

Within our ever-growing eco-conscious world, what we want out of the products and services that we buy has extended beyond simple desires for functional and/or aesthetic value. The current consumer climate has shifted into a sphere of enhanced environmental awareness and, as such, the mindset of the individual consumer while looking for which product to buy is sifting through what they want the product to promise, including ease, comfort, function, value, health, and the increasingly important promise of ‘environmentally friendly’.

In order to dissect this ‘looking’ process of shopping for products and services and how the characteristics of a product are relayed visually through packaging and label design it’s imperative to understand how carefully crafted visual works play on the consciousness of an individual and a society at large, and how they connect to our emotional and logical cognitive processes. The human sense of sight means that human instincts can be paired with the social consciousness of seeing to understand an intricately formed visual language of symbols in the packaging designs, and thus a shopper will be directed implicitly towards the desired product.

Through historical research of advertising design practices I will learn of the many techniques of composition, line, color, etc. that act as the mecha-

nisms of communication in this visual language of design. Then I can use this knowledge to focus on how environmental health has developed its own set of visual symbols within advertising design meant to intimate a particular products allegiance to environmental health. While I focus on the most common products found in supermarkets (the essential gallery where the most



‘looking’ at packaging designs occurs) from food to cleaning and paper products, I will be able to express the ways such visual stimuli sell them-

selves from a classic design perspective as well as through use of the newer symbols of ‘eco-friendliness’ (such as corrugated cardboard packaging and excessive use of green or botanical imagery). These ideas account for the visual symbolism of the green-age, and will frame what is to be created for my visual component to my thesis.

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‘Greenwashing’ Design Practices  
in a Visual World