (1988) and Hatzithomas et al. (2016), the top five product categories for Super Bowl commercials have been 1) food/drinks 2) alcoholic

beverages 3) services 4) auto & related products, and 5) financial services. Recording the

hyperlinks of the commercials allowed for repeated viewing throughout the process.

In preparation for the data recording process and content analysis, six general columns

were established: 1) year, 2) quarter, 3) advertisement information, 4) product category, 5)

gender, and 6) descriptive notes. "Year" represented the year in which the Super Bowl took

place. "Quarter" indicated in which quarter the commercial aired: first, second, third, or fourth.

The column named "advertisement information" included the name of the product or company,

the title of the spot, and the tagline. The "product category" identified the type of product or

service. "Gender" pertained to the sex of the characters. "Descriptive notes" provided the

opportunity to record extensive, qualitative notes as they emerged. The Excel application

allowed for an infinite number of columns, as well as the ability to isolate and collate data

categories to help determine patterns and themes.

Once the Microsoft Excel document was created with six primary columns, the next step

entailed watching each advertisement for the first year. The researcher started with the first

quarter of 2013, then moved in sequence to the second quarter, third quarter, and finally the

fourth quarter until the entire 2013 sample was viewed. Each commercial was played as many

times as needed to gather the necessary information. After all unique advertisements had been

viewed and described according to the primary columns, the researcher added four additional

columns to help organize and analyze the content more succinctly. The new columns included:

time in seconds, tone/appeal, target audience, and URL. Creating 10 columns helped separate the

extensive comments written in descriptive notes and allowed for better comparisons. After year

one was completed, the researcher analyzed the data to determine any unique findings or

emerging themes. A preliminary summary of 2013 was recorded before moving on to the next

year, 2016. Once an initial summary was recorded, the process repeated for the next sequential

year until all four years had been assessed. As more advertisements were viewed, primary and

secondary themes began to emerge.

Throughout the process, the author recorded extensive notes as unique findings arose.

Creating clear and concise notes across 10 columns helped in several ways. First, it assisted in

categorizing 279 commercials over 10 years. Accurate, clean data were essential to keep track of

multiple commercials across four separate years. Second, the descriptive notes helped identify

emerging themes across each year, helping to answer the four research questions in this study.

Third, recording the hyperlinks (URLs) made it easy to pause and re-watch advertisements

without having to spend additional time trying to locate them again. Eventually, the 10 columns

of notes were reduced to four columns to act as a quick reference guide to all 279 Super Bowl

commercials. This condensed document can is listed as Appendix A.

Once all commercials had been viewed and analyzed for each of the four years, a

spreadsheet was created to isolate and compare the extensive findings. The new spreadsheet

included the following 29 categories: male voice-over, female voice-over, celebrity male,

celebrity female, male lead, female lead, male vocalist, female vocalist, non-human character,

married/couple (m/f), same-sex couple (f/f), same-sex couple (m/m), comedic appeal, sexy

appeal, emotional/inspirational appeal, informational appeal, competitive, patriotic, automotive

product, food/beverage product, alcoholic beverages, financial products and services, TV

broadcast, NFL promotion, service/product, pharmaceutical, ads with two products, ads with

continued theme, and ads void of any visual characters. Simultaneous inductive and deductive

analysis was necessary to confidently determine conclusions. The aim was to produce a thick

description of themes and trends in the communication of gender depictions over the past

decade. Comparing the years to one another highlighted differences, similarities, and an opportunity to determine an overarching theme for the decade. The initial and expanded spreadsheets provided the information necessary to make final conclusions and confirm themes and patterns. As an intended final step, information from both spreadsheets was used to create visual graphs, charts, word clouds, and tables to help illustrate the data. However, during the visual creation process, this author decided to look at internal years 2014 and 2015 to gauge whether the abrupt decline in overt sexuality was accurate. Skimming over the commercials in 2014 and 2015 provided the data needed to gather a more holistic view of how the sexuality theme transitioned across the decade. As a result, this author created two graphs for the theme sexuality: one with sample years only and one that included 2014 and 2015.

Summary of Chapter

Chapter Three describes the choice of research method, design, theoretical framework, sample, and research procedures. Recognizing the multiple strengths of longitudinal content analyses in advertising, this study attempted to synthesize qualitative, descriptive data necessary for nuanced findings. This researcher viewed four years of Super Bowl commercials, 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022 covering a cross-section of 10 years. The sample included 279 national commercials aired during the first quarter, second quarter, third quarter, and fourth quarter housed on iSpot.tv. Descriptive data were recorded and analyzed across 10 columns in the digital software application Microsoft Excel and later expanded to a secondary spreadsheet to further analyze and explain the findings. Social learning theory (Bandura 1962; 1965; 1973; 1974; 1986), cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1973), and the mirror versus the mold argument (Eisend, 2010; Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987), guided the research by focusing on social and cultural behaviors, identities, and rituals. Chapter Four details the data found for each year and

the aggregated decade. Meaningful themes and patterns are presented in connection to the

study's four research questions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Overview

This study analyzed a cross-sectional sample of 279 Super Bowl advertisements from the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. This chapter presents the findings, key themes, subthemes, and aggregated findings for the decade. To provide context for the findings that are presented, the chapter begins with an overview of the study's research questions and provides a brief overview of the primary themes that emerged through analysis. After that, the findings of this study are detailed first by year and then by decade.

Research Questions

This study was guided by four research questions.

RQ 1: Has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 2: How has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 3: How has the communication of gender roles changed across the top five product categories in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

RQ 4: What gender-related themes emerge in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

Thematic Patterns

Seven primary thematic patterns emerged along with 12 subthemes. To provide context to the findings that will be presented, the primary themes are:

Thematic Pattern #1: Celebrity Appeal

Thematic Pattern #2: Comedic Tone

Thematic Pattern #3: Competition, Sports & Athleticism

Thematic Pattern #4: Traditional Marriage and Heterosexual Couples

Thematic Pattern #5: Shifts in Sexuality

Thematic Pattern #6: Shifts in Product Types

Thematic Pattern #7: Male Representation

The subthemes will be introduced as they emerged by year. Both primary themes and subthemes will be discussed in greater detail when presenting the results for RQ 4 at the end of Chapter Four.

Findings By Year

This section will discuss the results of the qualitative content analysis of the commercials for each year and then as an aggregated decade. Four research questions will guide the analysis throughout. An explanation of how the author determined the names and characteristics of roles will precede the qualitative findings. A full listing of this study's sample of Super Bowl commercials by year and quarter can be found in Appendix A.

Categorizing Roles

Qualitative analysis involves some measure of subjectivity, and this study is no exception. The names and qualities of each character were derived from a synthesis of three elements: the short synopses provided by iSpot.tv, the categories determined by other scholars, and the author's background in the performing arts. During the viewing of each advertisement, descriptive notes were written for each character including their physical and behavioral traits. Many characters exhibited common, easy-to-define qualities, though some unique roles emerged. The more unique roles such as Badlanders, Voodoo Daddy, and fembot were taken directly from their iSpot.tv synopses.

In addition to using the names given in the synopses, the author identified some roles in similar ways to earlier scholars. For example, Hall and Kappel (2018) identified *losers*, *the party girl*, and *the worker* as common types in alcohol commercials. The current study discovered a party girl and worker but did not deem any male role merely as a loser. Rather, this study described *man as loser* with more nuance. This study found that *dorky* and *dumb* characters, considered losers by some, frequently emerged as independent character types. In these cases, they were named dorky male or dumb male. In another example, this study followed the verbiage of earlier scholars that described the voices of authority as *experts or celebrities (*Lysonski, 1985).

Third, to fill in the gaps, this study includes terminology used to describe character categories within the entertainment industry. It is common to see roles listed in the casting breakdowns that read *real person*, *average to attractive*, or *model type*. These are three different visual/physical expressions of characters. A *real person* implies that they are not an actor, or that they appear to be an everyday, regular person. Typically, they are not recognized for their physical beauty, but rather their down-to-earth, more realistic appearance. Here, they may be balding, overweight, or plain in personality or appearance. *Average to attractive* is a category based primarily on physical appearance. This typically means an average to fit body type and looks that can be made up to appear more appealing than an average person. *Model type* is also based primarily on appearance. This character must be extremely attractive and fit. They often resemble the ideal in beauty because they are sexy, in excellent shape, beautiful or handsome.

Findings: 2013

A total of 57 commercials were analyzed from Super Bowl XLVII in 2013. It is important to note that no ads for television broadcasts were included in any quarter, unlike the

subsequent analyzed years that regularly included ads for television broadcasts across quarters.

The reason for this is unknown. It is speculated that iSpot.tv did not regularly include ads for TV

broadcasts from 10 years ago, only commercials for traditional products and services.

Nonetheless, the commercials in 2013 provided robust data and simultaneously created a

baseline for this study. Comparing data from 2013 to 2022 revealed both similarities and notable

differences.

To best understand the communication of gender roles in a qualitative manner, the study

first established and compared gender role categories. Table 1 reveals the number of males and

females participating in roles as voice-overs, celebrities, leading characters, and vocalists. Males

led in every area, which helps paint a general picture of how males and females were utilized in

2013 Super Bowl advertisements. Altogether, 11 ads were void of any female presence while

only one ad excluded males.

Table 1

Number of Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads in 2013 by Role Category

Role Category	Male	Female
Voice-Over	36	1
Celebrity	11	8
Lead	34	11
Vocalist	10	3

Role Portrayals, Themes & Subthemes

When looking at role portrayals in 2013 commercials, both males and females portrayed

a variety of roles. The following is a list of 46 male roles featured in 2013: dork/dumb, nerd,

computer geek, model, husband, dad, average joe, firefighter, cop, celebrity, hero, entrepreneur,

car salesperson, lifeguard, sales clerk, M&M, Jack in the Box, musician, welder, bear wrestler,

weight lifter, prom king, underdog, cowboy, badlander, baby, son, coach, athlete, football player,

spokesperson/expert, president, office worker, rancher, agent, senior citizen, boss, businessman,

football fan, broadcaster, recruiter, bank robber, mayhem, voodoo daddy, groom, and astronaut.

In contrast, female role portrayals were significantly different. The following is a list of

28 female roles and characters, most of which are specific to the female gender: wife, mother,

spouse, celebrity, model, prom queen, good luck charm, fembot, waitress, bride, librarian,

showgirl, princess, stewardess, sexy partier, concert fan, makeup artist, helpless child, helpless

old lady, daughter, assistant, office worker, spokesperson/expert, genie, agent, farmer, senior

citizen, and pilot. Figure 1 illustrates a side-by-side comparison of male and female roles in 2013

Super Bowl commercials. Very few roles overlap, and the male roles are more extensive than the

female roles.

Figure 1

Side-By-Side Word Clouds of Male and Female Roles in 2013 Super Bowl Advertisements

Note. Male roles are on the left and female roles are on the right.

All female characters physically appeared to be *average to attractive,* and many were *model types*. The sexier females wore less clothing such as string bikinis and half tops as seen in ads for Carl's Jr., Axe body spray, SodaStream, Jack in the Box, and E*TRADE. Other attractive females wore tight, short cocktail dresses and high heels to show off their figures in spots for Budweiser, GoDaddy, Kia, and Bud Light. Most of the attractive characters relied upon their beauty and smarts, not on any career or job title. The showgirls in the reoccurring Coca-Cola ads were beautiful and smart. They wore accentuated makeup and glittery, revealing costumes to emphasize their breasts and legs. The females used their attractiveness to flirt with the male competitors and their intelligence to outsmart them. Both qualities, brains and beauty, ultimately helped the showgirls win the race and enjoy the last cold bottle of Coke.

In contrast, the moms and wives were typically portrayed as more down-to-earth, supportive of their spouses, and smarter than their mates. Typically, the more attractive characters had longer hair and glamorous makeup while the mothers and wives wore little makeup, and at times had shorter hairstyles. The mothers and wives wore wedding bands, relaxed clothing, and frequently carried purses to establish their positions in relationships. Whenever a couple was shown in a vehicle, the female would sit in the passenger seat while the male drove. All couples and spouses were portrayed as traditional, heterosexual characters with one man and one woman.

Several commercials depicted moms and wives as caring, supportive, and often non-speaking characters. Rooted in traditional marriage, a subtheme titled *supportive wife/mom* emerged. In Hyundai: *Team*, an unassuming mom drives her young son and his friends around town to create a fierce football team. She actively supports her son's desire to beat the tough boys on the opposing team. She is smart and knows how to get things accomplished. She never

speaks a word, just smiles knowingly. The boys are seen participating in various masculine

physical activities. Mom is in charge, supportive, and mute.

In another ad titled GoDaddy: *YourBrightIdea.co*, six heterosexual, married couples

discuss their great ideas. In each scenario, the wives encourage their husbands to brand their

innovative ideas. The wives, though more business savvy than their husbands, simply support

their husbands' achievements by nudging them to take the lead. Only one man at the end brands

his bright idea, which, in turn, makes him a millionaire. Three beautiful women surround him,

his wife, the model stewardess, and the celebrity pilot, all laughing together on a private plane.

Ultimately, the men generate big ideas. Similarly, in Samsung Mobile, a female assistant

supports her boss's decisions. She is professional, though subordinate to him. His role as a

thought leader is to make tough decisions. Her position is to support his decisions and follow his

lead. Other women are featured in the background as attractive, professional assistants. None of

them speak.

Another example of the wife or mom remaining quiet is in Kia: *Space Babies*. As the dad

drives, he tries to delicately explain where babies come from to his young, savvy son. The

mom/wife sits quietly in the passenger seat showing support for her husband. He takes the lead

in conversation and the task of driving. She communicates through facial expressions only.

A close cousin to the subtheme *supportive wife/mom*, is *understated, smart female*.

Several ads show women as smarter than their husbands or male counterparts. In Tide: *2013

Super Bowl*, the wife appearing supportive, seems to outsmart her husband. She, a Ravens fan,

removes the stain that looks like sports legend Joe Montana from her husband's jersey. The

husband, clearly a die-hard 49ers fan, wants to keep the stain because he idolizes the player and

the team. The action she takes to remove the spot implies that she knows how to get out stains with Tide laundry detergent and that she has the better team in the Super Bowl.

Another example of an *understated, smart female* is depicted in Doritos: *Princesses*. Here, the sweet little daughter bribes her dad and his four middle-aged friends to play dress up in exchange for Doritos. The masculine men act against their physical types and traditional roles as adult men and dance around in feminine dresses and makeup. This exemplifies another subtheme, *gender role reversals.* As the daughter, dad, and his friends play, the wife/mom enters and observes the comic scene. She asks the burly man with chips in his beard if he is wearing her wedding dress to which he replies "yes." Mom is a practical, understated character while the dad and his four friends are portrayed as dorky and dumb. Here, even the young daughter knows how to motivate the men to play princess with her. In addition to the *understated, smart female*, a new male subtheme emerges, *dorky/dumb male.*

In Carl's Jr.: *Fried*, the leading, single man is sunburned on the beach. The single, attractive female played by supermodel Nina Adgal, does not say a word when he comments on her sandwich. She is smarter than him by knowing about the scrumptious sandwich and avoiding sunburn on the beach. He is dumb for getting sunburned and gullible for complimenting her sandwich instead of her gorgeous body. She smiles in an all-knowing, understated way. She wears a black string bikini with noticeably oiled skin. This ad, set within a comedic context, combines several subthemes: 1) dorky/dumb male, 2) understated, smart female, and 3) overt sexuality.

In Go Daddy: *Big Kiss*, supermodel Bar Refaeli and a nerdy man referred to as Walter kiss in a sloppy, sensual manner. The gorgeous female has no defined job whereas the unattractive male appears to be a computer geek or some type of businessman/loser. The ad

violates the expected norm by bringing together two opposing forces, one sexy and one

unappealing, in a comic, unrealistic scenario. The narrator describes the union as bringing

together sexy and smart. This ad merges celebrity, comedy, sexuality, and a dorky male.

In contrast to the *dorky/dumb male* portrayals, another male subtheme emerged, *man as*

hero. Two ads portrayed men as heroes who needed to save the women and girls. In the spot for

Milk, titled Processor Education Program (MilkPEP): *Milk Mustache 2013 Super Bowl*, celebrity

actor Dwayne Johnson, also known as "The Rock," is featured as a sexy, athletic, and caring man

equipped for the sole purpose to protect and serve women and girls. Here, *man as hero* is

exemplified as a subtheme. He conquers every obstacle with his charm, good looks, and physical

strength. In another example of a *man as hero*, a physically attractive and handsome lifeguard

saves a drowning woman from a shark in Axe: *Lifeguard*. Traditionally, men have been

portrayed as the physically superior gender, so they are assumed to be able to save the weaker

female sex when they need help. Not only does this lifeguard save the woman and carry her limp

body out of the water, but he also pounds the shark with his bare fist. Both ads integrate a

comedic style alongside the strong male hero messaging.

In contrast to physically strong male heroes, some male heroes were shown to have a

softer side. In Budweiser: *Brotherhood,* an attractive, single rancher raises a young Clydesdale

for Budweiser. Three years later, the horse recognizes the handsome rancher and runs to him in

the middle of the street in a downtown city. They hug. The man has a blue-collar career and

displays a softness toward the horse he raised. The use of emotional appeal helps support the

softer male portrayal. Thus, *redefining labels* emerges as another subtheme.

Another example of showing men with a softer side can be seen in Ram Trucks: *God*

Made a Farmer. Celebrity Paul Harvey narrates an epic homage to the American farmer. Several

hard-working middle-America farmers are featured in a series of photos. They are plain folks

with caring hearts. Many faces are tough and weathered due to many years of hard work. Each

wear blue jeans. Many men are shown as caretakers with strong family bonds. The narrative

implies that men can be strong physically and morally, and still have a soft side.

To help celebrate the Big Game, multiple commercials were seeped in competition,

sports, and athleticism. In NFL Network: *Sandcastle,* celebrity athlete Deion "Sandcastle"

Sanders disguises himself so he can try out for an NFL football team again. In Pizza Hut: *Hut,*

Hut, Hut, both genders of all ages celebrate and play football while shouting "hut." In

McDonald's: *Pep Talk*, a male coach talks to his players in the high school locker room.

The competitive nature is also illustrated in Coca-Cola: *The Chase*. Three groups, two

male and one female, race across the desert for the last bottle of Coke. The charming male

cowboys, the beautiful female showgirls, and the rugged male badlanders, known as a large tribe

of raiders or nomads, compete against one another. The males are rugged, athletic, and masculine

in dress and behavior. The females wear sparkly, pink showgirl costumes, false eyelashes, and

glamorous makeup. They shoot a glitter cannon at the cowboys and flirt as a tactic to win. The

men appreciate the gesture by smiling and tipping their hats. At the end, the audience is

prompted to choose the winner. No words are spoken. Men rely upon their physical strength

while the women rely upon their beauty and smarts. Each Coca-Cola ad combines competition,

subtle sexuality, and comedy.

Overt sexuality and *subtle sexuality* emerged as subthemes in several ads. In Bud Light:

Lucky Chair, musical celebrity Stevie Wonder plays the Voodoo Daddy. Two average male

friends approach him to help garner good luck for their football team. Sexy celebrity actress Zoe

Saldana acts as a good luck charm and sits in their lucky chair in hopes of bringing it good luck.

She wears a revealing black cocktail dress with high heels. She is beautiful and overtly

sexualized. Voodoo Daddy Stevie Wonder wears a white suit and acts as the man in charge. The

two average male characters wear casual jeans and flannel shirts.

Likewise, another ad fully immersed in overt sexuality is for Calvin Klein underwear. In

Calvin Klein: *Matthew Terry* the gorgeous male model wears only Calvin Klein underwear. The

spot is shot in black and white. Terry shows his six-pack abs and moves his body to highlight its

physical attractiveness. His physique is compared to that of a machine utilizing an overt sexual

appeal. No words are spoken, and no women are featured. This is the only ad that shows a man

in an overtly sexual context.

In a more subtle sexual approach, an upbeat female voice introduces the new rocket

mascara in Maybelline New York: *Explosive Smooth Lashes*. The ad features a female model

with blue eyes and long hair. The ad shows her attractive face in a close-up as her long hair flies

around her face. She is fully clothed, though her penetrating eyes and clear skin exude a more

embedded sex appeal. This is the only ad without men in 2013.

Traditional family units, sometimes referred to as *nuclear* families, also appeared in

several ads. As mentioned in Chapter One, a traditional family unit consists of a mother, a father,

and their biological children. In Audi: *Prom Night: Worth It*, a dateless teenage boy sits in the

kitchen looking depressed. His dad surprises him by tossing him the keys to his Audi. This gives

the teen the confidence and bravery to go to his prom, park in the principal's spot at school and

kiss the Prom Queen. After the Prom King punches him in the face, the teen drives home happily

with a black eye. His family is a traditional one that consists of a mom, a dad, and two kids. The

Prom Queen is an attractive female. She wears a red dress and a crown. The Prom King, also

good-looking, exudes a rough and tough attitude. He wears a tux with a red sash. He uses

physical force as punishment for kissing his girl. The tone is comedic and inspirational.

Although most Super Bowl ads featured characters from their mid-teens to mid-40s, there

were a few characters outside the typical age range. Four ads featured babies and children. First,

a baby boy with financial knowhow was featured in E*TRADE from Morgan Stanley. Second, a

young son in Kia: *Space Babies* asked his parents where babies come from. Third, a real baby

boy named Carlie Ray was shown taking his first steps in GoPro: *Dubstep Baby*. Fourth, a little

girl playing princess and dress up with her dad and his friends was featured in Doritos:

Princesses.

Older characters were featured in Taco Bell: *Viva Young*. The commercial highlights six

senior citizens who sneak out of a retirement home to go dancing and partying. Three men and

three women dress up like teenagers and act wild and carefree. One woman makes out with a

younger man in a bathroom stall and a one older man gets a tattoo. As they eat Taco Bell in the

Taco Bell parking lot, the police drive by slowly to check them out. The seniors' ages were

juxtaposed with their behaviors, creating a comedic effect. This also is an example of *redefining

labels,* another subtheme.

Another type of role emerged across product categories: celebrity. Some female

celebrities included actress Kaley Cuoco as the Genie in Toyota: *I Wish*, actress/comedian Amy

Poehler as a quirky, flirty consumer in Best Buy: *Asking Amy*, and race car driver Danica Patrick

in two ads for GoDaddy.com. Some male celebrities included: The singer known as PSY for

Wonderful Pistachios, Steve Wonder as the Voodoo Daddy for Bud Light, The Rock for Milk,

Paul Rudd and Seth Rogan for Samsung Mobile, comedian Tracey Morgan for MiO, and sport

legend Deion Sanders for the NFL.

Product Categories

It remains difficult to decipher any concrete trends across product categories.

Historically, the categories and their ranking have been as follows: 1) food and drinks, 2)

alcoholic beverages, 3) services, 4) auto & related products, and 5) financial services. For 2013,

some shifts occurred. To best describe the new/changing categories, the following top five

categories emerged: food/beverages (19), services/products (17), automotive (13), alcoholic

beverages (6), and financial services (1).

Historical Order	**2013 Order**
1) Food and drinks	1) Food/beverages
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) Services/products
3) Services	3) Automotive
4) Auto and related products	4) Alcoholic beverages
5) Financial services	5) Financial services

The side-by-side comparison illustrates fewer alcoholic beverage ads and more services,

products, and automotive commercials in 2013 than in previous years. Food and beverages

remained in the number one position and financial services at number five. The automotive

category featured traditional family units and heterosexual couples in seven of the 13 spots. Two

automotive ads did not include women at all, and one commercial featured a female lead,

although she was portrayed as a beautiful, sexy fembot, i.e., half woman and half robot (Kia:

Robot, 2013).

Regardless of the product or service, a comedic tone was utilized in most of the ads,

which validates the findings from the study on the frequent use of humor through stereotyping in

advertising (Eisend et al., 2014). Further, of the seven overtly sexual ads, two were for fast food,

two were for men's underwear, and two were for male hygiene products. The primary characters

in the alcohol ads appeared to be 21-35 years old. This aligns with the standard within the

alcohol industry that "compensated actors or models in commercial communication must be, and

must reasonably appear to be, at least 25 years old" (Anheuser-Busch, 2019).

In Budweiser: *Our Kind of Beer*, a group of young female models and hip male models

dance, converse, and drink in an upscale nightclub. Both genders are attractive, sleek, and sexy

characters. They all wear black clothing to match the product label. None appear to be married

and their careers are undefined. In the second spot titled Budweiser: *Party Walk In*, the same

attractive, sleek, and sexy characters are portrayed in similar clothing. Both spots feature upscale

men and women appearing to be between the ages of 21 and 35.

Summarized Findings for 2013

There was evidence of heightened sexual appeal in 2013 compared to later years. *Overt*

sexuality emerged as a significant subtheme. Further, many advertisements centered on

competitive scenarios to align with the nature of the Super Bowl. Men dominated the voice-over

category 36 to 1, which fundamentally designates men as the primary experts or voices of

authority. In some cases, the voice of the male celebrity became the primary appeal. This aligns

with previous findings that men traditionally play the role of voice-over narrators (Bretl &

Cantor, 1988; Courtney & Whipple, 1974; McArthur & Resko, 1975). A comedic tone prevailed

throughout. Traditional marriages, heterosexual relationships, and family units were illustrated.

More services and products were advertised and fewer ads in the food/beverage category

appeared. Category titles were updated to reflect how products were being presented. Males were

portrayed as dorky/dumb characters, heroes, and celebrities while females were portrayed as

supportive wives/moms, understated, smart females, and celebrities. Many female roles lacked a voice or any dialogue.

Findings: 2016

Super Bowl 50 duplicated 2013 in overall thematic patterns though it showed some slight changes in a few categories. Overall, the ads in 2016 displayed greater subtlety of sexuality while a handful of ads challenged male and female sex roles by attempting to redefine labels. Males portrayed 70 types of characters while females played 38, indicating a greater overall variety of portrayals by both sexes compared to 2013. More products and services were advertised in addition to TV broadcasts. Eight ads had no women and 11 ads featured non-human characters. Six couples were featured, each being heterosexual with one man and one woman. The role of celebrity remained a leading theme alongside comedic tone. No real people (i.e., non-celebrities) were featured. Competition, sports, and athleticism were embedded throughout.

Table 2 shows that even with more ads in the 2016 sample than in 2013, males still led in every role category. Of 73 total ads, men were featured in 36 voiceovers compared to only three female voices. The category of celebrity almost doubled for men from 2013 to 2016 from 11 to 21. Simultaneously, female celebrities shrunk by half from eight to four. Male leads remained steady at 34 while female leads increased slightly to 14. Fewer male vocalists were heard in 2016 than previously in 2013.

Table 2

Number of Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads in 2016 by Role Category

Role Category	Male	Female
Voice-Over	36	3
Celebrity	21	4
Lead	34	14
Vocalist	3	2

Role Portrayals, Themes & Subthemes

Although a larger variety of roles were portrayed in 2016 for both genders, significantly more types of male characters were depicted than female characters. The following is a list of 70 male characters: celebrity, break dancer, bowler, juggler, conductor, weightlifter, man showing physical strength, groom, upscale wedding guests, sportscasters, average man, real person, friend, astronaut, son, alien, dad, businessman, husband, hero, bad guy, spy, spokesperson/expert, George Washington, tour guide, boy, mannequin farmer, Marilyn Monroe, film crew, athlete, teenager on a date, overprotective father, bank robber, police, plant worker, Ant-Man, The Hulk, football player, construction worker, dog walker, hunk, bike rider, eccentric, middle-aged, politician, community member, magician, woodcarver, narrator, beer drinker, rancher, ketchup bottle, fitness male, bull rider, pirate, professional, protege, football fan, interviewer, grocery manager, kid, corporate worker, sports fan, adventurer, choir singer, dorky geek, awkward teen, male in drag, academic guy, tough guy.

In contrast, female roles had less variety. The following are 38 characters played by women and girls: celebrity, grandma practicing yoga, bride, dancer, sexy wedding guest, model/actress, average female, real person, wife, kickboxer, pregnant spouse, doctor, sexy spy,

alien, athlete, bar patron, ketchup bottle, fitness female, quirky, middle-aged mother, football

fan, girl, daughter, teenager on a date, plant worker, woman, friend, politician, community

member, magician's assistant, hairstylist, cashier, mom, spokesperson/expert, kid, corporate

worker, adventurer, choir singer. Figure 2 shows a side-by-side comparison of the role portrayals

of each gender. Several roles were played by both genders and the number of women showing

physical strength increased from 2013. Across product categories 11 ads feature men and women

participating in the same type of activities; in these instances, gender seems unimportant.

Further, in about half of the ads, the roles could be portrayed in similar fashion by either gender.

For example, roles as football fans, community members, choir singers, and adventurers were

played in a more neutral manner by both genders.

Figure 2

Side-By-Side Word Clouds of Male and Female Roles in 2016 Super Bowl Advertisements

Note. Male roles are on the left and female roles are on the right.

In line with 2013, 2016 commercials continued to utilize a comedic tone. Whether it was

exhibited through the character itself or scenario, comedy prevailed and appeared in 37 of the 73

ads. Competition continued as a theme in nine commercials to tie in with the Super Bowl

festivities. In advertising upcoming television broadcasts, 29 ads were informative in nature. The

use of sexuality and sexual stereotypes diminished from 16 in the previous sample year to only

three. This change was the most significant between any two studied years. Further, the degree of

sexuality decreased. Of the three sexual spots of note, the characters were fully clothed unlike

the previous studied year in which women frequently appeared in bikinis and a man in his

underwear. Here, the characters, three women and one man, were depicted as sexy because they

were attractive people with some help from the wardrobe department. For example, in the

commercial titled Hyundai: *Ryanville*, celebrity actor and handsome male Ryan Reynolds plays

every role in town as two average-to-attractive women drive around in their Hyundai.

Everywhere they drive, Ryan appears as various people in masculine careers or activities. He

plays football, works construction, walks dogs, rides a bike, and makes a traffic stop as a police

officer, all while flirting with the women by smiling at them. This distracts the women. He is

physically attractive, charming, and sexy but in a more subtle, creative way.

    In another example, two attractive women in Buick: *Big Day* compete to catch the bridal

bouquet during a wedding reception. The upscale women are physically fit and wear sexy

cocktail dresses and high heels. Once the bouquet is tossed, they compete like professional

football players and tackle one another to the ground. The beautiful model/actress Emily

Ratajkowski grabs the bouquet and tosses it to New York Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham

Jr. The ad combines sport, competition, comedy, celebrity, and sexual appeal. The featured male

celebrities in the crowd wear suits. The spot juxtaposes an upscale crowd and event with against-

gender-type, physical behavior by the women.

In the third example of sexual undertones, a young female spy dresses in a suggestive manner by wearing a sexy schoolgirl skirt. Machine Zone: *Mobile Strike Fight* is a video game that comes to life like a live-action movie. The ad features celebrity actor Arnold Schwarzenegger in a nice business suit ready to take on any bad guy or physical threat. The smart and athletic female keeps up physically with her male counterparts although she does it in a mini skirt. She uses a pink knuckle duster, also known as brass knuckles, as her weapon. Although no blatant sexuality was used, her attire helps communicate her gender amidst a physically masculine backdrop. Her athleticism contradicts her feminine appearance of a sexy schoolgirl.

As in 2013, *gender role reversals* continued to emerge as a subtheme. A few ads featured men participating in traditionally feminine behavior. In JUBLIA: *Best Kept Secret*, three former NFL sport celebrities received spa pedicures. Amidst a sports commentating backdrop, the three men are dressed in robes showing concern over the health of their toenails. The commercial clearly plays on male-female role contrasts to create a comedic ad. In Snickers: *Marilyn*, celebrity actor Willem Dafoe plays a grumpy unpoised Marilyn Monroe on the film set of *The Seven Year Itch*. Once he eats a Snickers, he transforms into a beautiful, sexy version of Marilyn in her iconic white dress.

Consistently, men portrayed the roles of heroes and dorky/geeky guys. Only one middle-aged mom was portrayed as quirky in Butterfinger: *Bolder Than Bold Jump.* More spots portrayed men as gullible, dorky, or dumb. For example, in Doritos: *Ultrasound*, a pregnant woman is in the hospital getting an ultrasound. Rather than helping or supporting his wife, the husband is more interested in eating Doritos and teasing the fetus with the chips. The pregnant woman, along with her female doctor, seems to know better the gravity of the moment than the

clueless, goofy male. When the wife grabs the chip away from the husband and throws it from the hospital bed, the baby shoots out of the vaginal canal to catch it.

Overall, 2016 commercials portrayed fewer dorky/geeky men and fewer sexualized women. Conversely, more women were seen as physically strong characters than in the previous sample year. In addition, seven ads directly challenged traditional gender roles by reversing the expected narrative or by showing both men and women participating in the same activities in the same general manner: Jeep: *4x4ever*, Axe: *Find Your Magic*, FitBit: *Dualities*, MINI USA: *Defy Labels*, Advil: *Distant Memory*, Michelob: *Breathe*, and Toyota: *The Longest Chase*. This helped to support another subtheme titled *redefining labels*.

In Jeep: *4x4ever*, FitBit: *Dualities*, Advil: *Distant Memory*, and Michelob: *Breathe*, men and women are shown in equally active forms. Both sexes drive Jeep 4x4s, and both sexes work out physically in FitBit, Advil, and Michelob. Advancing the narrative of equality, MINI USA: *Defy Labels*, features sports celebrity Serena Williams and other celebrities to help defy traditional gender labels. They do this by comparing the stereotypes people hold about them personally in context to the Mini car. Tennis star Williams says, "This is a chick car" while she stands in a strong pose in front of the vehicle. Next, U.S. female soccer star Abby Wambach says, "This is a gay car." Like each individual, the car is to be seen as more than a label. In Axe: *Find Your Magic*, traditional ideas of masculinity are challenged. The spot features a dorky/geeky-looking man, an awkward curly-red-haired teen, a man dancing in drag, and a tough guy with kittens. An average-to-attractive woman is shown to like the dorky, less physically strong man. The ad implies that it is OK for men to be something other than strong and handsome.

As previously mentioned, most ads engaged in a cross-section of appeals and gender portrayals. In Coca-Cola: *Hulk vs Ant-Man*, the superhero characters are portrayed as comedically competitive. At the end of the ad, Paul Rudd as Ant-Man says to The Hulk that he has "the greenest eyes" while The Hulk drinks a mini-can of Coke with his pinky extended. The unexpected role reversals of physically strong superheroes acting in a feminine manner creates a comic effect. The celebrity voice of Rudd as Ant-Man adds another appeal layer.

Product Categories

The order of the top five products shifted slightly from the historical order and 2013 ranking. The following is the order for 2016: services/products (19), TV broadcasts (18), automotive and food/beverages tied (11 each), financial services (6), and alcoholic beverages (5).

Historical Order	**2016 Order**
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Automotive & Food/beverages
4) Auto and related products	4) Financial services
5) Financial services	5) Alcoholic beverages

The 2016 Super Bowl commercials followed suit with the 2013 trend of increased service and product advertisements, making it the number one spot. Food and beverages fell sharply to tie with automotive in the number three spot, leaving alcoholic beverages in the number five position. Four pharmaceutical commercials aired in 2016, which turned out to be an atypical category for the Super Bowl. No other sample year aired any pharmaceutical ads. The internal rearranging of product categories does not appear to generate any additional gender-related patterns. Rather, gender portrayals seem dependent upon the advertisers' concepts, not merely

the category—with the exception of alcoholic beverages due to the legal age requirements of those appearing in the ad. Additionally, the NFL ran three promotional spots, which was more than any other year.

Summarized Findings for 2016

Overall, the ads in 2016 departed from traditional gender stereotypes in showing no overt sexuality and displayed greater sexual subtlety. A handful of ads challenged male and female sex roles by attempting to redefine labels. 70 types of male characters emerged while 38 female roles emerged, thus demonstrating a greater overall variety of role portrayals by both sexes compared to 2013. More products and services were advertised along with TV broadcasts. Eight ads had no women present, and 11 ads featured non-human characters. Six couples were featured. Each couple was presented as heterosexual with one man and one woman. The role of celebrity remained a leading theme alongside comedic tone. Competition, sports, and athleticism were embedded throughout.

Findings: 2019

In general, the ads in 2019 continued many of the themes and trends established in 2016. Overt sexuality transitioned to even fewer sexualized characters and featured greater subtlety, making innuendo a new way to communicate. Men and boys portrayed fewer types of characters than the previous year with 43 roles, and women and gils played 34 different types. Men continued to be depicted as dorky/dumb, but to a lesser degree. Ten heterosexual couples were featured across product categories. The role of celebrity remained a leading component alongside comedic tone. More ads used an emotional appeal by featuring real-life people in real-life events. Competition, sports, and athleticism continued to emerge especially for women in athletic activities. Services and products remained in the top spot and alcoholic beverages rose to tie

food/beverages in the number three position. Commercials continued the 2016 trend to promote

more than one product or service per spot.

Table 3

Number of Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads in 2019 by Role Category

Role Category	Male	Female
Voice-Over	33	6
Celebrity	21	13
Lead	22	17
Vocalist	9	3

Role Portrayals, Themes & Subthemes

Compared to 2016 where men played 70 character types and women portrayed 38

character types, 2019 showed a significant decrease in the variety of male roles. Male roles

dropped from 70 to 43. Female roles remained about the same with only a slight decrease from

38 to 34. Several of the roles were played by both men and women, e.g., cruise passengers, nosy

neighbors, office workers, journalists, and store owners. Though both genders played the roles, it

remained easy to distinguish the two sexes based on clothing and mannerisms.

The following is a list of 43 male characters featured in 2019: celebrity, office worker,

homeowner, nosy neighbor, husband, waiter, spokesperson/expert, rap artist, king, knight,

factory worker, bellhop, elevator rider, M&M, shark, narrator, robot, average man, distinguished

man, friend, cruise passenger, fox, working dad, Mr. Peanut, neighbor, boyfriend, professional,

scientist, fit man, real person, roommate, commentator, medieval barber, child, policeman,

firefighter, runner, store owner, journalist, dad, newscaster, wagon driver, coach.

The following is a list of 34 female characters. As shown in Figure 3, many roles also appear in the male character list: celebrity, office worker, nosy neighbor, wife, diner patron, dancer, knight, expert, spy, elevator rider, suburban mom, mermaid, shark, robot, smart female, cruise passenger, housewife, teenage daughter, real person, girlfriend, scientist, commentator, queen, queen's attendant, child, paramedic, runner, entrepreneur, spokesperson/expert, store owner, journalist, daughter, football player, showgirl.

Figure 3

Side-By-Side Word Clouds of Male and Female Roles in 2019 Super Bowl Advertisements

Note. Male roles are on the left and female roles are on the right.

Sexual appeals continued to be used sparingly. No bikini-clad women or half-dressed male models appeared. Like 2016, ads in 2019 used a more subtle approach to sexuality. For example, in the 15-second spot for Persil ProClean: *The Deep Clean Level*, sexual innuendo emerges when discussing the secret to Persil's ability to clean. The fit, handsome male spokesperson is dressed nicely in a white tuxedo jacket, black bow tie, and black pants. He is the charismatic, middle-aged, handsome expert with clean-cut looks and brownish-gray hair. The

younger female and male scientists in the lab are dressed all in white and there to learn. The

female scientist wears glasses and her long brown hair pulled back into a low ponytail. The male

scientist listens but does not speak. At the end, the female scientist asks the spokesman in a

suggestive manner, "What's your deepest secret?" to which he replies in a professional manner,

"Keep it clean, Rhonda."

In Wix.com: *Let People Find You*, celebrity female supermodel and entrepreneur Karlie

Kloss shows the audience how to make their businesses visible online. She is young, beautiful,

and well-spoken with long blond hair. She wears a casual fitted T-shirt and small earrings. She

shows photos of herself with more glamorous looks on her computer screen. She is both brains

and beauty. She is the entrepreneurial expert. The ad uses an active appeal even though Karlie

Kloss is a sexually appealing individual because of her physical attractiveness and career as a

supermodel. This ad demonstrates a subtle approach to sexuality and redefines labels by

highlighting a beautiful female as a business entrepreneur.

Only one ad in 2019 used sexuality in an intentional way. In DEVOUR Foods: *Food

Porn*, an attractive heterosexual couple describes the boyfriend's addiction to food. The woman

is the smart one, caring, and supportive. She has long brown hair and wears a sweater, white

shirt, and jeans. In one instance, she uses her sex appeal as a tactic to help break the boyfriend

from his food addiction. In that moment, she wears a sexy nightgown and is shown in the

bedroom. He wears sweat clothes and has short brown hair, a short beard, and mustache. He is

disheveled. She speaks throughout. He is only able to communicate his frustration through grunts

and groans. The characters act in a serious manner, which creates a comedic effect. Although this

male character can be categorized as dorky/dumb because he does not have the answers to fix his

problem, fewer dorky/dumb men were featured in general.

As a contrast to *dorky/dumb males* and *celebrity appeal*, more *real people* were featured. In 2019 *non-celebrities* playing themselves communicated through emotional/inspirational appeals. In Xbox: *We All Win*, several young video gamers with physical disabilities were featured. All are real people, not actors. The one main boy appears with his real-life mom and dad. Mom is the primary caregiver. The dad/husband speaks about his son and gets choked up with emotion. This behavior contradicts his tough, masculine exterior, which includes a bald head, deep voice, overweight physique, and gray beard. The mom smiles and looks on as her husband speaks. All kids and adults wear casual clothes typically worn inside the home.

In Verizon: *The Coach That Wouldn't Be Here: Anthony Lynn,* Coach Lynn of the Los Angeles Chargers explains that without the help of the first responders, he would not have survived an automobile accident in 2005. The individuals introduce themselves to him as the people who helped: two male police officers and one female EMT. Likewise, in Verizon: *The Team That Wouldn't Be Here*, real-life first responders are featured as those who helped save 11 NFL players including coach Anthony Lynn. These real events and real people inspired a 12-part docuseries by Peter Berg. Most responders were male, and the coach and all players were male. Every person was portrayed as professional, caring, and down-to-earth. The appeal was emotional.

Toyota RAV4 Hybrid: *Toni* celebrates female athleticism in a masculine culture. Real person and female athlete Antoinette "Toni" Harris was the first female player in the NFL. The ad shows her working hard in races and workouts to overcome gender stereotypes and obstacles. She does not wear makeup. She has a nose piercing and small stud earrings. The roles of Toni as a young girl and Toni now show her wearing workout clothes and football uniforms. She wears her hair up in a bun away from her face. This ad merges real people, competition, sports,

athleticism, gender role reversals, and redefining labels. This ad is an example of femvertising, that is, one that intentionally sets out to empower females.

Taking femvertising, competition, sports, athleticism, gender role reversals, and redefining labels a step further, is celebrity/athlete Serena Williams in Bumble: *The Ball is in Her Court*. Considered the greatest tennis player of all time (GOAT), Serena Williams is seen playing different strong feminine roles throughout her life. She works in the office, shows a photo of her getting married to her husband, and is shown as an adult and child on the tennis court. She shows femininity by wearing long curly hair, hoop earrings, and a white tennis skirt. Her voice and demeanor communicate confidence and strength. This ad encourages women to take the lead within the online dating space. This behavior challenges the traditional narrative of men being the ones responsible to initiate the first move in romantic encounters.

Additionally, more ads featured smart women that did not rely upon men to solve problems or take the lead. In Olay: *Killer Skin*, actress/celebrity Sarah Michelle Gellar, known for playing the role of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and her boyfriend are scared inside their home. A masked, male killer enters the house in horror-movie style. She is the beauty product expert and is able to stop the killer with her beautiful skin. In Turkish Airlines: *The Journey,* a beautiful, upscale female spy with long blond hair boards Turkish Air. Her profession requires that she surveil a person of interest. She acts alone. In M&M's: *Bad Passengers*, actress/celebrity Christina Applegate drives her car through a nice, suburban neighborhood as three male voices argue in the backseat. She wears nice, casual clothing, earrings, and has her long blond hair styled up in a ponytail. When she loses her cool, she stops the car and turns around to see three, squished male M&M's in the backseat. The male kids/M&M's are annoying and mom must put a stop to their bad behavior. No husband or boyfriend is present.

Traditional family units were also featured in several ads. In Mint Mobile: *Chunky-Style Milk? That's Not Right*, a contemporary version of a 1950s style, *Leave It to Beaver* family plays on the TV. The wife is a loving mom and housewife, the daughter is a smiling teenager with long blond hair, and the husband is a working dad with a tie and receding hairline. This nuclear family is shown playing traditional gender roles within a comedic context.

Many ads, as in 2013 and 2016, featured celebrities as the leading characters. Acting as themselves, the following is a partial list: Michael Bublé for bubly (sparkling water), Steve Carell, Cardi B, and Lil John in Pepsi, 2 Chainz in Expensify, Backstreet Boys and Chance the Rapper in Doritos, Bo Jackson for Sprint, Andy Warhol for Burger King, Serena Williams for Bumble, Karlie Kloss for Wix.com, Tony Romo for SKETCHERS, Ludacris in Mercedes-Benz, Zoe Kravitz for Michelob, and Alex Rodriguez and Charlie Sheen in Planters.

Product Categories

Slightly different from the product orders in 2013 to 2016, the following are the top five product categories for 2019: services/products (29), TV broadcasts (18), food/beverages & alcoholic beverages (9 each), automotive (6), and financial services (2).

Historical Order	2019 Order
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Food/beverage & Alcoholic beverages
4) Auto and related products	4) Automotive
5) Financial services	5) Financial services

Of all four sample years, 2019 presented the most ads for alcoholic beverages. Bud Light ran a total of four ads that continued the same medieval theme in each. The ads featured masculine

male knights, the King, and the Queen. One smart female knight with long, reddish-brown hair wore a female version of the traditional knight uniform, including a skirt to show her legs and differentiate her from the men with covered legs. She was portrayed as the smart knight, coming up with the best ideas. At the end of the second quarter, Bud Light integrated another product in line with their medieval theme, the HBO *Game of Thrones* series. In Bud Light: *Game of Thrones: Jousting Match*, the King and Queen watch a jousting match as a female attendant serves the Queen a drink. On his fighting horse, the Bud Light Knight is dressed in full armor with his face covered. His voice is very low and deep. A fire-breathing dragon flies in and scares the crowd causing the women to scream and all run away. As the knight dies on the ground, the final season of *Game of Thrones* season is announced. Men participate in physically challenging fighting roles and women participate in a variety of domestic roles. *Blurring the lines* as a subtheme emerges when Bud Light and HBO team up in this ad. *Competition, sports, and athleticism*, *traditional marriage*, *supportive wife*, and *man as hero* all intertwine in this 60-second spot. Conversely, Budweiser's ad in the fourth quarter presented their iconic Clydesdales and Dalmatian dog. Two men, dressed as coach-drivers, drove the wagon in the rugged outdoors. No women were present.

Other alcoholic beverage brands included: Stella Artois, BON & VIV's Spiked Seltzer, and Michelob. In Stella Artois: *Change Up the Usual*, actress/celebrity Sarah Jessica Parker as her character Carrie Bradshaw in *Sex in the City*, and actor/celebrity Jeff Bridges as "The Dude" Lebowski from *The Big Lebowski*, both drink the product Stella Artois in a swanky restaurant/bar. Though they both drink the same beer in the same location, she wears a sparkly high-end dress and hat with her hair and makeup fully styled. She is extremely feminine with long luscious hair and jewelry pieces. All notice her as she walks in. The Dude wears dark

sunglasses, a comfortable sweater, T-shirt, comfy pants, sandals, and a wedding ring. He is handsome with medium-length gray hair, a mustache and goatee, and personable charm. Another character, the older distinguished Stella man, agrees with their choice of drink. He wears a green and black tux jacket and has gray hair with a manicured gray beard and mustache. The two men dress and act as charming older men. The woman appears comfortable with her single status and feminine charms. Celebrity appeal and gender differences are utilized.

BON & VIV's Spiked Seltzer and Michelob take on other approaches to advertise their products. In BON & VIV's Spiked Seltzer: *The Pitch,* the female product creators appear as mermaids underwater. They both speak about their new product in the style of *Shark Tank*. They are beautiful and smart. Michelob features a gender-neutral robot in Michelob: *Robots* and musician/celebrity Zoe Kravitz as a contemporary spokesperson in Michelob: *The Pure Experience*.

Another example of promoting two brands in one spot is found in T-Mobile: *Lyfted* and T-Mobile: *What's for Dinner?* T-Mobile: *Lyfted* shows a text conversation between two people in which the man named Mike mistakes the texter, the Lyft driver, as a friend consoling him in his time of need. In T-Mobile: *What's for Dinner?* the boyfriend, to avoid conflict, allows the girlfriend named Kristi to choose dinner. In this case, she chooses sushi, but the ad states that Taco Bell has teamed up with T-Mobile for free tacos on Tuesdays. Combining more than one product or service blurs the lines between categories. In the examples of T-Mobile, food/beverages and services are intertwined with the technology and communication company. This trend of blurring the lines emerged in 2016 and continued in 2019.

Summarized Findings for 2019

In summary, the ads in 2019 continued many of the themes and trends established in 2016. Overt sexuality transitioned to fewer sexualized characters, greater subtlety, and innuendo. Men portrayed fewer types of characters than the previous year with 43 roles, and women played 34 types of roles. Men continued to be depicted as dorky/dumb, but to a lesser degree. Ten heterosexual couples were featured across product categories. The role of celebrity remained a leading component alongside comedic tone. More ads used an emotional appeal by featuring real-life people in connection with real-life events. Competition, sports, and athleticism continued to emerge especially with females participating in more athletic activities. Services and products remained in the top spot and alcoholic beverages rose to tie food/beverages in the number three position. The 2016 trend to promote more than one product or service per spot continued.

Findings: 2022

Overall, the gap between the number of men and women in each role category narrowed in Super Bowl LVI. The ads aired in 2022 featured 29 male celebrities and 19 female celebrities, up from the previous year, which had 21 male celebrities and 13 female celebrities. There were also more vocalists in 2022 than in any of the previous three sample years with 15 male vocalists and 14 female vocalists. Table 4 shows that the number of female leads fell just below their male counterparts with 12 female leads compared to 16 male leads. Collectively, including the vocalist category, these numbers show a tightening of the gender gap. The area with the widest gap remains in the voice-over category with 22 male voice-overs compared to five female voice-overs. These findings align with previous research that men are perceived as the voices of

authority in commercial advertising (Bretl & Cantor, 1988).

Table 4

Number of Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads in 2022 by Role Category

Role Category	Male	Female
Voice-Over	22	5
Celebrity	29	19
Lead	16	12
Vocalist	15	14

Role Portrayals, Themes & Subthemes

The 2022 ads communicated approximately the same variety of roles for both sexes. As shown in Figure 4, males and females share some cross-over roles and differ in other roles. The following is a list of 50 male characters in 2022: celebrity, football player, clown, professional, actor, lost traveler, hunter, Irish community member, renegade, bartender, partygoer, spokesperson/expert, son, husband, groom, college kid, old man, friend, real person, father, average male, rancher, astronaut, neighbor, Dr. Evil, assistant, staff member, mayor, consumer, choir singer, special ops, homeowner, boy, bowler, football fan, hip male, Julius Caesar, baby boy, businessman, hero, sailor, brother, nerdy adult son, tailgater, Zeus, restaurant owner, karaoke singer, spouse, employee, shopper.

Though many roles are unique to the male sex, many roles were duplicated within the female character list. The following is a list of 49 female characters featured in 2022 ads: celebrity, frail grandma, clown, spokesperson/expert, actress, gatherer, Irish community member, renegade, traveler, daughter, wife, bride, corpse bride, real person, suburban mom, girlfriend, average female, rancher, German spy, staff member, consumer, choir singer, singer, recording

artist, special ops, homeowner, tour guide, girl, bowler, football fan, flight attendant, tax expert,

Cleopatra, model, businesswoman, poker player, entrepreneur, doctor, birdwatcher, oversharing

mom, tailgater, Zeus's wife, daredevil/fortune, cowboy, shop owner, candle seller, spouse,

friend, shopper.

Figure 4

Side-By-Side Word Clouds of Male and Female Roles in 2022 Super Bowl Advertisements

Note. Male roles are on the left and female roles are on the right.

The 2022 ads showed shifts in how sexuality was communicated. Rather than using

sexual innuendo as modeled in 2019, or overtly sexual portrayals as in 2013, 2022 yielded zero

sexual innuendos and zero overtly sexualized characters. Instead, sexy women were also smart,

fit, and played by celebrities. Men communicated subtle sexuality that was embedded in their

charisma, confident deliveries, fit bodies, and celebrity status. Examples of smart, sexy women

included: Salma Hayek as Zeus's wife Hera, Halle Berry as Caesar's wife Cleopatra, Zendaya as

Sally for Squarespace, and Mary J. Blige as herself in Hologic, Inc. Examples of smart,

handsome men included: Matthew McConaughey in Salesforce, J. B. Smoove as Julius Caesar in

Caesars Entertainment, and Idris Elba for Booking.com. All three men were attractive, well-spoken, and charming as leading men/spokespersons/experts.

Supportive wife/mom continued with Salma Hayek as the wife of Zeus, Halle Berry as the supportive wife of Julius Caesar, and the supportive wife/mother in Pringles: *Stuck In*. Cue Health: *Meet Cue* featured a smart, practical, and nurturing mom to her young son. Overall, fewer ads featured mom/mother roles compared to female portrayals in 2013; seven mom roles were featured in 2013 and four were portrayed in 2022.

This was the only year that illustrated non-binary gender role portrayals. Two women dressed and behaved in a more gender-neutral manner. Awkwafina, a young actress/rapper/comedian, played the office guide in Disney+: *All The GOATs*. She was quirky with long black hair and a low, raspy voice. She wore black pants, tennis shoes, a short blazer, and no jewelry. She exhibited both feminine and masculine qualities. In Frito-Lay: *Push It*, a woman with short hair watched birds out in the forest. She was dressed in a masculine/gender neutral fashion. She wore a dark gray windbreaker, light gray pants, binoculars, small diamond earrings, hiking shoes, and no makeup, an attire suitable for men and women. She did not speak.

The ads in 2022 continued to challenge gender norms through *gender role reversals* and *redefining labels.* Women played strong leading roles in two ads centered around gaming and gambling. In Rakuten: *High Stakes*, two diverse women, one upper-class and one middle-class, competed against one other in a high stakes card game in a luxury casino. The upscale gambler was played by actress Hannah Waddingham. She presented a snooty air and held her hairless cat at the table. She wore a sexy, black strapless dress, long black gloves, and expensive diamond jewels. She had short platinum blond hair with glamorous makeup. She loses her entire bet to a more down-to-earth, smarter woman who wears a fuchsia dress, a long gold necklace, a small

watch, simple earrings, and glasses. Her hair is dark and long and pulled back into a ponytail.

Men play secondary characters without any lines. Likewise, in DraftKings: *Fortune: Life's a Gamble*, a young, sexy woman is dressed in a shiny, black bodysuit with long black cornrows. She wears dark, gothic makeup, black fingernail polish, and black and gold jewelry. She is referred to as "Fortune" and plays the role of a daredevil and expert. Sport celebrity Joe Namath waits for her in a sports car on a football field wearing an oversized fur coat. She gets in and they race away together.

Two ads showed men and boys participating in activities traditionally regarded as female: singing musical theatre songs and playing with dolls. In T-Mobile Home Internet: *A Duet for Home Internet*, actors Zach Braff and Donald Faison from the comedy series *Scrubs* sing to the tune of "I Feel Pretty" from the musical *West Side Story*. As male neighbors, they both wear casual clothing in neutral colors. Both men have short hair and are cleanly shaven. Donald is the expert and teaches Zach about the product. Both men happily dance back to their houses. Further, in Rocket Mortgage: *Barbie's Dream House*, two young girls and two young boys play together at Barbie's Dreamhouse. The boys play with male dolls representing male house buyers while the girls play with female house buyers. At the end, one boy and one girl play together with Skeletor and Sorceress dolls at a scary castle. Men/boys in both commercials appear as men/boys, although they are participating in traditional female activities.

The subtheme *man as hero* continued with Kia: *Robo Dog*, Disney +: *Moon Knight*, and Nissan: *Presenting: Thrill Driver*. In Kia: Robo Dog, a lonely little robot dog wanders the city streets. The hero, a handsome male with short brown hair and a short, manicured beard and mustache saves the day by taking the puppy home. The male actor regularly plays the lead in romantic Hallmark Channel movies. In Disney +: *Moon Knight*, the leading male attempts to

save the world. *Moon Knight* is produced by Marvel Studios, which tells stories of superheroes. In Nissan: *Presenting: Thrill Driver* comedian/actor Eugene Levy becomes the hero in a feature film movie. As the hero, he has long, styled salt-and-pepper hair, a black leather jacket, manicured facial hair, an earring, a hand tattoo, and a macho attitude to match.

Men also showed their softer, more domestic sides. Actor Seth Green as Dr. Evil's son Scott from the movie *Austin Powers* played a caring, new father in General Motors: *EV-erybody in*. Throughout the ad, he carries his new baby in a carrier on his chest. He wears neutral brown colors with a partially gray goatee and long sideburns. He defends himself and his baby against his own dysfunctional father and dumb villain, Dr. Evil.

The trend of featuring real people and their true-life stories continued from 2019 to 2022. In Toyota: *Brothers*, brothers Brian and Robin McKeever are shown growing up. They are seen being active, playing games, riding bikes, skiing, and working out. They are typical boys doing traditional male activities. Later a female doctor gives them the bad news that Brian has Stargardt disease, which means he is losing his sight. Robin acts as Brian's sighted guide at that point and they later earn 10 Paralympic medals together. Wallbox USA: *Embrace Electricity Again* features the real story of Seth, an average man who survived being struck by lightning.

The theme of *dorky/dumb males* continued with celebrity comedians Larry David, Kevin Hart, actor Ty Burrell, and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Each were depicted as dumb or gullible. Older, balding comedian Larry David continually made bad choices in FTX: *Don't Miss Out*. Comedian Kevin Hart acted like a VIP in Sam's Club VIP. Little did he know that Sam's Club treats all customers that way. In Greenlight Financial Technology: *I'll Take It*, actor Ty Burrell buys everything he desires and goes broke. Arnold Schwarzenegger as Zeus in BMW: *Zeus &*

Hera, has difficulty harnessing his electric powers in the modern world. His wife Hera helps

restore his powers by buying him an electric BMW.

The 2022 ads also featured older characters and celebrities. Older male celebrity Morgan

Freeman played the distinguished smart spokesperson/expert for Turkish Airlines and older

female celebrity Dolly Parton as herself in two T-Mobile spots. Including prominent older

celebrities indicates a departure from the younger characters in most commercials.

Traditional heterosexual marriages and family units were featured in 2022. In Pringles*:*

Stuck In, a loving wife sticks by her husband from marriage to death. In Booking.com: *Idris Says*

Things, a family of four, a mother, father, young daughter, and young son, are featured playing

cards together inside a cabin. In Amazon, Inc.: *Mind Reader,* Scarlett Johansson and Colin Jost, a

real-life married celebrity couple, play themselves.

A slight variation of traditional marriage was illustrated in Caesars Entertainment: *I Said*

Legendary. Actor J. B. Smoove plays the role of Caesar and Halle Berry plays his wife

Cleopatra. During a dinner party with sports celebrities Peyton Manning, Archie Manning,

Cooper Manning, and Eli Manning, confident Caesar adorned with flashy gold accessories and a

gold robe sits and converses at the head of the table. Cleopatra, referred to as Cleo, is sexy,

beautiful, and smart. Seated at the other head of the table, she converses as well. She is

glamorous and wears a low-cut gold dress and expensive jewelry. She is the brains behind his

success. When a guest compliments Caesar about the look of the Caesar Superdome, he states

that "It was all Cleo's idea," giving her full credit.

One ad departed from traditional heterosexual marriages and couples. In Google Pixel:

Lizzo in Real Tone, a same-sex couple was featured amongst a collage of still photos. This was

the only ad in the decade that portrayed two women together in an amorous manner.

Competition, sports, and athleticism continued as a strong theme throughout in multiple ads. In Hellmann's Best Foods: *Mayo Tackles Food Waste*, Linebacker Jerod May tackled various people including an old frail grandma and comedian Pete Davidson. In Michelob: *Welcome to Superior Bowl*, Serena Williams struts into a bowling alley to challenge all the male and female sports professionals in a game of bowling. In *Avocados from Mexico: Always Good*, athletic Roman era men and women act like barbarians during a tailgate party at The Colosseum in Italy.

Product Categories

Compared to the previous sample year, services and products continued to gain traction while food and beverages dropped to fourth position. This was the only year that food/beverages ranked this low. Automotive increased slightly into the third position and alcoholic beverages dropped into the fifth spot. The following are the top five categories for 2022: services/products (33), TV broadcasts (12), automotive (11), food/beverages (7), and alcoholic beverages (6).

Historical Order	2022 Order
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Automotive
4) Auto and related products	4) Food/beverages
5) Financial services	5) Alcoholic beverages

Some brands provided both services and products under one umbrella. As brands merged, category lines became blurred. This cross-over effect made it more difficult to decipher specific trends across established product categories. Several brands promoted more than one product including apps, services, products, communications, health, subscriptions, crypto/financial, and

technology sectors. Two examples of this blending in 2022 include Amazon Prime Video: *Thursday Night Football* and Vroom.com: *Flake*. Amazon Prime Video is a streaming service and Thursday Night Football is a part of the NFL franchise. This merger blends two products from two different companies: a streaming service and a television broadcast. Likewise, Vroom.com is a company that sells cars, although it is also a service and app. Vroom.com can be considered an *emerging product* that *blurs the lines* because it does not fit neatly into the automotive category. Hologic, Inc. and Cue Health also illustrate emerging products and blurring the lines. Each are new products that can be categorized as health products, wellness services, technological devices, or pharmaceuticals. The lines become blurred because they do not fit neatly into one pre-established category.

The automotive category moved up one level from 2019. No year-specific patterns emerged although four ads promoted electric vehicles and electric power. Both men and women drove vehicles. The only auto ad that flipped traditional portrayals was for Chevrolet: *New Generation*. The ad recreates the iconic opening of the TV show *The Sopranos*. Actress/celebrity Jaime-Lynn Sigler drives an EV Truck through the city to pick up her male co-star.

Summarized Findings for 2022

In summary, 2022 exhibited the power of celebrity intertwined with comedy and competition. Two ads featured non-celebrities (i.e., real people). Men continued to play dorky/dumb roles, though mostly cross-listed with celebrity appeal. Men also appeared as heroes and women were supportive wives/moms. The role of the *understated, smart female* illustrated more confidence and delivered more lines as did *supportive wives/moms*. Two women were portrayed in a non-binary fashion and one same-sex female couple emerged briefly. Sexuality emerged out of the embedding in celebrity personas rather than overt sexuality or through

innuendo. Some ads demonstrated gender role reversals and attemped to redefine labels. Women

were portrayed as stronger, more athletic, and willing to take the initiative with men. Men were

portrayed in softer, less athletic roles as a father caring for his baby and boys playing with dolls.

Products and services remained the top product category. As new products and services emerged

and blended categories, male and female portrayals became more interchangeable, especially in

athletic activities.

Aggregated Findings: The Decade

Overall, the decade included 279 advertisements from the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and

2022. The decade presented several shifts while at the same time remaining the same in certain

categories. Though they varied from the historical order and in every sample year, the top five

product categories for the decade were services/products (98), TV broadcasts (48),

food/beverages (46), automotive (41), and alcoholic beverages (26). Newer types of products

began to emerge, blurring category lines. Some commercials promoted two products at a time.

Historical Order for Top Five	**Decade Order for Top Five**
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Food/beverages
4) Auto and related products	4) Automotive
5) Financial services	5) Alcoholic beverages

The role of celebrity continued to grow. Competition, sports, and athleticism remained

embedded throughout. Comedic appeal remained the most popular appeal. Relationships

continued to be portrayed through heterosexual narratives except for one same-sex female couple

briefly featured in a Google ad in 2022. Sexuality progressed from overt sexuality to subtle

sexuality, to innuendo, to celebrity-embedded sexuality. Female roles were portrayed differently

in 2013 than 2022. By 2022, women were confident, strong, outspoken, quirky, and athletic in

contrast to quieter, more supportive, and overtly sexual characters in 2013. Starting in 2013

through 2022, men were depicted as dumb/dorky, heroes, and athletic. By the end of the decade,

male roles included softer, more emotional, domestic portrayals. Some ads in 2019 and 2022

showed men and women in similar roles. In certain cases, the roles were rooted in traditional

gender portrayals, while in others, the roles could be played by either sex because the activity did

not rely upon a gendered presentation. In some cases, ads intended to break stereotypes through

gender role reversals or redefining labels thus, empowering both sexes. Table 5 illustrates a

comprehensive alphabetized list of male roles for the decade and Table 6 highlights the female

roles. Bolded text signifies those roles that were played by both sexes.

Table 5

Comprehensive List of Male Roles for the Decade

academic guy	construction	karaoke singer	recruiter
actor	worker	**ketchup bottle**	**renegade**
adventurer	**consumer**	**kid**	restaurant owner
agent	**corporate**	King	**robot**
alien	**worker**	**knight**	roommate
Ant-Man	**cowboy**	lifeguard	**runner**
assistant	**cruise passenger**	lost traveler	sailor
astronaut	dad/father	magician	salesclerk
athlete	distinguished man	male in drag	**scientist**
average man	dog walker	mannequin farmer	**senior citizen**
awkward teen	dorky geek	Marilyn Monroe	**shark**
baby	Dr. Evil	Mayhem	**shopper**
bad guy	dumb guy	mayor	son
Badlander	eccentric	medieval barber	**special ops**
bank robber	**elevator rider**	middle-aged man	**spokesperson**
bartender	**employee**	**model**	**sports fan**
bear wrestler	**entrepreneur**	musician	sportscaster
beer drinker	**expert**	narrator	**spouse**
bellhop	**factory worker**	**neighbor**	**spy**
bike rider	film crew	nerd	**staff member**
boss	firefighter	nerdy adult son	**store owner**
bowler	fit man	newscaster	strong man
boy	**fitness person**	**nosy neighbor**	**tailgater**
boyfriend	**football fan**	**office worker**	**teen on a date**
breakdancer	**football player**	old man	tough guy
broadcaster	**friend**	overprotective	**tour guide**
brother	George	father	underdog
bull rider	Washington	partygoer	**wedding guest**
businessperson	grocery manager	pirate	Voodoo Daddy
car salesperson	groom	**plant worker**	wagon driver
celebrity	hero	policeman	waiter
child	hip male	**politician**	weightlifter
choir singer	**homeowner**	President	welder
clown	hunk	**princess**	woodcarver
coach	hunter	**professional**	working dad
college kid	husband	Prom King	Zeus
commentator	interviewer	protege	
community	**journalist**	**rancher**	
member	juggler	rap artist	
computer geek	Julius Caesar	**real person**	
conductor			

Note. Alphabetized list does not include animals or non-human characters. Bolded text represents roles that were played by males and females.

Table 6

Comprehensive List of Female Roles for the Decade

actress	flight attendant	Prom Queen
adventurer	**football fan**	Queen
agent	**football player**	Queen's attendant
alien	frail grandma	**rancher**
assistant	**friend**	**real person**
athlete	gatherer	recording artist
average female	Genie	**renegade**
bar patron	Frau Farbissina	**robot**
birdwatcher	girl	**runner**
bowler	girlfriend	**scientist**
bride	good luck charm	**senior citizen**
businessperson	hairstylist	sexy partier
candle seller	helpless child	**shark**
cashier	helpless old lady	**shopper**
celebrity	**homeowner**	showgirl
child	housewife	singer
choir singer	**journalist**	smart female
Cleopatra	**ketchup bottle**	**special ops**
clown	kickboxer	**spokesperson**
commentator	**kid**	spouse
community	**knight**	**spy**
member	librarian	**staff member**
concert fan	magician's	stewardess
consumer	assistant	**store owner**
corporate	makeup artist	suburban mom
worker	mermaid	**tailgater**
corpse bride	middle-aged	tax expert
cowboy	mother	teenage daughter
cruise passenger	**model**	**teen on a date**
dancer	mom/mother	**tour guide**
daredevil/fortune	**nosy neighbor**	traveler
daughter	**office worker**	yoga grandma
diner patron	oversharing mom	waitress
doctor	paramedic	**wedding guest**
elevator rider	pilot	wife
entrepreneur	**plant worker**	woman
expert	poker player	Zeus's wife (Hera)
farmer	**politician**	
fembot	pregnant spouse	
fitness person	**princess**	

Note. Alphabetized list does not include animals or non-human characters. Bolded text represents

roles that were played by males and females.

Research Question Findings

The qualitative data collected from 279 Super Bowl commercials over the past decade revealed extensive information that was used to answer the study's four research questions.

RQ 1: Has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

While some changes in the communication of gender roles were observed, the overall portrayals of gender roles continue to be complex and nuanced. The communication of gender roles has changed in that the frequency of sexual appeals and the degree of sexuality of the characters have decreased from 2013 to 2022. Now, rather than ads using sex as a primary appeal or sexual innuendos, sexuality is embedded in celebrities. Further, the role of celebrity, comedic narratives, and elements of competition remain at the core of Super Bowl commercials.

Conversely, one way in which the portrayal of gender roles has remained the same is through the presentation of traditional family units. The roles of spouses, parents, sons/daughters, and boyfriends/girlfriends continue to be communicated through heterosexual narratives. Further, men were seen and heard more often than women, and in a larger variety of roles. Men remained the dominant voice and visual for the decade though the variety of female roles has increased. Table 7 illustrates the total number of roles played by males and females by year.

Table 7

Combined Number of Roles Played by Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads by Year

Year	Male	Female
2013	46	28
2016	70	38
2019	43	34
2022	50	49
TOTAL	**209**	**149**

RQ 2: How has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

There were more celebrities and vocalists in 2022 than earlier in the decade. The gap between men and women in celebrity and leading character categories has shrunk, creating greater visibility for women than in previous years. Many roles that women and men play have become interchangeable and/or non-gender specific, especially in the newer tech ads. Equally, more ads specifically challenge traditional gender ideologies to break stereotypes and redefine labels. Many commercials show men exhibiting softer emotional traits and relying less on their physical attractiveness or strength. Men as *dorky/dumb* and *heroes* still exist, though the portrayals seem to intertwine more with celebrities. Women were shown in more athletic scenarios and exhibited more confident attitudes across character types. The role of the *understated, smart female* has become more verbally expressive. In some cases, she is quirky and outspoken, in addition to being smart.

As mentioned in RQ 1, the portrayal of sexuality has changed for men and women. Portrayals earlier in the decade showed men and women in overtly sexual scenarios, in string

bikinis and underwear. As the years progressed, the frequency of sexual appeals and the degree of sexuality decreased, creating a new subtheme, *subtle sexuality*. Sexuality in 2019 transitioned into verbal, sexual innuendos, and 2022 utilized sexuality embedded in celebrity.

The 3Cs (celebrity, comedy, and competition) provide the most popular formula for Super Bowl ads. The frequent use of celebrity blurs the line between the real-world and the made-up, mediated advertisement-world. The use of non-celebrities (real people) continues to blur lines even further. Entertainment celebrities communicated their qualities through comedic narratives whereas real people were portrayed as down-to-earth via emotional or active appeals.

Although family units remain traditional, and couples were portrayed as heterosexual, one ad in 2022 showed something different. A same-sex female couple was featured in two still photos in Google Pixel: *Lizzo in Real Tone*. Although it was brief, and within a montage of other photos of diverse people, it shows a shift in gender role portrayals.

RQ 3: *How has the communication of gender roles changed across the top five product categories in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?*

The order of the top five product categories shifted in every year studied over the past decade. This study found that, among all commercials, services/products ranked number one, television broadcasts ranked number two, food/beverages ranked number three, automotive number four, and alcoholic beverages number five. Historically ranked as number five, financial services came in at number six just behind alcoholic beverages.

Historical Order for Top Five	Decade Order for Top Five
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Food/beverages

4) Auto and related products   4) Automotive

5) Financial services   5) Alcoholic beverages

There is no clear-cut evidence that a given product type consistently communicates

gender in a certain manner. Rather, it seems to depend on the actual product and advertising

campaign, which often relies upon comedy and celebrity. Alcoholic beverage ads typically

feature single adults. They do not feature traditional family units with children because no one

under the age of 25 is permitted to act in a spot for an alcoholic beverage (Anheuser-Busch,

2019). The other four product categories regularly feature people of all ages depending upon the

brand and storyline.

This study did identify a trend with the most recent products and services in which

gender roles were portrayed in a more interchangeable manner. In comparison to ads aired in

2013, commercials later in the decade portray men and women in similar roles. In many

instances, the ads purposefully aim to empower women and men by attempting to break gender

stereotypes. In addition, many new products such as software applications, streaming platforms,

and subscription services have entered the scene. The lines have blurred between products,

services, entertainment, technology, and communication, which makes it difficult to determine a

definitive pattern based on product category. Subsequently, there is a slight blurring in the

communication of gender roles as well. Characters, less binary in nature, appeared as lead roles

in 2022. In ads for Disney+ and Frito Lay, two women dressed in a neutral manner wearing

pants, little makeup, and sneakers. The first had a raspy, low quality to her voice while the

second climbed a tree; both of which are traditionally attributed as masculine characteristics and

behaviors. The cross-over in activities and male and feminine qualities became more and more

evident as the decade progressed.

RQ 4: What gender-related themes emerge in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

As introduced at the beginning of Chapter Four, seven primary thematic patterns emerged throughout the decade. Table 8 illustrates the seven primary themes in connection to the 12 subthemes.

Table 8

Seven Primary Themes and 12 Subthemes

Primary Theme	Sub-Theme #1	Sub-Theme #2	Sub-Theme #3
#1 Celebrity Appeal	Non-celebrity (real person)		
#2 Comedic Tone	Dorky/Dumb Male	Gender Role Reversals	
#3 Competition, Sports & Athleticism			
#4 Traditional Marriage & Heterosexual Couples	Supportive Wife/Mom	Man as Hero	Understated, Smart Female
#5 Shifts in Sexuality	Overt Sexuality	Subtle Sexuality	Redefining Labels
#6 Shifts in Product Types	Historic Order Redefined	Emerging Products	Blurring the Lines
#7 Male Representation			

Thematic Pattern #1: Celebrity Appeal

Celebrity appeal proved a major player in Super Bowl advertisements. Overall, both the number of male and female celebrities more than doubled between 2013 and 2022. Male celebrities increased from 11 to 29 and female celebrities increased from eight to 19. In total, 82 male celebrities appeared in advertisements and 44 female celebrities were featured. Figure 5 illustrates a side-by-side visual comparison of celebrity appearances by gender. Celebrities, whether they are actors, sport professionals, musicians, or comedians, are regularly utilized in

Super Bowl advertising. Most played themselves although a few played characters. Most

commercials featuring celebrities utilized a comedic appeal.

Figure 5
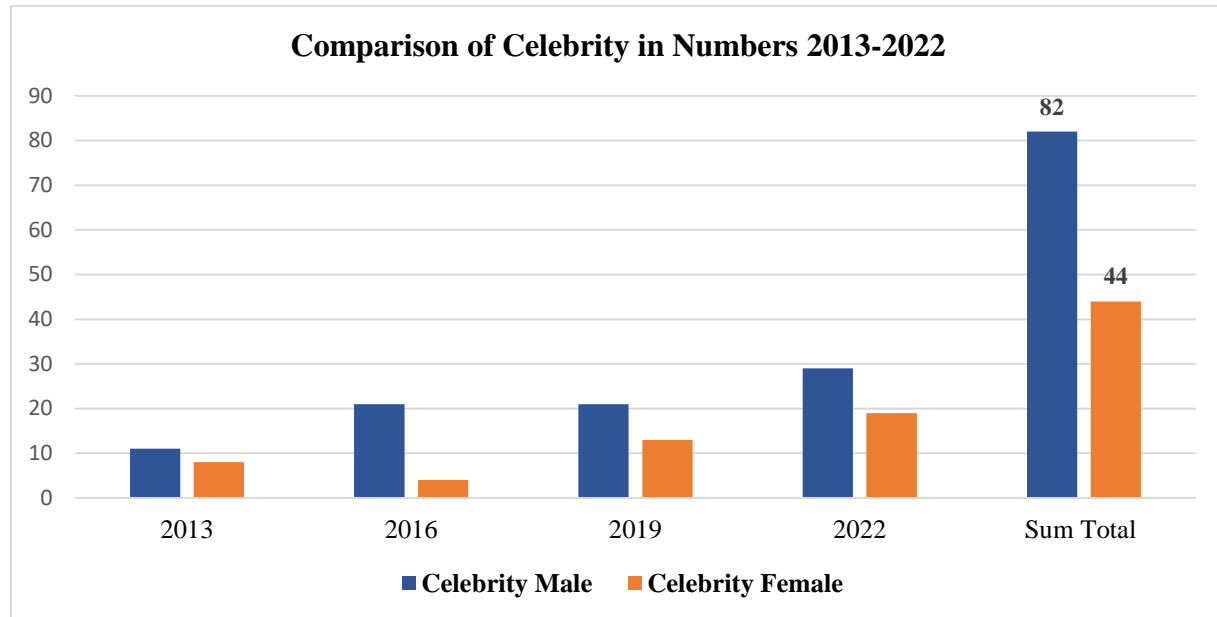
One subtheme titled *non-celebrity (real person)* emerged. In 2013, Subway featured two

ads that congratulated a real person, Jared, for keeping the weight off for 15 years. Jared was

able to lose considerable weight eating only Subway sandwiches. His act thrust him into the

national spotlight making him a modern-day hero and celebrity. Though he rose to celebrity

status, he was first a regular, ordinary person.

The subtheme continued in 2019, which featured real-life people in three ads. Similarly,

2022 featured two spots with real people. Each of these ads were presented with an emotional

appeal rather than comedic appeal, to which the role of celebrity is closely tied. No real people

were featured in the sample from 2016.

Thematic Pattern #2: Comedic Tone

Comedy proved to be the leading appeal for the decade. As shown in Figure 6, 44% of all

advertisements utilized a comedic appeal, premise, or tone. Competitive, sexual, and

emotional/inspirational appeals appeared in 10-11% of all ads, which is significantly less than comedic ads. Informational commercials, such as TV broadcasts, ranked in the second position at 24%. Advertisements for upcoming movies and television broadcasts primarily followed an informational approach, although many were layered with comedic touches. It is worth noting that a competitive narrative was present throughout the decade and often underscored the comedic characters and narratives.

Figure 6
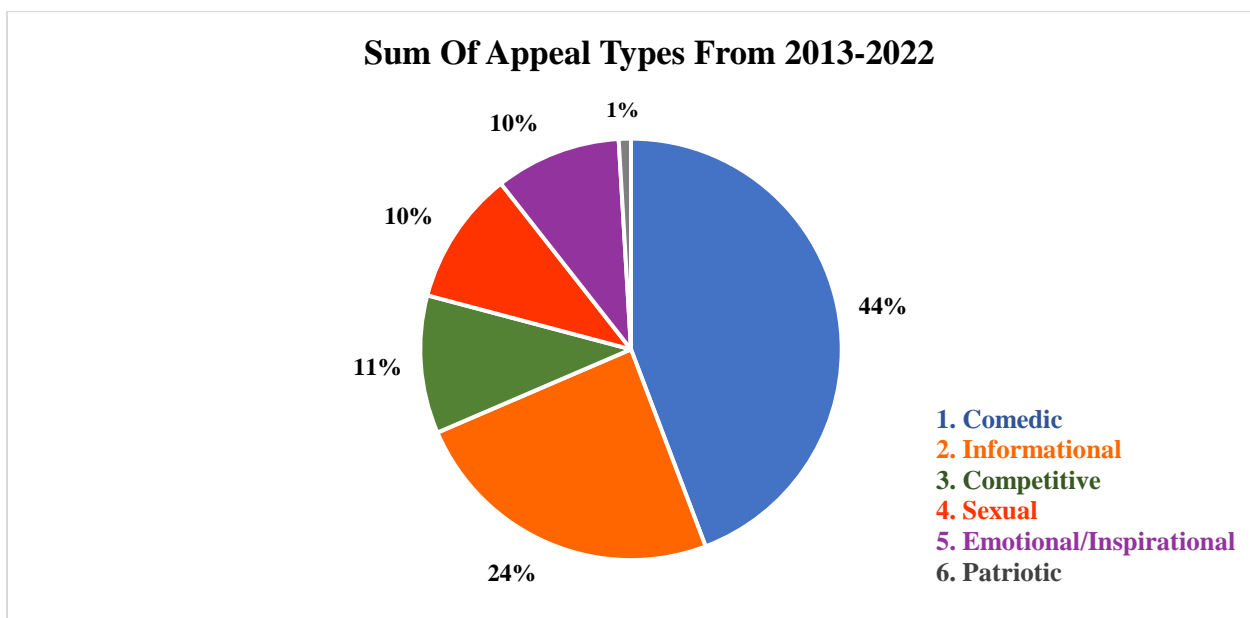
Two subthemes emerged under Comedic Tone: Subtheme #1: Dorky/Dumb Male and Subtheme #2: Gender Role Reversals. Both themes were illustrated throughout the decade.

In 2013, Century 21 ran a spot called *Life Saver*. A husband and wife are in a convenience store when they scratch off a winning lottery ticket. In their excitement, the dorky/dumb male chokes on his hotdog. The wife spots a Century 21 agent and starts discussing dream home possibilities. The smart, understated agent solves the wife's problem by becoming her realtor and saves the man from choking on the hotdog.

In 2022, similar dorky/dumb male characters were portrayed, though mostly by celebrities. Comedian Kevin Hart plays himself in an ad for Sam's Club. In Sam's Club: *VIP*, Hart shows his lack of knowledge by acting like the only VIP in the store when the premise is that all Sam's Club customers are treated as VIPs. He is dumb not to know this.

Gender role reversals were exhibited in JUBLIA: *Best Kept Secret*. Former NFL players and commentators dressed in plush white robes have their toes manicured at an upscale spa. They sat comfortably in spa chairs in anticipation of combating toe fungus with pedicures. Here, men partake in a conventional female activity.

In the 2022 ad Rakuten: *High Stakes*, two women, one upscale and one down-to-earth, sit at a poker table at a lavish casino. Typically considered a male activity, the women are the primary gamblers and leading characters in this spot.

Thematic Pattern #3: Competition, Sports & Athleticism

Most commercials utilized some element of competition, sports, or athleticism. Whether it was by featuring sport heroes, showing characters in athletic activities, using narratives based in competition, or a combination thereof, Thematic Pattern #3 was embedded throughout the decade. Numerous sport celebrities were featured across product categories. As the decade progressed, more female sport celebrities joined the ranks of male sport celebrities. Except for Pizza Hut: *Hut Hut Hut* where people of all ages and genders were shown playing a casual game of football, 2013 ads did not illustrate any women playing sports or athletic activities. In Sketchers: *Man Versus Cheetah*, a cheetah begins chasing a gazelle. Wearing Skechers, the dorky male lead is able to catch the cheetah and saves the gazelle from being eaten. He shows his athleticism and fast speed during the race.

In 2016, several commercials included both men and women participating in athletic

activities such as Advil: *Distant Memory* and Fitbit: *Dualities*. Both ads featured an array of men

and women working out and engaging in intense activities in a serious manner. In 2019, tennis

star Serena Williams promoted the dating app Bumble. In Bumble, *the Ball is in Her Court,*

Don't Wait, Williams encourages women to take the lead, defy tradition, and do not wait for ask

men to ask you out. This conversation takes place while she stands on a tennis court. Even in the

beginning of a 60-second spot with real-life celebrity couple Colin Jost and Scarlett Johannsson,

the sports theme emerges. In Amazon, Inc: *Mind Reader,* Jost tells Alexa "It's Game Day." As

the football game plays, the couple thinks competing internal narratives.

Thematic Pattern #4: Traditional Marriage & Heterosexual Couples

Traditional relationships between a man and a woman were the norm. Husbands and

wives were easy to identify because the characters wore wedding bands. Further, they often

appeared in domestic scenarios as parents, homeowners, etc. Other symbols of marriage status

included children, typically two kids, one boy and one girl. Family units were not seen in

alcoholic beverage commercials. There, men and women were portrayed as young, attractive,

and single.

Clothing played a significant role to help determine gender roles and status within the

family and heterosexual couples. Moms would typically carry a purse over their shoulders. In the

earlier years, male spouses would typically drive the family cars. Later in the decade, both men

and women were featured drivers, showing a shift from traditional norms. Table 9 shows there

were a total of 35 heterosexual couples, 1 same-sex female couple, 0 same-sex male couples, 26

non-human characters, and 6 ads without any visual characters at all. There were more non-

human characters and ads without any visual characters than same-sex couples. Zero gay male

couples appeared in any ad in any year and only one gay female couple was briefly highlighted in an ad for Google Pixel in 2022 featuring musical celebrity Lizzo.

Table 9

Number of Heterosexual Couples, Same-Sex Couples, and Non-Human Characters by Year

Year	# Of Ads Viewed	Heterosexual Married/Couple (m/f)	Same-Sex Couple (f/f)	Same-Sex Couple (m/m)	Non-Human Characters	Void Of Visual Characters
2013	57	12	0	0	0	1
2016	73	6	0	0	11	1
2019	74	10	0	0	10	2
2022	75	7	1	0	5	2
TOTAL	279	35	1	0	26	6

Three subthemes emerged under the heading Traditional Marriage and Heterosexual Couples: Subtheme #1: Supportive Wife/Mom, Subtheme #2: Man as Hero, and Subtheme #3: Understated, Smart Female.

Supportive wives and mothers were portrayed quietly in connection to their spouse or children. In the 2013 spot Kia: *Space Babies*, the wife/mother sits quietly in the passenger seat while the father drives and attempts to answer their son's question "where do babies come from?" In contrast, 2019 showed supportive wives/moms as more outspoken. In M&M's: *Bad Passengers*, actress/celebrity Christina Applegate drives the vehicle. She yells at her M&M children for arguing in the backseat and demands that they stop, or she will have to "break them apart."

Male heroes, stemming from comic book superheroes, were physically strong and dependable. Their primary duty was to save the female gender and beat the bad guy. In 2013, an

athletic lifeguard in Axe: *Lifeguard* saved a beautiful drowning woman in a string bikini. Later in 2019, male heroes took on a different look. In Verizon, *The Team that Wouldn't Be Here,* real-life first responders who saved the lives of several NFL players were featured. Most of the responders/heroes were male, although a few were female.

Understated, smart females were portrayed throughout the decade although the degree of understatement diminished. As the decade progressed, female characters were given more of a voice. In 2022, actress/celebrity Anna Kendrick played the lead consumer with real estate knowledge in Rocket Mortgage: *Barbie's Dream House*. In a smart, yet quirky manner, she teaches the children how to get the best deal on a home mortgage. Likewise, Halle Berry, in the role of Cleopatra in Caesars Entertainment: *I Said Legendary*, converses with the male guests in a confident manner. She illustrates understated poise. She is confident, beautiful, and well-spoken.

Thematic Pattern #5: Shifts in Sexuality

Over the span of the decade, the communication of sexuality shifted. Fewer commercials utilized sexual appeals, the degree of sexuality decreased, and innuendo emerged. Further, sexuality arose from the celebrities' persona. These discoveries led to the emergence of three subthemes: Subtheme #1: Overt Sexuality, Subtheme #2: Subtle Sexuality, and Subtheme #3: Redefining Labels. The actual number of ads that utilized forms of sexuality decreased by half from 16 in 2013 to eight in 2022. Figure 7 shows sexuality at its highest in 2013 at 16 and then rebounding to eight in 2022. Observing the huge drop from 16 in 2013 to three in 2016 would indicate a clear-cut shift. However, a different story comes to light when including overtly sexualized ads for the internal years 2014 and 2015. Figure 8 illustrates a more gradual departure from ads displaying overt sexuality. Starting with seven, then three, then zero is a much more

accurate picture of the transition. The data also indicate a shift in the communication of sexuality within gendered roles. The ads from 2019 utilized sexual innuendo rather than overt sexuality and characters showing skin. In 2022, elements of sexuality were portrayed with more subtlety that was often derived from the individual celebrity's sense of style and stage persona. Although the individual may appear physically attractive and dress in a somewhat suggestive manner, the appeal was not primarily sexual, but rather comedic, competitive, or active.

Figure 7

Number Of Ads With Sexual Elements By Year

Figure 8

Number Of Ads With Overt Sexuality By Year
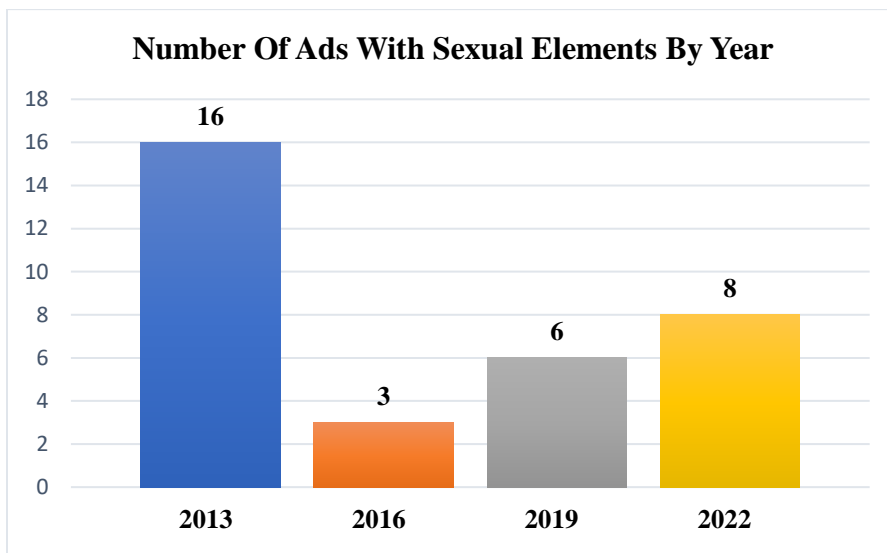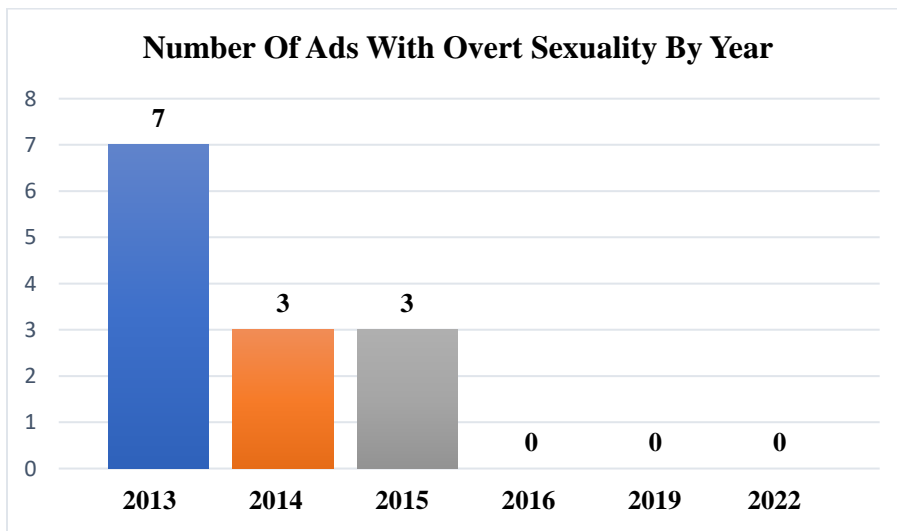
Figures 7 and 8 show a decline in occurrence though it is important to recognize that the degree of sexuality also changed. The ads in 2013 featured overtly sexual characters whereas 2016 showed more subtlety, and 2019 introduced innuendo. By 2022 sexuality was primarily embedded in celebrity personas.

As previously mentioned, in the fourth quarter of the 2013 Super Bowl, a sexy female sat on the beach eating a Carl's Jr. codfish sandwich in a seductive manner. She appeared in a skimpy, sexy bikini, with oiled, tan skin, and long blond hair. She was physically beautiful. As she licked her fingers in a suggestive manner, a sunburned man in basic swim trunks appeared from the sea. Although sunburned, he was athletic and attractive. Rather than complimenting her, he commented on her sandwich. Without speaking, she just smiled. She was sexier and smarter than he was. He was portrayed as a bit of a dork. Neither wore wedding rings suggesting that they were single. The tagline stated "Eat Like You Mean It." Through the appearance and actions of the woman, this commercial promoted the Carl's Jr. fish sandwich using a strong sexual, and partially comic, appeal. The man had a voice though the woman did not.

In contrast, in the 2022 Super Bowl no women wore bikinis nor licked their fingers in a suggestive manner. Instead, musical celebrities Miley Cyrus and Doja Cat both wore suggestive clothing in the second half of their commercials for T-Mobile and Taco Bell but to a lesser degree. Cyrus, known for her provocative attitude and attire, wore tight black pants without a blouse, leaving bare skin to show on her chest and midsection. The lack of shirt was suggestive, but not too revealing and not out of character for Cyrus. Singer Doja Cat, also young, talented, and beautiful, wore tight leather pants with a bikini top. Both played themselves and were the leading characters. In each spot, they were the problem solvers and actively supported the products T-Mobile and Taco Bell, respectively. They were sexy and beautiful, but the

advertisements did not solely rely upon sex to sell. They lent their voices as lead vocalists, which

highlighted their musical abilities and artistic expression in addition to their on-screen presence.

In 2015, Carl's Jr. promoted its all-natural burger with GUESS supermodel Charlotte

McKinney (see Appendix B). In the ad, she appears to be naked walking through a farmer's

market in a seductive manner. Various melons are strategically placed to hide her anatomy. She

garners much male attention with one man holding a streaming garden hose as he watches her

pass. The commercial ends with her revealing that she is wearing a white, string bikini top and

skimpy, white shorts. It is implied by the bounce of her breasts that she is also 'au naturel' rather

than fake. She takes a big bite out of the burger. Carl's Jr. did not air spots in 2014, 2016, 2017,

2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2022.

Like female roles, the portrayals of male roles also evolved from 2013 to 2022. The most

obvious sexual contrast can best be illustrated with the physically alluring male model Matthew

Terry in the 2013 Calvin Klein ad versus the handsome celebrity actor Matthew McConaughey

in Salesforce: *New Frontier* in 2022. In Calvin Klein: *Matthew Terry*, the appeal is clearly sexual

because the model is not wearing a shirt, which draws attention to his rock-hard abs. Shot in

black and white, the commercial highlights the male physique in branded underwear.

In contrast, McConaughey plays the role of an astronaut. He is the leading character and

fully clothed. In real-life, he is known for his charm and good looks. He is an attractive man with

masculine qualities though the sexuality is subtle. The degree of sexuality compared to the male

model in 2013 is significantly less. McConaughey's celebrity status and portrayal of a traditional

male astronaut compliments his good looks and sexual essence. Other men playing strong

masculine characters in 2022 are J. B. Smoove as Julius Caesar for Caesars Entertainment and

Idris Elba as the spokesperson for Booking.com. Both are handsome, charming, and smooth, though their sexuality is more subtle.

In addition to overt sexuality and subtle sexuality, redefining labels emerged as another shift in sexuality. As the decade progressed, advertisers made a concerted effort to create ads that challenged male and female stereotypes. Women appeared stronger, more athletic, and exhibited a "take charge" attitude. Men were depicted as softer, more emotional, less reliant on physical attractiveness, and domestic. Examples include tennis star Serena Williams in an ad for Bumble: *The Ball is in Her Court*, new father Scott in General Motors: *EV-everybody In*, and young boys in Rocket Mortgage: *Barbie's Dream House*.

In the ad for Bumble, Williams encourages women to take charge by making the first move with men on the online dating app. She is strong, athletic, and confident. The ad breaks gender traditions by showing a woman exhibiting typical masculine behavior. Likewise, in General Motors: *EV-everybody In*, the character Scott from the Austin Powers movies comes to work with his newborn baby strapped to his chest. He wears casual, earth-toned clothing, has facial hair, and lovingly pats his son throughout the commercial. He exhibits behaviors more in line with new mothers. In Rocket Mortgage: *Barbie's Dream House*, young boys and girls play together with dolls. The ad attempts to make the traditional female activity acceptable for boys by redefining traditional male and female behaviors. It is important to note that redefining labels appeared after 2013 and increased as the decade progressed.

Thematic Pattern #6: Shifts in Product Types

Each year there was a shift in the order of product types. Historically, the top five advertised product categories during Super Bowl broadcasts were: 1) food and drinks, 2) alcoholic beverages, 3) services, 4) auto and related products, and 5) financial services

(Hatzithomas et al., 2016). This study identified the following headings and order for the decade: services/products (98), TV broadcasts (48), food/beverages (46), automotive (41), alcoholic beverages (26), financial (14), NFL promotions (6), and pharmaceutical (4).

Historical Order for Top Five	**Decade Order for Top Five**
1) Food and drinks	1) Services/products
2) Alcoholic beverages	2) TV broadcasts
3) Services	3) Food/beverages
4) Auto and related products	4) Automotive
5) Financial services	5) Alcoholic beverages

Three subthemes emerged in correlation to the shifts in product types: Subtheme #1: Historic Order Redefined, Subtheme #2: Emerging Products, and Subtheme #3: Blurring the Lines. It is important to note that previous studies have typically excluded movie trailers and television broadcasts because they were deemed different than traditional commercials (Barron, 2020; Hatzithomas et al., 2016; King, 2012). This study included all national advertisements that aired during each quarter regardless of category. Many viewers are equally excited to see what new movies and television programs are being promoted during the Super Bowl as they are the more traditional spots. In addition, several products have become embedded in movie trailers. For example, Disney+ can simultaneously promote a new movie for theatres and monthly subscriptions for its streaming service. Additionally, Disney+ has designated its own app, blurring product categories lines even further.

Another slight trend was observed in the automotive category. Later in the decade, both men and women drove vehicles, whereas earlier in the decade, men were the primary drivers. In Hyundai: *Turbo* and Kia: *Space Babies* in 2013, the male spouse and boyfriend drove while the

female spouse and girlfriend rode in the passenger seats. In 2022, Chevrolet: *New Generation* featured actress Jamie-Lynn Sigler driving her new electric truck through the city streets. In Nissan: *Presenting: Thrill Driver,* actress Brie Larson pulls up in her sleek yellow sports car and tosses the keys to comedian/actor Eugene Levy to take a spin.

Between the years 2013 and 2022, this study found that 98 ads promoted services or products while 48 were ads for TV broadcasts. Compared to the food and beverage category with 46 advertisements and automotive ads with 41, this illustrates the prominence of commercials that promote upcoming television broadcasts, products, and services. In recent years, there has been a significant rise in social media and various streaming platforms, so movies, series, and streaming platforms frequently promote their products as subscriptions. The emergence of new types of goods therefore challenges pre-defined product categories. This applies to companies such as T-Mobile that sell mobile devices considered physical products and monthly subscriptions for Wi-Fi and airtime, which are considered services. Figure 9 illustrates the numbers of advertisements for this study's eight product categories for the past decade.

Figure 9

Number of Ads in Product Categories From 2013-2022

1. Services/Products
2. TV Broadcasts
3. Food/Beverages
4. Automotive
5. Alcoholic Beverages
6. Financial Services
7. NFL Promos
8. Pharmaceuticals
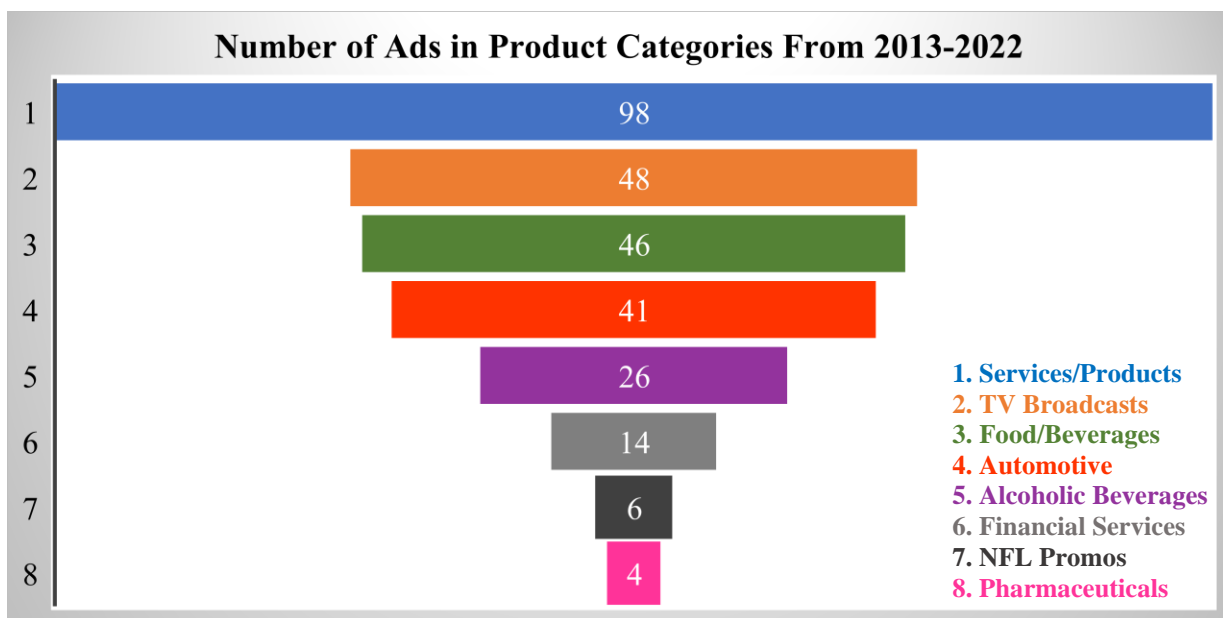
Compared to past trends, alcoholic beverage commercials have decreased, and automobile advertisements have increased. Historically, food and beverages ranked in the number one spot, but with the continued advancement of technology, new non-food products and services are becoming more prominent. Because airtime for commercials is so expensive, only large companies with extensive advertising budgets may participate in the Super Bowl broadcast. The increase in ads for new technological global products and services has supported the transition of gender role portrayals over the past decade. New products have allowed for character portrayals to be less focused on specific genders. Many roles are interchangeable with both genders playing the same type of characters.

Early in the decade, overtly sexual ads were primarily associated with food, beverages, personal hygiene products, and undergarments. Traditionally, alcoholic beverage ads had a reputation of using sexual appeals, though for this study, that was not the case. Table 10 shows the top five product categories for each year from historical through the decade.

Table 10

Comparison of Top Five Product Categories from Historical Through the Decade

Historical	2013	2016	2019	2022	Decade
Food and drinks	Food/beverages	Services/products	Services/products	Services/products	Services/products
Alcoholic beverages	Services/products	TV broadcasts	TV broadcasts	TV broadcasts	TV broadcasts
Services	Automotive	Food/beverages & Automotive	Food/beverages & Alcoholic bevs.	Food/beverages	Automotive
Auto and related	Alcoholic beverages	Financial services	Automotive	Automotive	Food/beverages
Financial services	Financial services	Alcoholic beverages	Financial services	Alcoholic beverages	Alcoholic beverages

Note. TV broadcasts were not included in Historical or 2013 years.

Thematic Pattern #7: Male Representation

The primary focus of this study was to investigate the communication of gender roles in a qualitative manner, though the study must not overlook the significant differences found between role categories. This study clearly identified men as the principal celebrities, leading characters, musical vocalists, and voices in voice-over roles. Table 11 shows that 127 advertisements utilized a male voice while only 15 utilized a female voice indicating a significant difference in gender characterization. Men also dominated the role of celebrity with 82 male celebrities featured compared to 44 female celebrities. In addition, the non-celebrity leading characters were also heavily represented by the male gender with 106 male leads and 54 female leads. It is important to note that in both the celebrity and vocalist categories female representation increased from 2013 to 2022 while the voice-over and leading characters categories remained stagnant for women over the decade. Consequently, male portrayals increased in celebrity and vocalist categories and decreased in voice-over and leading character categories. While some internal shifts were evident and women showed an increase in role portrayals from 2013 to 2022, men clearly dominated each of the four categories in comparison to their female counterparts.

Table 11

Number of Males and Females in Super Bowl Ads by Category and Year

Year	Male VO	Female VO	Male Celebrity	Female Celebrity	Male Lead	Female Lead	Male Vocalist	Female Vocalist
2013	36	1	11	8	34	11	10	3
2016	36	3	21	4	34	14	3	2
2019	33	6	21	13	22	17	9	3
2022	22	5	29	19	16	12	15	14
TOTAL	127	15	82	44	106	54	37	22

Representation as a single concept is outside the purview of this study. The author views this theme as an opportunity for future research to produce quantitative findings.

Summary of Chapter Four

Chapter Four presented extensive findings from this study's cross-sectional sample of 279 Super Bowl advertisements for the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022. Findings were presented by year, decade, and theme. Seven primary themes were identified and explained along with 12 subthemes in correlation to RQ 4. Chapter Four also provided numerous examples to answer RQ 1, RQ 2, and RQ 3. Chapter Five will discuss findings, implications, delimitations, limitations, and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

Chapter Five begins with a summary of findings detailed at length in Chapter Four. Next, the author expands on a selection of concepts in the discussion section. Then, implications from a methodological, theoretical, and practical stance are presented. Next, this study's delimitations and limitations are explained. Finally, six suggestions for future research for gender roles in mediated advertising are identified.

Summary of Findings

As a precursor to the discussion section, this section offers a brief recap of the findings. Findings are summarized by addressing the study's four research questions. RQ 4 provides a visual representation of seven primary thematic patterns and 12 subthemes that emerged.

RQ 1: Has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

As Chapter Four noted, while some changes in the communication of gender role were observed, the overall portrayals of gender roles continue to be complex and nuanced. Overtly sexualized characters and ads decreased from 2013 to 2022. Conversely, one way in which ads have remained the same is through the presentation of traditional family units. The roles of spouses, parents, sons/daughters, and boyfriends/girlfriends continue to be communicated through heterosexual narratives.

RQ 2: How has the communication of gender roles changed in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

The role of celebrity, comedic appeal, and competition dominate Super Bowl ads. The frequent use of celebrity and non-celebrities (real people) blurs the line between real-world

people and advertisement-world characters. Family units and couples remain traditional, except

for one 2022 ad that briefly featured a same-sex female couple. Further, many ads defy

traditional labels by showing men with softer emotional traits and women exhibiting more

confident attitudes. Role portrayals continue to intertwine more frequently with celebrities;

however, several roles have become interchangeable and/or non-gender specific. The gap

between men and women in celebrity and leading character categories has shrunk. Finally, the

frequency of sexual appeals and the degree of sexuality decreased over time.

  RQ 3: How has the communication of gender roles changed across the top five product

  categories in Super Bowl commercials over the past decade?

  Although the order of the top five product categories shifted in every year studied for the

past decade, there is no clear-cut evidence that any product category consistently communicates

gender in a certain manner. Rather, it seems to depend on the actual product and advertising

campaign, which often relies upon comedy and celebrity. In addition, new products such as

software applications, streaming platforms, and subscription services have emerged, causing the

lines to blur and overlap between products, services, entertainment, technology, and

communication. Similarly, they have also blurred the communication of gender roles. Less

binary characters appeared as lead roles in 2022 and several ads illustrated gender roles in a more

interchangeable manner. Later in the decade both men and women were featured driving vehicles

whereas earlier in the decade, men were the primary drivers.

  RQ 4: What gender-related themes emerge in Super Bowl commercials over the past

  decade?

  As previously shown in Table 8, seven main thematic patterns and 12 subthemes emerged

during data analysis. The following is a list of the seven primary themes across the decade:

Thematic Pattern #1: Celebrity Appeal

Thematic Pattern #2: Comedic Tone

Thematic Pattern #3: Competition, Sports & Athleticism

Thematic Pattern #4: Traditional Marriage and Heterosexual Couples

Thematic Pattern #5: Shifts in Sexuality

Thematic Pattern #6: Shifts in Product Types

Thematic Pattern #7: Male Representation

Discussion

This qualitative study produced extensive, nuanced findings in the communication of

gender roles within the framework of Super Bowl commercials. Though all findings deserve

thorough analysis and a robust discussion, this section will focus on four concepts derived from

this study: 1) the 3Cs, 2) shifts in sexuality, 3) traditional narratives, and 4) blurring the lines.

Celebrity, Comedy, and Competition (3Cs)

The Super Bowl is ultimately a time for celebration. Not only do fans root for their

favorite team, but they also watch the halftime show and new advertisements. Viewers anticipate

seeing new ads with their favorite sport heroes and celebrities each year. They want to

simultaneously celebrate the teams and be entertained. For these reasons, the role of celebrity,

comedic narratives, and competition remain at the core of Super Bowl commercials.

The role of celebrity has been important throughout the history of Super Bowl

commercials; however, there has been a significant uptick in celebrity appearances in recent

years. Male and female celebrities more than doubled from 2013 to 2022. One reason for the

increase in celebrity appearances may simply be a strategy to make the greatest impact on

viewers. Viewers may be more likely to listen to the pitch if one of their favorite celebrities is

appearing. With the high cost of airtime and extensive reach potential, advertisers need to make the spot memorable. One way to help with product recall is by using celebrity appeal.

Equally important is comedy. The Super Bowl is considered both a sporting event and entertainment. People generally enjoy a good laugh during celebratory events, so a comedic appeal is clearly an excellent choice. The findings of this study show that 44% of all ads utilized comedic elements. Whether the comedy was illustrated through gender role reversals, sexuality, or dorky/dumb males, it prevailed as the primary appeal.

Given the nature of the Super Bowl is rooted in sports, competition, and athleticism, it makes sense that ads integrate a competitive theme. As a fun way to celebrate the Big Game, scenarios are created to feed the appetites of hungry football fans. The combination of competition with elements of comedy and celebrity personas appears to be a popular formula amongst advertisers. Future Super Bowl ads will most likely continue utilizing the 3Cs to capture the attention of viewers.

Shifts in Sexuality

The communication of sexuality changed in a few different ways over the span of 10 years. Several ads featured overtly sexualized characters in 2013. In 2016, fewer sexual appeals emerged. Further, the degree to which it was being portrayed also diminished, creating a more subtle portrayal of sexuality. In 2019, the use of sexual innuendo, often as verbal humor, replaced overt and subtle sexuality. Yet another shift was evident in 2022. Rather than ads using overt sexuality, sexual innuendo, or subtle sexuality, the sexual nature of the character was embedded within the celebrity. Thus, 2022 exemplifies the interweaving of sexuality and the individual celebrity. How and how much sexuality are communicated seems to depend upon the unique persona of the celebrity. Actors are no longer being cast to play sexualized characters but

rather, celebrities are cast based on their embedded qualities and personality. At this juncture,

sexuality in all forms has been communicated through a heterosexual narrative.

Traditional Narratives

Like the communication of sexuality, the roles of spouses, parents, sons/daughters, and

boyfriends/girlfriends continue to be communicated through heterosexual narratives. Family

units mirror a traditional nuclear family that consists of two parents (one mother and one father)

and their children. Contrary to this standard narrative seen in Super Bowl commercials, only

17.8% of U.S. families are considered nuclear (Lepore, 2021). That is down from 40%, which

was reported in 1970. Other types of family units have emerged through the years, including

single and gay parents. According to Statista Research Department (2022), 7.1% of Americans

self-identify as LGBTQ. This number has doubled since 2012. Currently, 21% of adult Gen Zers,

those born 1997-2003, self-identify as LGBTQ (Jones, 2022). With the rates increasing each

year, Gallup expects the number of LGBTQ-identifying adults to increase as the youngest

Americans gradually replace the oldest. As demographics continue to shift, will future

commercials reflect non-traditional family units and LGBTQ narratives? If these demographics

are transferred to the Super Bowl viewership, advertisers will need to watch viewer

demographics closely.

In recent years, there has been a strong movement to empower men to be softer and more

emotional, and women to be stronger and more athletic. This may be a result of an increase in

female viewership and/or shifts in cultural norms. According to Graham and Young (2020), NFL

Commissioner Roger Goodell stated that the league had reached an all-time high of 187.3

million fans, of which 47% were women. Goodell further acknowledged that ads had a

reputation for being male-focused, and at times, sexist. Between 2002 and 2012, the number of

women watching NFL games rose from 14% to 46% (Statista Research Department, 2013).

Throughout this decade, the numbers of female viewers for the NFL and Super Bowl broadcasts

have hovered between 46% to 47% (Graham & Young, 2020). Because more women are tuning

in to football broadcasts than in the previous decade, it seems advertisers and the NFL are taking

notice and adjusting to capture the newer demographic. Some of the modifications can be seen in

gender portrayals, choice of celebrities, and narratives.

In addition to more female viewership, shifts in gender portrayals are most likely a result

of contemporary cultural changes. In recent years, a stronger push for gender equality has

resurged since the iconic movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Social media platforms house

recent discussions surrounding gender equality. Some examples include *equal pay for equal*

work advocated by soccer star Megan Rapinoe, the #Me Too Movement, and voices within the

LGBTQ community. These efforts seem to align with the mirror portion of the mirror versus the

mold argument.

Throughout the decade, the NFL has made a concerted effort to promote female

empowerment and athleticism through their promotional ads. Many of their ads include

multicultural children of both sexes participating in the same activities. In the next decade, it will

be interesting to see how the portrayal of female relationships will be communicated. Will same-

sex couples continue to emerge in more ads? Will certain product categories support a more

liberal view of relationships? Will same-sex couples become normalized in Super Bowl

commercials? Is normalization more likely if it is in connection to celebrities? Subsequent Super

Bowl commercials will provide answers to these questions.

Even with more ads showing men, women, and children participating in similar activities

in a somewhat interchangeable style, gender is still a key element in advertising. Certain

activities can reinforce gender roles while others can break traditional stereotypes. The use of stereotypes can help tell a story because the general population can quickly recognize the portrayals. In Super Bowl commercials, comedy is a primary appeal, so gender role reversals are frequently used to create comedic effects. Whether it is Ant-Man complimenting The Hulk at the end of their fight, or former NFL athletes having their toes manicured in an upscale spa, or model-like wedding guests in cocktail dresses and high heels tackling one another to the ground to catch the bouquet, sex stereotypes are at play. Often, comedy emerges from men taking on feminine qualities such as average men dressing up as princesses in Doritos: *Princesses*. It is the juxtaposition of two diverse characteristics coming together that creates comedy because it violates expected norms. Will ads still be funny if a gay man acts in a feminine manner, or a more athletic woman acts in a more masculine manner? As societal norms change, what is deemed funny may also change. Gender stereotypes may shift if LGBTQ role portrayals become more frequent. In fact, it may create more blurring of lines.

Blurring The Lines

Whether it be in product categories, new types of products, or gender portrayals, many lines were blurred over the decade. Role portrayals within product categories are difficult to generalize because so many commercials promoted more than one product or service. Lines became even more blurred toward the end of the decade with non-binary character portrayals, real-life celebrities, non-celebrities (real people), and co-marketing strategies that promoted two different products or brands in one ad. Further, gender roles are becoming more interchangeable and, at times, inconsequential. Office workers are simply office workers. Cruise passengers and football fans do not need to rely upon gender to participate in the activity. Men and women can both work out at the gym and show athletic qualities. Men and women can both drive cars. TV

broadcasts often promote a new movie, streaming service, and app all at once. The trend points to continued blending of products and both genders playing similar roles.

Implications

Methodological

The qualitative approach to this study allowed for richer data to emerge while simultaneously providing new opportunities for future research. By purposefully not designating any predetermined categories, the research promoted an open framework. The open framework set the stage for themes to emerge authentically. A quantitative study would not have explained gender portrayals; it would have merely provided numbers that illustrated differences in male and female representation. It would not have explained how gender was being portrayed.

The longitudinal component allowed the opportunity to show any significant shifts, patterns, and trends across time. It was important to take a large cross-section of commercials over a decade of Super Bowl ads; fewer than 10 years may not have highlighted any perceivable shifts. The 2013 Super Bowl proved an important starting point because the ads communicated more highly sexualized characters through sexual appeals than those in 2016, 2019, or 2022. Equally, the commercials later in the decade showed male and female roles as more interchangeable than in previous years.

The role of the researcher as a research tool in the qualitative process provided opportunities to recognize greater nuance. Experience in the entertainment industry allowed the author to notice more elements within each commercial such as background music, scenic elements, appeals, props, wardrobe, makeup, and hairstyles. Also, having access to casting breakdowns provided a better understanding of character types and standard role descriptions.

In addition to holding several advantages, the qualitative method has limitations as well. Content is interpreted through the experiences, limits, beliefs, and bias of the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this case, from a middle-aged, female perspective. Although every effort was made to remain unbiased, this is a general limitation to the qualitative method.

The platform iSpot.tv provided valuable information for each commercial not available on other platforms. The names of actors and celebrities were particularly useful. Without the information and organization provided by iSpot.tv, cultural references and sampling parameters would have been extremely difficult to understand and set.

Theoretical

A plethora of theories may guide research in gender studies in advertising. This study utilized three interrelated sociocultural theories: social learning theory (McArthur & Resko, 1975), cultivation theory (Gerbner, 1967; 1969a, 1969b; 1973), and the mirror versus the mold argument (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay 1986; 1987). The choice of combining these three interrelated theories was appropriate for investigating a sociocultural event such as the Super Bowl. While it is difficult to identify conclusive evidence for the social learning theory and cultivation theory, this study found that both mirroring and molding occurred. As more themes and patterns emerged, it became apparent that both mirroring and molding were taking effect through the roles of celebrity, non-celebrity (real people), and shifts in product types.

American culture, products, celebrities, and gender portrayals in mediated advertising are deeply connected. As society shifts and new products emerge, so do advertisements. Super Bowl commercials not only perpetuate a continuous loop between culture and media, but they also celebrate it. Advertisers frequently cast celebrities for their unique attributes, recognizability, likeability, and fan reach. Entertainment celebrities and sports celebrities are hired to promote

products and services as themselves. This connection blurs the line between entertainment and real life, thus complicating the mirror versus the mold debate. Advertisers intend to mold audience perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs so that viewers buy their products. The aim is to inspire viewers to behave in the same manner the characters do in the commercials. At the same time, celebrities and real people play themselves, not devised characters. This mirroring of society is embedded in real-life people and real-life scenarios.

In recent years, many celebrities have made it their practice to endorse products and charities close to their hearts. This practice deepens the connection even further for the viewers who like the product and admire the celebrity. Celebrities hold the power to drive sales and influence cultural beliefs when they introduce and endorse products, thus molding occurs. Because the Super Bowl celebrates the competition between the top football teams in the U.S., the role of celebrity is naturally embedded in the context. Sport celebrities, compared to other types of celebrities, speak directly to the audience demographic on game day.

The theoretical implication is that sociocultural realities cannot be detached from mainstream mediated advertising. Celebrities and non-celebrities mirror their real-life personas in Super Bowl commercials; at the same time, advertisers intend to mold mindsets to sell products. Super Bowl advertisements reinforce sociocultural gender roles by mirroring and molding audience behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. These dual forces create an echo chamber making it difficult to know exactly where one begins and ends.

Although the mirror versus the mold argument (Holbrook, 1987; Pollay, 1986; 1987) worked well for this study in gender role portrayals, several alternate theories may prove advantageous. Should the emphasis shift to the perceptions of the consumers, a sociopsychological approach could be utilized. Here, personal audience behaviors, attitudes, and

beliefs would be explored (Craig, 1999). Should the aim shift to the systematic oppression or

inequality of a group, critical tradition would support various critical theories. Feminist theory,

critical race theory, and queer theory are among some of the most common theories of inquiry. It

would certainly be worthwhile to pursue the study through an intersectionality lens so that race

and ethnicity could be considered in tandem with gender.

Practical

From a practical stance, Super Bowl commercials are meant to entertain, inspire, and

inform. With most ads rooted in celebrity, comedy, and competition (3Cs), gender stereotypes, as

communicated through gender role reversals, do not appear to be harmful. Comedic elements

emerge from the juxtaposition of masculine and feminine qualities. Because the potential reach is

so wide and airtime is particularly high priced, Super Bowl advertisers must create memorable

ads. Thus, they must find relevant ways to cut through the noise and clutter. A few ways to be

memorable is by featuring beloved celebrities and devising humorous scenarios.

Ultimately, gender role research is an ongoing process that warrants continuous attention.

Further research is imperative to understand cultural and societal shifts. The communication of

gender roles and product categories are constantly changing, therefore continued research is

necessary to identify patterns and trends.

<p align="center">**Delimitations & Limitations**</p>

Delimitations

This study analyzed the content from 279 nationally televised Super Bowl commercials

during 2013, 2016, 2019, 2022 that aired during quarters one, two, three, and four as presented

on iSpot.tv. No pregame, postgame, teasers, or halftime ads were included, nor were spots posted

on other websites such as Adland.com or YouTube.com. Regionally aired commercials were also not included in the sample.

A more robust study could include all 10 years between 2013 and 2022 to identify even more nuanced internal shifts and patterns. The TV broadcast category could be excluded to produce more comparable results to previous studies that normally omit TV broadcasts altogether. Findings can also shift by including the ads played during halftime, pregame, and postgame.

Limitations

Two primary limitations affect this study: the subjectivity of the researcher and the lack of TV broadcasts in 2013. Although it is standard practice for researchers to insert themselves into qualitative studies, perspectives are inherently subjective (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the author's gender, age, and position within the entertainment industry informs how she views the content. Further, the author's demographics and background explain how terms, themes, and patterns were identified and named, in alignment with personal descriptions and industry casting breakdowns. Future research could include synthesized perspectives from men and women of different ages.

Secondly, no ads for television broadcasts or movies were posted on iSpot.tv in 2013. This omission may skew the data although the identified patterns and trends seem to be consistent with the overall findings. More ads were posted on Adland.com, yet they were not organized by quarter, which made it more difficult to narrow, organize, and create a consistent sample across the years.

Future Research

The delimitations of this study provide many opportunities for future studies. While an infinite number of research studies are possible, this author focuses on six primary suggestions for future research.

1) *Utilize the same qualitative structure for prime-time or daytime commercials.* Ads aired daily, during weekday hours are marketed to a different demographic and cost less money than the Super Bowl. Subsequently, they may cast fewer celebrities, advertise different products, and communicate different gender portrayals. Current trends in casting and advertising show a shift in roles based on gender (Actor's Access, personal communication, January 10, 2022). Advertisers are becoming more flexible as to which gender is cast and who plays the male and female sex roles even when a specific gender is initially requested. For example, industry casting websites regularly list roles as open to either gender, including those who are non-binary, transgender, and female-identifying or male-presenting (Casting Networks, 2022).

2) *Explore the connection between gender, ethnicity, and race in Super Bowl commercials.* Using the theory of intersectionality may provide a deeper understanding of gender role portrayals by weaving in the context of race and ethnicity (Ghavami & Peplau, 2012). Advertisers and casting agencies have made a concerted effort to include more People of Color across product categories over the past several years. Although more People of Color are being cast, it is worthwhile to investigate the types of roles both sexes are playing in conjunction to their race and ethnicity. The following studies have made similar suggestions: Barron (2020), Gary (2012), Lydecker et al. (2017), Taylor et al. (2019), King (2012), and Poggi (2020).

3) *Examine advertising agencies that create Super Bowl commercials.* In a qualitative study, interview the gatekeepers on how they devise their ads. Explore the relationships between

the clients, ad agencies, casting directors, and production companies. Thompson-Whiteside

(2020) suggested interviewing advertising professionals to garner greater insight and close

research gaps. Hilmantel and Van Amburg (2016) found that 50 of 55 ads in the 2016 Super

Bowl employed male directors. How does the gender of the production team or ad professionals

play a role in the communication of gender roles in Super Bowl commercials?

4) *Design a qualitative study that interviews spectators of Super Bowl commercials.*

What are their takeaways about the communication of gender, race, and/or ethnicity? Why do

they tune in (i.e., halftime show, commercials, the game, the celebratory nature)? What are their

expectations of the ads? Do they feel offended by sexual stereotypes? How does the context of

comedy play into their overall perceptions? Do they expect to see celebrities featured? How

likely are they to purchase a product advertised during the Super Bowl? Kim et al. (2012)

suggested flipping the focus to the consumer/audience. Focusing on consumer perspectives could

shed light on the overall impact of the advertisements. In this instance, the study could utilize the

sociopsychological tradition through a lens of cultivation theory.

5) *Replicate the study for another major televised sporting event such as the Olympics on

a world stage or a professional female sport in the United States.* The Olympics are considered

the most gender-equal sports event on the world stage. In 2021, the Summer Olympics were

hosted in Tokyo, Japan of which 49% of all athletes were women. Much can be learned by

comparing the ads played during events with more female athletes. How do the products,

appeals, and communication of gender roles compare to those of the Super Bowl?

6) *Follow the evolution of gender role portrayals in a longitudinal, qualitative content

analysis of one product.* For example, Budweiser advertised during every Super Bowl between

2013 and 2022. Were there any changes in advertising approaches, appeals, or gender portrayals?

Do they stick with the same basic formula or make changes each year? Focusing on one specific

product category or product brand over the span of many years may better highlight cultural

shifts and patterns. Further products to consider include Pepsi, Doritos, Coca-Cola, M&Ms,

McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Subway, Taco Bell, Toyota, and the NFL. These brands advertised

consistently without pause between 2013 and 2022.

Summary

Chapter Five began with a summary of findings of the four research questions. Then, in

the discussion section, four primary concepts were reviewed which included the 3Cs, shifts in

sexuality, traditional narratives, and blurring of lines. Next, the implications were described from

methodological, theoretical, and practical viewpoints. Then, an explanation of this study's

delimitations and limitations were presented. Finally, six suggestions for future research were

identified and explained.

As this study has shown, gender roles are highly complex and require closer observations

to produce a more detailed set of findings. Utilizing a qualitative approach to study gender roles

in Super Bowl advertisements proves challenging, though it creates richer data. Although this

study employed a significant cross-section of Super Bowl advertisements across a decade, this

study merely scratches the surface. Any one component of this research could develop into its

own study.

This study found that Super Bowl commercials regularly combine celebrity, comedy, and

competition. Shifts in product types and celebrity portrayals blurred the lines creating a mirroring

and molding effect. Throughout the decade, male and female portrayals evolved, and some

became interchangeable. Advertisers made a concerted effort to break harmful stereotypes by

redefining labels for both sexes. The use of gender stereotypes was evident, though intended to

entertain, not harm. Although men consistently played more roles than their female counterparts, the Super Bowl is a professional male sport, which may explain the disparities in role portrayals. The findings from this study may contribute to scholarship in the areas of gender studies, advertising, and communication.

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APPENDIX A

List of Super Bowl Commercials

Year	Quarter	Brand/Title/Tagline	URL
2013	1	Genesis: Excited, "New Thinking, New Possibilities"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dBk/hyundai-genesis-super-bowl-2013-excited-feat-gus-johnson
2013	1	Sketchers: Man vs. Cheetah, "Designed for Speed"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dS9/skechers-2013-super-bowl-gorun2-man-vs-cheetah
2013	1	Toyota: I Wish, #WishGranted	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSH/toyota-2013-super-bowl-i-wish-feat-kaley-cuoco-song-skee-lo
2013	1	Oreo: Library Fight, "Something We Can All Disagree On"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSE/oreo-2013-super-bowl-library-fight
2013	1	Coca-Cola: Security Cameras, "Open Happiness"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSs/coca-cola-2013-super-bowl-security-cameras
2013	1	Budweiser: Our Kind of Beer	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSC/budweiser-black-crown-2013-super-bowl-our-kind-of-beer
2013	1	Best Buy: Asking Amy	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSM/best-buy-2013-super-bowl-asking-amy-featuring-amy-poehler
2013	1	Pepsi: House Party, "Drink It to Believe It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSr/pepsinext-2013-super-bowl-house-party
2013	1	Doritos: Screaming Goat	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSj/doritos-2013-super-bowl-screaming-goat
2013	1	GoDaddy: Big Kiss	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSl/go-daddy-2013-super-bowl-big-kiss-featuring-bar-refaeli
2013	1	Hyundai: Team, "New Thinking, New Possibilities"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSy/hyundai-super-bowl-2013-team-song-by-quiet-riot
2013	1	Audi: Prom Night: Worth It, "Truth in Engineering"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSD/audi-s6-2013-super-bowl-prom-night-worth-it
2013	1	M&M's: Anything for Love, "Chocolate's Better with M"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSR/m-and-ms-2013-super-bowl-anything-for-love
2013	1	Budweiser: Party Walk-In	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSp/budweiser-black-crown-2013-super-bowl-party-walk-in
2013	1	McDonald's: Pep Talk, "I'm Lovin' It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSK/mcdonalds-2013-super-bowl-pep-talk

2013	1	Century 21: Life Saver, "Smarter. Bolder. Faster."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSG/century-21-2013-super-bowl-life-saver
2013	1	AT&T Wireless: 2 Things at Once, "Rethink Possible"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dST/at-and-t-2013-super-bowl-2-things-at-once-featuring-beck-bennett
2013	1	Maybelline New York: Explosive Smooth Lashes, "The Rocket Mascara"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSf/maybelline-new-york-2013-super-bowl-explosive-smooth-lashes
2013	1	Pizza Hut: Hut, Hut, Hut	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dS6/pizza-hut-2013-super-bowl-hut-hut-hut
2013	2	Lincoln Motor Company: Phoenix, "Introducing the Lincoln Motor Company"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGV/2013-lincoln-mkz-phoenix
2013	2	Taco Bell: Viva Young, "Live Mas"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dS4/taco-bell-2013-super-bowl-viva-young-original-song-by-fun
2013	2	Subway: 15 Years, "Eat Fresh"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSv/subway-2013-super-bowl-15-years-feat-jared-brian-baumgartner
2013	2	Coca-Cola: The Chase	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSP/coca-cola-2013-super-bowl-the-chase
2013	2	Volkswagen: Get Happy, "Das Auto"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSc/volkswagen-super-bowl-2013-get-happy
2013	2	Hyundai Turbo 2013 Super Bowl TV Spot, 'Stuck'	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSQ/hyundai-turbo-2013-super-bowl-stuck
2013	2	Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP): Milk Mustache 2013 Super Bowl Ft The Rock, "Got Milk?"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dS8/milk-mustache-2013-super-bowl-ft-the-rock-song-styletones
2013	2	GoDaddy: YourBigIdea.Co	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSa/godaddyco-2013-super-bowl-yourbigideaco-feat-danica-patrick
2013	2	Bud Light: Voodoo, "Here We Go."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSi/bud-light-2013-super-bowl-voodoo-song-by-stevie-wonder
2013	2	Cars.com: Wolf Drama, "All Drive. No Drama."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSJ/cars-com-2013-super-bowl-wolf-drama
2013	2	Calvin Klein: Matthew Terry	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSF/calvin-klein-concept-2013-super-bowl-featuring-mathew-terry
2013	2	Doritos: Princesses	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dSx/doritos-2013-super-bowl-princesses
2013	3	Budweiser: Brotherhood, "Enjoy Responsibly"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGu/budweiser-2013-super-bowl-brotherhood-song-by-fleetwood-mac

2013	3	Beck's Beer: Serenade, "Our Smoothest Beck's yet"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGz/becks-sapphire-2013-super-bowl-serenade-song-by-chet-faker
2013	3	Speed Stick: Unattended Laundry, "Don't Sweat it. Handle it."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGC/speed-stick-2013-super-bowl-unattended-laundry
2013	3	Lincoln Motor Company: #SteerTheScript	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGN/lincoln-2013-super-bowl-steerthescript-featuring-jimmy-fallon
2013	3	Wonderful Pistachios: PSY, "Get Crackin'"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGr/wonderful-pistachios-2013-super-bowl-featuring-psy
2013	3	Gildan: Getaway, "Every Thread Counts"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGj/gildan-2013-super-bowl-getaway
2013	3	Kia: Robot, "Respect the Tech"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGR/kia-forte-2013-super-bowl-robot
2013	3	MiO: Change America	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGl/mio-fit-2013-super-bowl-change-america-featuring-tracy-morgan
2013	3	Axe: Lifeguard, "Nothing Beats an Astronaut. Ever."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGy/axe-apollo-2013-super-bowl-lifeguard
2013	3	Bud Light: Lucky Chair, "Here We Go."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGp/bud-light-2013-super-bowl-lucky-chair-featuring-stevie-wonder
2013	3	Subway: FebruANY, "Eat Fresh"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGD/subway-2013-super-bowl-februany
2013	3	E*TRADE from Morgan Stanley: Save It, "Less for Us, More for You"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGT/etrade-2013-super-bowl-save-it-song-by-calvin-harris
2013	3	BlackBerry: What It Can't Do	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGS/blackberry-z10-2013-super-bowl-what-it-cant-do
2013	3	Century 21: Wedding, "Smarter. Bolder. Faster."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGB/century-21-2013-super-bowl-wedding
2013	4	Carl's Jr.: Fried, "Eat Like You Mean It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dli/carls-jr-fried-feat-nina-agdal-song-bobby-darin
2013	4	Coca-Cola: The Chase Conclusion, "Open Happiness"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dG3/coca-cola-2013-super-bowl-the-chase-conclusion
2013	4	NAPA Auto Parts: Know How, "Know How"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGP/napa-2013-super-bowl-know-how-feat-patrick-warburton
2013	4	Allstate: Team Flag, "Are You in Good Hands?"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGQ/allstate-2013-super-bowl-team-flag

2013	4	Samsung Mobile: Seth Rogan, Paul Rudd, LeBron James, "The Next Big Thing Is Here"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGh/samsung-super-bowl-2013-talking-babies-ft-seth-rogen-paul-rudd
2013	4	SodaStream: Set the Bubbles Free	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGx/sodastream-set-the-bubbles-free
2013	4	Tide: 2013 Super Bowl	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGJ/tide-2013-super-bowl-featuring-joe-montana
2013	4	Kia: Space Babies, "Built in the US"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGX/kia-sorento-2013-super-bowl-space-babies
2013	4	Ram Trucks: God Made a Farmer, "Guts. Glory. Ram."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGF/ram-trucks-2013-super-bowl-god-made-a-farmer-feat-paul-harvey
2013	4	GoPro: Dubstep Baby, "Be A Hero"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGs/gopro-hero2-dubstep-baby-song-by-walking-def
2013	4	Jack in the Box: Hot Mess, "In the Box"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGE/jack-in-the-box-2013-super-bowl-commercial-hot-mess
2013	4	NFL Network: Sand Castle	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7dGW/nfl-network-2013-super-bowl-sand-castle-featuring-deion-sanders
2016	1	Advil: Distant Memory, "Pain? Advil."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOm7/advil-super-bowl-2016-distant-memory
2016	1	Buick: Big Day, "Experience the New Buick"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmY/buick-cascada-super-bowl-2016-big-day-feat-odell-beckham-jr
2016	1	Shock Top: Unfiltered Talk, "Live Life Unfiltered"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmL/shock-top-super-bowl-2016-unfiltered-talk-featuring-tj-miller
2016	1	Squarespace: Real Talk with Key and Peele	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmk/squarespace-super-bowl-2016-real-talk-with-key-and-peele
2016	1	CBS: The Grammys Super Bowl 2016	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiU/the-grammys-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	1	Marmot: Fall in Love, "For Life"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOi9/marmot-super-bowl-2016-fall-in-love
2016	1	Taco Bell: Bigger Than…, "Live Mas"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOi4/taco-bell-super-bowl-2016-bigger-than-featuring-george-takei
2016	1	Mountain Dew: Puppymonkeybaby, "Three Awesome Things Combined"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiv/mountain-dew-kickstart-super-bowl-2016-puppymonkeybaby
2016	1	Audi: Commander, "Choosing the Moon Brings Out the Best in Us."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOi0/audi-r8-super-bowl-2016-commander-song-by-david-bowie

2016	1	CBS: Super Bowl 2016 Halftime Show	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiQ/super-bowl-2016-halftime-show-tv-promo
2016	1	PayPal: There's a New Money in Town, "PayPal Is New Money"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOi3/paypal-super-bowl-2016-theres-a-new-money-in-town
2016	1	Doritos: Ultrasound, "For the Bold"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOim/doritos-super-bowl-2016-ultrasound
2016	1	Machine Zone: Mobile Strike: Fight	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOi8/mobile-strike-super-bowl-2016-fight-feat-arnold-schwarzenegger
2016	1	NFL: Super Bowl Babies, "Football Is Family"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOii/national-football-league-super-bowl-2016-super-bowl-babies
2016	1	Apartments.com: Moving Day, "Change Your Apartment, Change the World."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOie/apartments-com-super-bowl-2016-moving-day-featuring-lil-wayne
2016	1	Hyundai: The Chase	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOia/2017-hyundai-elantra-super-bowl-2016-the-chase
2016	1	Avocados From Mexico: AVOS in Space, "Always in Season"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiJ/avocados-from-mexico-super-bowl-2016-avos-in-space-ft-scott-baio
2016	1	SoFi: Great Loans for Great People, "Don't Bank. SoFi."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOix/sofi-super-bowl-2016-great-loans-for-great-people
2016	1	Snickers: Marilyn, "Snickers Satisfies"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiX/snickers-super-bowl-2016-marilyn-featuring-willem-dafoe
2016	1	Michelob: Breathe, "Brewed for Those Who Go the Extra Mile"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiH/michelob-ultra-super-bowl-2016-breathe
2016	1	Genesis: First Date	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiW/2016-hyundai-genesis-super-bowl-2016-first-date-feat-kevin-hart
2016	1	CBS: The Big Bang Theory Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOiP/the-big-bang-theory-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	2	Toyota: The Longest Chase, "Let's Go Places"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmr/toyota-super-bowl-2016-the-longest-chase
2016	2	WeatherTech: Resources, "Made in America"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmS/weathertech-super-bowl-2016-resources
2016	2	Coca-Cola: Hulk vs. Ant-Man, "Taste the Feeling"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmG/coca-cola-mini-super-bowl-2016-hulk-vs-ant-man
2016	2	CBS: The Good Wife Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOm2/the-good-wife-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo

2016	2	Persil ProClean: America's #1 Rated, "#1 Rated"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmg/persil-proclean-super-bowl-2016-americas-1-rated
2016	2	AstraZeneca: Envy	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmT/astrazeneca-super-bowl-2016-envy
2016	2	CBS: The Late Late Show Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmb/the-late-late-show-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	2	Hyundai: Ryanville	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmO/2017-hyundai-elantra-super-bowl-2016-ryanville
2016	2	T-Mobile: Drop the Balls, "The Un-Carrier"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmq/t-mobile-super-bowl-2016-drop-the-balls-featuring-steve-harvey
2016	2	Paramount Pictures: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmt/teenage-mutant-ninja-turtles-out-of-the-shadows-movie-trailer
2016	2	Skittles: The Portrait, "Rock the Rainbow. Taste the Rainbow"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmZ/skittles-super-bowl-50-the-portrait-featuring-steven-tyler
2016	2	Bud Light: The Bud Light Party, "Raise One to Right Now"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmo/bud-light-super-bowl-2016-the-bud-light-party-ft-seth-rogen
2016	2	Quicken Loans: What We Were Thinking, "Push Button. Get Mortgage"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmI/quicken-loans-super-bowl-2016-what-we-were-thinking
2016	2	Acura: What He Said, "Precision Crafted Performance"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmw/2017-acura-nsx-super-bowl-2016-what-he-said-song-by-van-halen
2016	2	Dollar Shave Club: Zeke, "Fresh Blade Anytime"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmd/dollar-shave-club-super-bowl-2016-zeke
2016	2	CBS: Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOmR/criminal-minds-beyond-borders-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	3	CBS: Scorpion Super Bowl 2016	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8q/scorpion-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	3	Budweiser: Not Backing Down, "This Bud's for You"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8b/budweiser-super-bowl-2016-not-backing-down
2016	3	Honda: New Truck to Love	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8O/honda-ridgeline-super-bowl-2016-new-truck-to-love-song-by-queen
2016	3	Heinz Ketchup: Wiener Stampede	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8t/heinz-ketchup-super-bowl-2016-wiener-stampede
2016	3	Wix.com: Kung Fu Panda Discovers the Power of Wix,"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8o/wix-com-super-bowl-2016-kung-fu-panda-discovers-the-power-of-wix

		Create Your Stunning Website Today"	
2016	3	Fitbit: Dualities, "The Smart Fitness Watch"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8I/fitbit-blaze-super-bowl-2016-dualities
2016	3	Showtime: Everything. Now Streaming., "Got Internet, Get Showtime"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8d/showtime-super-bowl-2016-everything-now-streaming
2016	3	Butterfinger: Bolder Than Bold Jump	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8n/butterfinger-super-bowl-2016-bolder-than-bold-jump
2016	3	QuickBooks: Death Wish Coffee Company: Storm's a-Brewin'	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8Z/intuit-quickbooks-super-bowl-2016-death-wish-storms-a-brewin
2016	3	LG Televisions: Man from the Future, "The Future Begins"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8A/lg-super-bowl-2016-man-from-the-future-featuring-liam-neeson
2016	3	Xifaxan: Football Game	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8w/xifaxan-super-bowl-2016-football-game
2016	3	CBS: Madam Secretary Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8Y/madam-secretary-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	3	Pokémon: Pokémon 20, "Train On."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOm9/pokemon-super-bowl-2016-pokemon-20
2016	3	TurboTax: Never a Sellout	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8k/turbotax-super-bowl-2016-never-a-sellout-feat-anthony-hopkins
2016	3	MINI USA: Defy Labels, "Defy Labels"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8L/mini-clubman-super-bowl-2016-defy-labels-feat-serena-williams
2016	3	Doritos: Finalist: Dogs, "For the Bold"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOm4/doritos-2016-crash-the-super-bowl-finalist-doritos-dogs
2016	4	Colgate: Every Drop Counts, "Please Turn Off the Faucet."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IEcG/colgate-every-drop-counts
2016	4	CBS: NCIS | NCIS: New Orleans Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8u/ncis-ncis-new-orleans-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	4	SunTrust: Hold Your Breath	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8z/suntrust-super-bowl-2016-hold-your-breath
2016	4	CBS: Survivor Super Bowl 2016	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8M/survivor-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	4	CBS: Supergirl | Scorpion | NCIS: Los Angeles Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8r/super-girl-scorpion-ncis-los-angeles-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo

2016	4	Budweiser: Give a Damn	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8j/budweiser-super-bowl-2016-give-a-damn-featuring-helen-mirren
2016	4	NFL: Super Bowl 100	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8R/nfl-super-bowl-2016-super-bowl-100
2016	4	CBS: All-Access Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8l/cbs-all-access-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	4	T-Mobile: Restricted Bling, "The Un-Carrier"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8y/t-mobile-super-bowl-2016-restricted-bling-featuring-drake
2016	4	CBS: Tom Selleck: I Have a Dream Foundation, "CBS Cares"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8D/cbs-cares-super-bowl-2016-tom-selleck-i-have-a-dream-foundation
2016	4	Kia: Walken Closet	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8K/kia-super-bowl-2016-walken-closet-featuring-christopher-walken
2016	4	JUBLIA: Best Kept Secret	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8p/jublia-super-bowl-2016-best-kept-secret-featuring-deion-sanders
2016	4	CBS: Mom Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8G/mom-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	4	CBS: The Late Show Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8B/the-late-show-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo
2016	4	Schick: Robot Razors, "Free Your Skin"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8T/schick-hydro-super-bowl-2016-robot-razors
2016	4	Jeep: 4x4ever, "4x4ever"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8g/jeep-super-bowl-2016-4x4ever-song-by-morgan-dorr
2016	4	CBS: The Late Late Show Super Bowl 2016 TV Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO82/the-late-late-show-super-bowl-2016-tv-promo-catch
2016	4	NFL: Super Bowl Babies Choir, "Football Is Family"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO81/nfl-super-bowl-2016-super-bowl-babies-choir-feat-seal
2016	4	Axe: Find Your Magic, "Find Your Magic."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AO8S/axe-super-bowl-2016-find-your-magic
2019	1	Audi: Cashew	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1s/audi-super-bowl-2019-cashew-song-by-norman-greenbaum-t1
2019	1	SimpliSafe: A World Full of Fear, "Home Is the Place You Should Simply Feel Safe"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IyDq/simplisafe-home-security-super-bowl-2019-a-world-full-of-fear
2019	1	Pepsi: More Than OK	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1N/pepsi-super-bowl-2019-more-than-ok-featuring-steve-carell-cardi-b-lil-jon

2019	1	CBS: Wolves and Sheep	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1r/fbi-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-wolves-and-sheep
2019	1	Expensify: Expensify This, "You Weren't Born to Do Expenses."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1R/expensify-super-bowl-2019-expensify-this-featuring-2-chainz-adam-scott
2019	1	CBS: James Does It All	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1D/the-late-late-show-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-james-does-it-all
2019	1	Bud Light: Special Delivery, "Brewed with No Corn Syrup."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1y/bud-light-super-bowl-2019-corn-syrup-journey
2019	1	CBS: Halftime Show	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1p/super-bowl-liii-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-halftime-show
2019	1	PetComfort: Scout	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1K/petcomfort-by-weathertech-super-bowl-2019-scout
2019	1	Doritos: Now It's Hot, "The Original, Now It's Hot"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1S/doritos-super-bowl-2019-now-its-hot-feat-chance-the-rapper-backstreet-boys
2019	1	Olay: Killer Skin, Sarah Michelle Gellar	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1G/olay-super-bowl-2019-killer-skin-featuring-sarah-michelle-gellar
2019	1	CBS: Shipwrecked	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1g/survivor-edge-of-extinction-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-shipwrecked
2019	1	Turkish Airlines: The Journey	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1B/turkish-airlines-super-bowl-2019-teaser-the-journey-ii
2019	1	Hyundai: The Elevator: Shopper Assurance, "It's Car Shopping Made Better"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1T/hyundai-super-bowl-2019-the-elevator-shopper-assurance-featuring-jason-bateman-t1
2019	1	Bumble: The Ball Is in Her Court	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS16/bumble-super-bowl-2019-the-ball-is-in-her-court-feat-serena-williams-song-by-rita-ora
2019	1	Hulu: The Handmaid's Tale Season Three: Morning Again	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1f/hulu-super-bowl-2019-the-handmaids-tale-season-three-morning-again
2019	1	M&M's: Bad Passengers	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS15/m-and-ms-super-bowl-2019-bad-passengers-featuring-christina-applegate
2019	1	BON & VIV Spiked Seltzer: The Pitch	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS11/bon-and-viv-spiked-seltzer-pear-elderflower-super-bowl-2019-the-pitch
2019	1	YouTube TV: Watch Like a Fan, "Watch Like a Fan"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/ISZM/youtube-tv-super-bowl-2019-watch-like-a-fan
2019	2	CBS: Head Start	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5V/million-dollar-mile-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-head-start

2019	2	Sprint: Best of Both Worlds, "Brighter Future for All"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS19/sprint-super-bowl-2019-best-of-both-worlds-featuring-bo-jackson
2019	2	Stella Artois: Change Up The Usual, "Change Up the Usual"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1U/stella-artois-super-bowl-2019-change-up-the-usual-ft-sarah-jessica-parker-jeff-bridges
2019	2	TurboTax: RoboChild, "CPAs On Demand"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1v/turbotax-super-bowl-2019-robochild
2019	2	Paramount+: Truth	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS10/cbs-all-access-the-twilight-zone-super-bowl-2019-truth-featuring-jordan-peele
2019	2	Paramount+: Star Trek Discovery: Season Two	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1P/cbs-all-access-super-bowl-2019-star-trek-discovery-season-2
2019	2	Norwegian Cruise Line: Good to Be Free: Six Offers, "Feel Free"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1c/norwegian-cruise-line-super-bowl-2019-good-to-be-free-song-by-andy-grammer
2019	2	Mint Mobile: Chunky-Style Milk? That's Not Right	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS13/mint-mobile-super-bowl-2019-chunky-style-milk-thats-not-right
2019	2	CBS: Super Bowl Sunday	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1h/man-with-a-plan-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-super-bowl-Sunday
2019	2	Planters: Mr. Peanut Is Always There in Crunch Time, "Always There in Crunch Time"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1Q/planters-super-bowl-2019-mr-peanut-is-always-there-in-crunch-time-ft-alex-rodriguez-charlie-shee
2019	2	Toyota: Toni, "Let's Go Places"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS18/toyota-rav4-hybrid-super-bowl-2019-toni-featuring-antoinette-harris-t1
2019	2	CBS: It's Almost Time	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1m/super-bowl-liii-super-bowl-2019-its-almost-time
2019	2	T-Mobile: What's for Dinner? "Are You with Us?"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1i/t-mobile-super-bowl-2019-whats-for-dinner-song-by-fine-young-cannibals
2019	2	Persil ProClean: The Deep Clean Level, "It's More Than Clean. It's ProClean."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1e/persil-proclean-super-bowl-2019-the-deep-clean-level
2019	2	Mercedes-Benz: Say the Word	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1a/mercedes-benz-a-class-super-bowl-2019-say-the-word-featuring-ludacris-t1
2019	2	Showtime: Slow Motion	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1J/showtime-super-bowl-2019-slow-motion
2019	2	Google Assistant: 100 Billion Words	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1x/google-translate-super-bowl-2019-100-billion-words
2019	2	Pringles: Sad Device	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1X/pringles-super-bowl-2019-sad-device-song-by-lipps-inc

2019	2	CBS: How Do You Define the Best?	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1_/the-worlds-best-super-bowl-2019-how-do-you-define-the-best
2019	2	Avocados From Mexico: Top Dog, "Always in Season"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1W/avocados-from-mexico-super-bowl-2019-top-dog-featuring-kristin-chenoweth
2019	2	Bud Light: HBO: Game of Thrones: Jousting Match	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS1E/bud-light-super-bowl-2019-jousting-match
2019	3	CBS: Then, Now, Always	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS67/cbs-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-then-now-always
2019	3	CBS: Two Best Friends	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6Y/the-neighborhood-super-bowl-2019-two-best-friends
2019	3	CBS: Goosebumps	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6V/the-worlds-best-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-goosebumps
2019	3	Bud Light: Medieval Barbers	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6L/bud-light-super-bowl-2019-medieval-barbers
2019	3	SKECHERS: Romo Mode	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS59/skechers-slip-on-sneakers-super-bowl-2019-featuring-tony-romo
2019	3	Amazon Prime Video: Hanna: Season One: Be the Girl	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6k/amazon-prime-video-super-bowl-2019-hanna
2019	3	CBS: NFL Greats, "SWAT"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5Q/swat-super-bowl-2019-nfl-greats
2019	3	Colgate: Close Talker, "Do More for Your Whole Mouth"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5P/colgate-total-super-bowl-2019-close-talker-featuring-luke-wilson
2019	3	Google: Codes	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6A/google-search-super-bowl-2019-codes
2019	3	NFL: Inspire Change, "Inspire Change"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5h/nfl-super-bowl-2019-inspire-change
2019	3	CBS: Alicia's Pep Talk	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5m/2019-grammys-super-bowl-2019-alicias-pep-talk
2019	3	DEVOUR Foods: Food Porn, "Never Just Eat, DEVOUR."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5i/devour-foods-super-bowl-2019-food-porn
2019	3	Verizon: The Coach That Wouldn't Be Here: Anthony Lynn	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS58/verizon-super-bowl-2019-the-team-that-wouldnt-be-here-anthony-lynn
2019	3	Michelob: Robots	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5e/michelob-ultra-super-bowl-2019-robots-featuring-maluma
2019	3	Netflix: Our Planet: One Team	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5J/our-planet-super-bowl-2019-one-team

2019	3	Wix.com: Let People Find You, "Create the Website You Want"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5a/wix-com-super-bowl-2019-tv-commercial-let-people-find-you-featuring-karlie-kloss
2019	3	T-Mobile: Lyfted, "Are You with Us?"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5X/t-mobile-super-bowl-2019-lyfted-song-by-eric-carmen
2019	3	CBS: Ziva	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5F/ncis-super-bowl-2019-ziva
2019	3	bubly: Michael Bublé vs. bubly, "Crack a Smile"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5_/bubly-super-bowl-2019-michael-bubl-vs-bubly-featuring-michael-bubl
2019	3	Kia: The Great Unknowns, "Give It Everything"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS5c/kia-telluride-super-bowl-2019-the-great-unknowns-t1
2019	4	CBS: Just the First Hour, "Grammy's Promo"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6l/2019-grammys-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-just-the-first-hour
2019	4	The Washington Post: Democracy Dies in Darkness, "Democracy Dies in Darkness"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6j/the-washington-post-super-bowl-2019-democracy-dies-in-darkness
2019	4	T-Mobile: Dad?!, "Are You with Us?"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6p/t-mobile-super-bowl-2019-dad-song-by-dean-martin
2019	4	CBS: Girl Power: CBS Cares and Girls Inc.	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6K/cbs-super-bowl-2019-girl-power-cbs-cares-and-girls-inc
2019	4	CBS: Special Show, "The Late Show Promo"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6G/the-late-show-super-bowl-2019-tv-promo-special-show
2019	4	Michelob: The Pure Experience, "Beer in Its Organic Form"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6S/michelob-ultra-pure-gold-super-bowl-2019-the-pure-experience-featuring-zo-kravitz
2019	4	Amazon: Not Everything Makes the Cut	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6g/amazon-super-bowl-2019-not-everything-makes-the-cut-featuring-harrison-ford
2019	4	CBS: Final Ten of The Big Bang Theory	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6f/the-big-bang-theory-super-bowl-2019-final-ten
2019	4	Budweiser: Wind Never Felt Better, "This Bud's for a Better Tomorrow"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6T/budweiser-super-bowl-2019-wind-never-felt-better-song-by-bob-dylan
2019	4	Burger King: Andy	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS66/burger-king-whopper-super-bowl-2019-andy
2019	4	Verizon: The Team That Wouldn't Be Here, "America's Most Reliable Network"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS61/verizon-super-bowl-2019-the-team-that-wouldnt-be-here
2019	4	Bud Light: Trojan Horse Occupants, "Brewed with No Corn Syrup"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS62/bud-light-super-bowl-2019-trojan-horse-occupants

2019	4	WeatherTech: Dropped Call, "Made in America"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6q/weathertech-cupfone-super-bowl-2019-dropped-call
2019	4	Xbox: We All Win	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/IS6b/microsoft-xbox-adaptive-controller-super-bowl-2019-we-all-win
2022	1	NBC: The Original Returns (Law & Order)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpf/law-and-order-super-bowl-2022-tv-promo-the-original-returns
2022	1	Oculus VR: Old Friends. New Fun.	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVgG/meta-quest-2-super-bowl-2022-old-friends-new-fun-song-by-simple-minds
2022	1	Frito Lay: Push It	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qP9J/frito-lay-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-push-it-song-by-salt-n-pepa
2022	1	Coinbase Global Inc: QR: That's What I Want	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVgK/coinbase-global-inc-super-bowl-2022-qr-thats-what-i-want
2022	1	Carvana: Oversharing Mom, "We'll Drive You Happy"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qvmG/carvana-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-oversharing-mom
2022	1	NBC: Whenever, Wherever, (News)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVg4/nbc-news-now-super-bowl-2022-whenever-wherever
2022	1	Avocados From Mexico: Always Good	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUUV/avocados-from-mexico-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-always-good-ft-andy-ritcher
2022	1	Polestar: None of That, "100% Electric"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVg6/polestar-2022-super-bowl-none-of-that-t1
2022	1	Netflix: New Movies Every Week, "Only on Netflix"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVTv/netflix-2022-super-bowl-new-movies-every-week-song-by-otr-and-ukiyo
2022	1	BMW: Zeus & Hera, "The Ultimate Electric Driving Machine"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVp6/bmw-ix-super-bowl-2022-zeus-and-hera-ft-arnold-schwarzenegger-salma-hayek-t1
2022	1	DraftKings: Fortune: Life's a Gamble	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9tS/draftkings-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-fortune-lifes-a-gamble
2022	1	Bud Light Next: Zero in the Way of Possibility, "Brewed for What's Next"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUnq/bud-light-next-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-zero-in-the-way-of-possibility
2022	1	NBC: Courthouse (Law & Order)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVg3/law-and-order-super-bowl-2022-tv-promo-courthouse
2022	1	Expedia: Stuff, "Made to Travel"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9Lv/expedia-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-stuff-featuring-ewan-mcgregor-song-by-wreckless-eric
2022	1	E*TRADE from Morgan Stanley: He's Back	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVTx/etrade-from-morgan-stanley-2022-super-bowl-hes-back-song-by-britney-spears

2022	1	Rakuten: High Stakes	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUqm/rakuten-super-bowl-2022-high-stakes-featuring-hannah-waddingham
2022	1	Disney+: Moon Knight	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVT3/disney-2022-super-bowl-moon-knight-song-by-kid-cudi
2022	1	T-Mobile: Rescue Your Phone Today, "Do It for the Phones"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVV4/t-mobile-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-rescue-your-phone-today-feat-miley-cyrus-dolly-parton
2022	1	NBC: Stay Tuned (For Halftime Show)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVg0/super-bowl-halftime-show-2022-stay-tuned
2022	1	Hologic, Inc.: Real Love	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVBc/hologic-inc-2022-super-bowl-real-love-featuring-mary-j-blige
2022	1	Squarespace: Sally's Seashells: "Everything to Shell Anything"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9VR/squarespace-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-sallys-seashells-feat-zendaya-andr-3000
2022	1	Telemundo: GOOOOOOAL	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVS3/2022-fifa-world-cup-super-bowl-tv-promo-gooooooal
2022	1	Toyota: Brothers, "Start Your Impossible"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUUX/toyota-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-2022-winter-olympics-brothers-ft-the-mckeever-brothers-t1
2022	1	Peacock TV: This Year: Originals to Love, "Originals to Love"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q463/peacock-tv-streaming-this-year
2022	2	Amazon Prime Video: Thursday Night Football	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9_0/amazon-prime-video-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-thursday-night-football
2022	2	FTX: Don't Miss Out, "Don't Miss Out on the Next Big Thing"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVTf/ftx-2022-super-bowl-dont-miss-out-featuring-larry-david
2022	2	NBC: Dig It	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpT/nbc-super-bowl-2022-dig-it
2022	2	Michelob ULTRA Organic Seltzer: Caddy, "It's Only Worth It If You Enjoy It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUNI/michelob-ultra-organic-seltzer-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-caddy-featuring-brooks-koepka-song-by-jim
2022	2	Turkish Airlines: Pangea	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9xj/turkish-airlines-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-pangea-featuring-morgan-freeman
2022	2	Wallbox USA: Embrace Electricity Again: Moving Forward, "Embrace Electricity."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUQI/super-bowl-2022-pre-release-embrace-electricity-moving-forward
2022	2	TurboTax: What If?	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9DC/turbotax-live-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-what-if-featuring-jason-sudeikis
2022	2	Gillette: As Quick as Washing Your Face	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVB5/gillette-2022-super-bowl-as-quick-as-washing-your-face-song-by-yma-sumac

2022	2	Caesars Entertainment: I Said Legendary	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9h9/caesars-sportsbook-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-i-said-legendary-ft-jb-smoove-halle-berry
2022	2	Uber Eats: Uber Don't Eats,	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUME/uber-eats-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-uber-dont-eats-ft-jennifer-coolidge-nicholas-braun
2022	2	T-Mobile: Do It for the Phones, "Do It for the Phones"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVkd/t-mobile-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-do-it-for-the-phones-feat-miley-cyrus-dolly-parton
2022	2	USA Network: Wrestlemania Season	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVSN/wwe-super-bowl-2022-wrestlemania-season
2022	2	WeatherTech: Special Ops Fit Crew	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUEH/weathertech-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-special-ops-fit-crew
2022	2	Disney+: All the GOATs	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVSy/disney-super-bowl-2022-all-the-goats-featuring-awkwafina
2022	2	Rocket Mortgage: Barbie's Dream House	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVBA/rocket-mortgage-2022-super-bowl-barbies-dream-house-featuring-anna-kendrick
2022	2	Chevrolet: New Generation	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVgz/chevrolet-silverado-super-bowl-2022-new-generation-feat-jamie-lynn-sigler-robert-iler-t1
2022	2	Michelob: Welcome to Superior Bowl, "It's Only Worth It If You Enjoy It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUCi/michelob-ultra-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-welcome-to-superior-bowl-featuring-serena-williams-peyton
2022	2	NBC: Ultra Pass (Halftime Show App).	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVSs/super-bowl-halftime-show-2022-ultra-pass
2022	2	Salesforce: New Frontier	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpB/salesforce-super-bowl-2022-new-frontier-featuring-matthew-mcconaughey
2022	3	Peacock TV: Marry Me (Movie)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVSn/peacock-tv-super-bowl-2022-marry-me
2022	3	T-Mobile Home Internet: A Duet for Home Internet	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVOD/t-mobile-home-internet-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-a-duet-for-home-internet-ft-donald-faison
2022	3	eToro: Imagine a World, "The Power of Social Investing"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVBL/etoro-2022-super-bowl-imagine-a-world
2022	3	General Motors: EV-erybody In, "EVerybody In."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVwg/general-motors-super-bowl-2022-ev-erybody-in-ft-mike-myers-seth-green-mindy-sterling-t1
2022	3	NBC: Sam (Law & Order)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVKY/law-and-order-super-bowl-2022-promo-sam
2022	3	Kia: Robo Dog, "Movement That Inspires"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qv4I/kia-ev6-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-robo-dog-song-by-bonnie-tyler-t1

2022	3	Bud Light Seltzer: Land of Loud Flavors, "Loudest Flavors Ever"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qPvX/bud-light-seltzer-hard-soda-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-land-of-loud-flavors-featuring-guy-fieri
2022	3	Pringles: Stuck In, "Get Stuck In"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qU4U/pringles-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-spot-stuck-in-song-by-lionel-richie
2022	3	Universal Orlando Resort: Jurassic World Velocicoaster: Apex Predator, "Let Yourself Woah"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVGU/jurassic-world-velocicoaster-super-bowl-2022-apex-predator
2022	3	Lay's: Stay Golden, "Stay Golden"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qvRX/lays-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-stay-golden-featuring-seth-rogen-paul-rudd
2022	3	Amazon Prime Video: The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVBD/amazon-prime-video-2022-super-bowl-the-lord-of-the-rings-the-rings-of-power
2022	3	Planet Fitness: What's Gotten into Lindsay? "Feel Fitacular"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q4Bu/planet-fitness-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-whats-gotten-into-lindsay-feat-lindsay-lohan
2022	3	Cue Health: Meet Cue	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9hX/cue-health-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-meet-cue
2022	3	Google Pixel: Lizzo in Real Tone, "Everyone Deserves to Be Seen as They Truly Are."	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9yA/google-pixel-6-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-lizzo-in-real-tone-song-by-lizzo
2022	4	NBC: Rivals Promo	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVKR/the-endgame-super-bowl-2022-rivals
2022	4	Greenlight Financial Technology: I'll Take It, "Learn to Earn, Save and Invest Together"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qU4P/greenlight-financial-technology-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-ill-take-it-featuring-ty-burrell
2022	4	Budweiser: A Clydesdale's Journey	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVgt/budweiser-2022-super-bowl-a-clydesdales-journey
2022	4	Peacock TV: Premium Movies	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVS0/peacock-tv-super-bowl-2022-premium-movies
2022	4	Hellmann's	Best Foods: Mayo Tackles Food Waste, "Make Taste Not Waste"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVBN/hellmanns-2022-super-bowl-mayo-tackles-food-waste-feat-jerod-mayo-pete-davidson
2022	4	Taco Bell: The Grande Escape, "Live Mas"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q9Wb/taco-bell-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-the-grande-escape-featuring-doja-cat
2022	4	Nissan: Presenting: Thrill Driver	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qvvl/nissan-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-presenting-thrill-driver-feat-eugene-levy-brie-larson-t1
2022	4	NBC: Unwrapped (The Thing About Pam Promo)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVK6/the-thing-about-pam-super-bowl-2022-promo-unwrapped

2022	4	NBC: Monobob (Olympics)	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpz/nbc-super-bowl-2022-2022-winter-olympics-monobob
2022	4	Irish Spring: Welcome to Irish Spring, "Smell from a Nice-Smelling Place"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUG9/irish-spring-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-welcome-to-irish-spring
2022	4	Cutwater Spirits: Here's to the Lazy Ones, "Bar Quality Cocktails in a Can"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpN/cutwater-spirits-super-bowl-2022-heres-to-the-lazy-ones
2022	4	Booking.com: Idris Says Things, "Booking.yeah"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qUUw/booking-com-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-idris-says-things-featuring-idris-elba
2022	4	QuickBooks: Duality Duets: Hero	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVVT/quickbooks-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-duality-duets-featuring-dj-khaled
2022	4	Amazon, Inc.: Mind Reader	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVT9/amazon-inc-2022-super-bowl-mind-reader-featuring-scarlett-johansson-colin-jost
2022	4	NFL: We Believe, "It Takes All of Us"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpj/nfl-super-bowl-2022-we-believe-featuring-calais-campbell
2022	4	Vroom.com: Flake: The Musical, "All Online"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/q3er/vroom-com-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-flake-the-musical
2022	4	NBC: Amazing Final Act	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/bVpr/nbc-super-bowl-2022-2022-winter-olympics-amazing-final-act
2022	4	Sam's Club VIP	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/qPzj/sams-club-super-bowl-2022-pre-release-vip-featuring-kevin-hart

APPENDIX B

Additional Commercials Discussed Outside of Sample Years

Year	Quarter	Brand/ Title/Tagline	URL
2015	Pre-game	Carl's Jr. All-Natural Burger Super Bowl 2015 TV Spot, 'Au Naturel', "Eat Like You Mean It"	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7Xz8/carls-jr-all-natural-burger-super-bowl-2015-au-naturel