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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

FINE ART

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**CHOCOLATE, COSMETICS,
EATING DISORDERS
AND
JANINE ANTONI**

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INTRODUCTION

Women believe that by controlling or containing their bodies and their appetites they can escape the pernicious cycle of insufficiency, of never being good enough. (Bordo, 1990, p.55).

This dissertation is an examination of issues which are addressed in the above quote. The idea that the body can be "controlled or contained" by the mind in relation to the female, is the subject with which I am dealing. The words "appetite" and "pernicious cycle" are relevant to this investigation, as I shall be discussing the denial of appetite of many women and the dangerous cycle that this denial can lead to.

The art work under discussion is the work of Janine Antoni. Female activities and the female body itself are central to her work. I shall be investigating Antoni's choice of materials (chocolate, make-up, soap, fat) which have a substantial relationship with consumerism, in an attempt to emphasise the prominent part that consumerism plays in women's lives. I hope to draw together some of the effects that advertising can achieve and to indicate the strong emphasis on "the beautiful woman" and "the thin woman" in our consumer culture.

Through an investigation of chocolate advertisements in Chapter One, I will discuss the notion of the "double-bind" that women are faced with. The first part of this chapter will establish the target audience for chocolate products. This female audience is encouraged by advertisements to eat chocolate. My investigation will explain how women are enticed by advertisements and encouraged to indulge. One of the ways in which marketers attract their audience is by implying that chocolate is a luxurious, sexual product. I will discuss this eroticisation of chocolate in advertisements and compare it with the use of chocolate in Antoni's piece *Gnaw*. The way in which marketers can influence people to do things that they wouldn't normally do will be investigated in relation to Antoni's *Wean*. I hope to discuss the change that occurs in this piece and to relate it to the changes in appearance which advertising encourages women to perform. The "double-bind" which I have already mentioned will then be

investigated. This contradiction is where women are constantly tempted and urged to eat chocolate and at the same time they are told that the slimmer the body is, the more beautiful the body becomes. This division between chocolate (delicious) and the fat body (disgusting), will be discussed in relation to *Gnaw's* attraction and repulsion. I shall also be investigating the absent body in *Gnaw* and *Wean*, and the absent body in chocolate advertisements.

The aim of the second chapter is to establish the significance of beauty products on women's lives. I hope to highlight the pressure advertisements for cosmetics place on women to enhance and change their natural appearance. There is a strong emphasis on products that alter one's "naturalness" in Antoni's work. The pieces which I shall be discussing are *Loving Care*, *Butterfly Kisses*, *Mom and Dad* and *Tender Buttons*. The first three of these works will be discussed because of their relevance to the cosmetic industry. *Tender Buttons* will be examined in terms of the parallel between the transformation that takes place in the work and the transformation which members of the target audience often experience. The combination of Antoni's work and cosmetic advertisements will highlight many of the ways that women are targeted in our consumer culture and the actions which these women are encouraged to take.

Antoni's work will be investigated in Chapter Three in a similar way to that of the previous chapters. Advertising is central to each section in this thesis, however each chapter focuses on a different part of it. Firstly chocolate advertisements are examined followed by cosmetic advertisements in Chapter Two. The third chapter features advertisements also, however the main focus is on the illnesses which can be encouraged or worsened by advertisements. These illnesses which I shall investigate are known today as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. I shall indicate how one might connect these illnesses with advertising. The particular works which are most significant are *Eureka* and *Lick and Lather*. In order to highlight a relationship between consumerism, Antoni's work and eating disorders, I feel it necessary to discuss both the scientific and the cultural discourses on anorexia and bulimia. Through the investigation of Antoni's work I hope to emphasise the similarities between *Gnaw*,

Wean, Loving Care, Butterfly Kisses, Mom and Dad, Tender Buttons, Eureka and Lick and Lather. From these similarities I hope to indicate links between the overall work, consumerism and eating disorders.

CHAPTER ONE

CONSUMERISM, CHOCOLATE AND JANINE ANTONI

Cadbury's advertise one of their products just before each episode of a popular soap opera every week. In order to emphasise their products, all of the characters and props in the advertisements are made out of chocolate. Recently the advertisement for Cadbury's *Wispa Mint* featured two chocolate women "nattering" in the street. The first woman said "But it's pure indulgence", the other replied "Oh I know, but I can't help myself". The words exchanged between these women may seem quite innocent, however they are appropriate to my investigation in this chapter.

The two chocolate women are representing the female viewer. The female viewers are bombarded with delicious, tempting food and I would suggest that most of these viewers say similar things to each other. The words used, "indulgence" and "help" are words which are commonly used in discourses on the female who is lured by marketers to eat sumptuous food like chocolate and is also encouraged to eat healthy food in order to stay slim. It is this problem, the double bind that women are faced with that I am investigating. In order to understand how this problem developed I will be observing the ways in which marketers target women when advertising chocolate by feminising and eroticising the products. I will be examining the parallel between the double bind in Antoni's 1992 piece *Gnaw* and the double bind in advertising. This investigation will show how Antoni has highlighted the contradiction that women are faced with. Should we enjoy and indulge or should we strive for an ideal beauty? Once it has been established that the target audience for chocolate is female, I hope to investigate how advertising could possibly influence women to buy the products marketed and also how advertising could encourage women to stay slim and attractive.

Antoni's piece *Wean* plays on this idea of women and consumerism and ultimately the consumer changing form. Following the investigation of this piece I plan to look at the absent body in certain advertisements and in Antoni's work. Through a hermeneutic process I plan on deciphering the code of advertisements in order to see what the absent person could mean and consequently I could explain why nobody is present in *Gnaw* and *Wean*. This investigation of Antoni's work and advertisements should indicate some of the hypocrisies of consumer society.

The chocoholic is a regressive identity celebrating female weakness and surrender to temptation.(Lupton, 1996, p.105)

This quote from Barthel is an attempt to indicate that women are the only sex that could become addicted to chocolate. This idea that women are the main eaters of chocolate could have come from previous studies which suggest that women tend to eat sweet foods more than men. For instance, Mintz has suggested in his study of sugar (Lupton, 1996, p.35) that the colour white (sugar) is associated with feminine purity. Similarly, Visser suggests that whiteness is light, mild, soothing and feminine (Lupton, 1996, p.109). According to their studies, chocolate would be considered a feminine food because it contains so much sugar (whiteness). One might suggest that this specific gendering of food would not apply to most of us, since the majority of people would eat a wide variety of food from chocolate to minced meat. However, the notion that chocolate is primarily a female food is continually portrayed in advertising. "Men create, produce and distribute most of the media images in our culture", (Bentz and Mayes (eds.), 1993, p.2). One might suggest that therefore men have chosen women as the target audience for chocolate since men rarely appear in advertisements for chocolate.

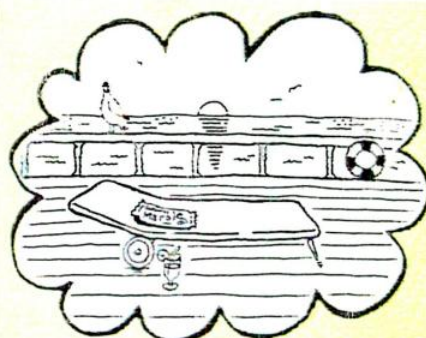
An example of how chocolate advertisements are targeted at women could be the advertisement for Cadbury's Marble (figs. 1, 2 & 3). The chocolate bar itself is the character in all three advertisements. The "thought bubble" coming from the bar indicates that it is dreaming. One might suggest that the bar is a female character



Cadbury's Marble. The bar with an expensive taste.



Cadbury's Marble. The bar with an expensive taste.



Cadbury's Marble. The bar with an expensive taste.

Figs. 1, 2 & 3. Marble advertisements, 1998.

due to what “she” is dreaming about. In fig. 1, the bar is dreaming about her gold-card. The picture on it is of a woman and “Ms. C.” is printed before the name Marble, indicating that Marble is a woman. In fig. 2, the bar’s dream is of being at a fashion show. All the women at the show are sitting in the front row and the men are in the background. The bar is sitting in the middle of the women indicating that she is one of them. The women are made to look like they are there purely for the sake of seeing the latest fashion, while all the men are working as photographers. Fig. 3 also represents a female Marble. The bar is dreaming of lying on a sunbed by the sea. The only indication of the bar’s femininity is the dainty cocktail glass beside the bed. The feminisation of the bar in these advertisements targets women as the audience by creating scenarios that women could identify with. I suggest that because women are the target audience for chocolate, men are not encouraged as much to buy chocolate and therefore women are the biggest market audience for chocolate. If women are buying more chocolate than men, Barthel’s and Mintz’s perception of chocolate being a female food will be strengthened.¹

Antoni disrupts this representation of women and chocolate in *Gnaw* (see fig. 4). It is indicated in advertising that women adore chocolate and that they eat much more of it than men do. If one was to consider that Antoni is female and that she is working with chocolate as one of her materials in this piece, one might realise that the popular representation of women with chocolate becomes dislocated. It could be that she tasted it and rejected it. This rejection of chocolate by a female disturbs the images advertisers present. The rejection by Antoni is strengthened by the final presentation of the piece. She recycled the chewed chocolate by making chocolate boxes out of it. The finished piece looked like a shop window display (fig. 5). The fabrication of these boxes indicated that Antoni created them for somebody else. It could be argued that she could have sold them or given them away as gifts. Whatever they were meant for, the fact that Antoni produced them, reversed the popular conception that as a rule, men give chocolates to women.

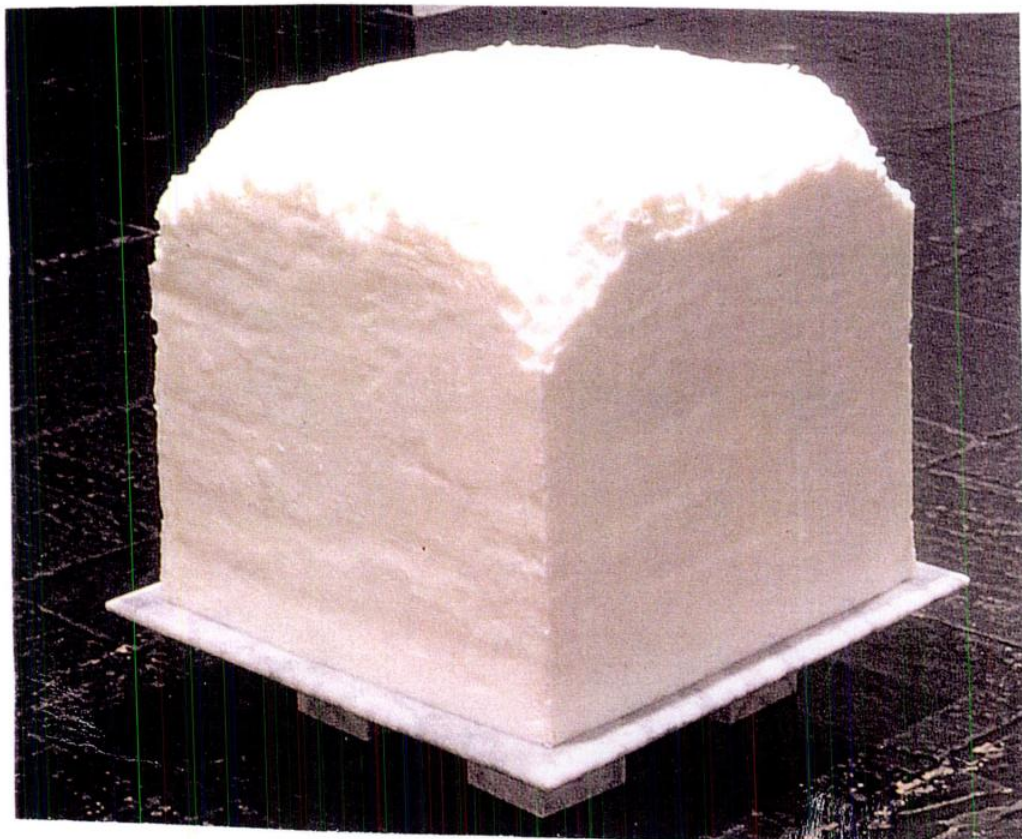


Fig. 4. Gnaw, 1992.



Fig. 5. Gnaw Shop Window Display, 1992.

During the Victorian era women were encouraged to limit their food intake. In *Godey's Lady's Book* the advice was to "be frugal and plain in your tastes," (Brumberg, 1988, p.179). In contemporary society advice to women is a lot more subtle, however the underlying message in advertisements is similar to the Victorian *Lady's Book*. Women may be the target audience for chocolate, yet they rarely appear eating it in advertisements. Generally they appear alongside the product or holding it, however they are infrequently indulging in eating chocolate. When they are shown eating the product there are sexual metaphors attached.

In Antoni's 1992 piece *Gnaw* she cast a 600lb cube of chocolate and a 600lb cube of lard. She bit into them for a month and a half, spitting out the chewed chocolate as she went. Antoni has commented on this process of biting chocolate and lard. "I imitate basic fine art rituals such as chiselling with my teeth." (Cottingham, 1993, p.105).² Following this chiselling Antoni made four hundred lipsticks from the chewed lard and heart shaped chocolate boxes from the chocolate. Antoni's use of her own mouth as the tool in this piece is significant for the following reason. Viewers of the piece are aware that a woman (Antoni) has chewed on a large amount of chocolate and fat. These viewers are also aware that advertisements associate women with chocolate yet women are rarely shown eating it. An opinion that suggests that women could be seen indulging in chocolate and leaving teeth marks there to prove it. Although she rejected the chocolate after chewing, the bites that she originally took were in no way delicate. Antoni's activity in *Gnaw* would have been tiresome, laborious and perhaps sickening. One would not assume that the process was in any way romantic or erotic. This lack of sexualisation in *Gnaw* reinforces the dichotomy between the representation of women in chocolate advertisements and the piece itself.

The advertisement for Nestle's *Aero* is an example of how the indulgent woman is sexualised. The woman in this advertisement is not just appearing alongside the bar, she is indulging in it. There is a large lake of chocolate which she is swimming in, indicating that she is consumed by it. The woman is engrossed in chocolate, however the advertisers do not simply portray a woman enjoying chocolate

for the sake of pleasure, they attach a sexual metaphor so that the woman maintains her conditional attractiveness. In this advertisement the words of the theme tune "Let's get it on", accompanied by her inviting gaze transforms the innocent advertisement into an eroticised one. Antoni's process of biting into a large quantity of chocolate could convey a certain message. As she said in an interview with Laura Cottingham, "I started with the idea that I wanted to chew on a 600lb cube of chocolate" (Cottingham, 1993, p.105).³ This shows that Antoni had a desire to bite chocolate for her own personal experience and that she did not do it for the sole reason of making boxes out of chewed chocolate. I suggest that her message is that women do not always have a "bite-size" amount of chocolate. Sometimes women do eat voraciously and when they indulge it is not always in a sexual manner.

One of the contradictions in consumer society is the double-bind women are faced with. Women are constantly encouraged to indulge in chocolate and at the same time women are urged to lose weight by eating low-fat products. Chocolate is advertised as a delicious, exciting and romantic food. According to Deborah Lupton fat is portrayed as unhealthy and repulsive (Lupton, 1996, p.82).⁴ Chocolate is a fatty food therefore it is both romantic and repulsive at the same time. If women are taken in by one type of advertising (chocolate), they are instantly going against another type of advertising (low-fat foods). There is a parallel between this double-bind in consumer society and Antoni's piece *Gnaw*. The 600lb cube of fat which she chewed on which would be considered dangerous and unhealthy for women, ironically produced lipsticks which are meant to enhance women's appearance. The lipsticks would be used to enhance beauty, however this could be disturbing because the viewer is aware that the contents of the lipsticks had been chewed in Antoni's mouth. Similarly the chocolate boxes could be tempting to the viewer but they could also be considered repulsive because of their origin. This play between attractiveness and repulsiveness is common in advertising.

Recently advertisers have attempted to fuse the two opposing messages. Advertisements are featuring chocolate products and messages to stay thin at

the same time. The advertisement for *Heaven* (fig.6) has a rather blunt way of conveying its message. The image is divided in half. The top half represents an overweight female body (portraying the fat body as the repulsive body) and the bottom half features the chocolate bar (the attractive part). The intention of this advertisement is to let the consumer feel that she can have it all. It indicates that she can eat delicious food and stay slim and well. In the small print it is explained that *Heaven* only helps slimming if the consumer is already on a controlled diet. This indicates that the target audience for the bar is overweight females. The crude nature of the female form in the advertisement attempts to make the viewer see herself as that person. This was done by excluding the body's head from the picture.

Gnaw plays on this idea of "good" and "bad" products. The "bad" product in *Gnaw* is transformed into four hundred "good" products. The audience of a chocolate advertisement could look at the product and be delighted by it and disgusted by it at the same time. Similarly *Gnaw's* audience is presented with opposing materials. The chocolate is delicious and the fat is dangerous. From the start to the end of this piece there is a division, two opposing materials pulling against each other. The initial reaction to the piece (attraction and repulsion) is the same as the final conclusion. One is never sure that one likes the products because one is also repelled by them.⁵

Our personal identity is created out of elements created by others and marketed aggressively and seductively (Tomlinson, (ed.), 1990, p.13).

This statement could be an explanation of how consumer society can cause people to follow the standards that are set in advertising. The suggestion is that marketers try to cast people into a particular shape depending on the current "shape" they are selling. Antoni's piece *Wean* plays on the idea of the changing body in consumer society (see fig. 7). I feel it necessary to discuss the role of chocolate advertisements in relation to *Wean*.

Wean consists of a series of negative impressions in a wall. The first impression is Antoni's breast. The second is Antoni's nipple. These are followed by

three negative impressions of latex nipples. The impressions are in a straight line across the wall. This enables the viewer to read the piece from left to right. When this is done

Gobble without the wobble.

pssst! →

halo

so good it's almost a sin

Halo Heaven is just one of a range of delicious reduced fat bars, all covered with real milk chocolate.
Of course, Halo bars can help slimming or weight control only as part of a calorie controlled diet.

Fig. 6. Heaven advertisement, 1998.

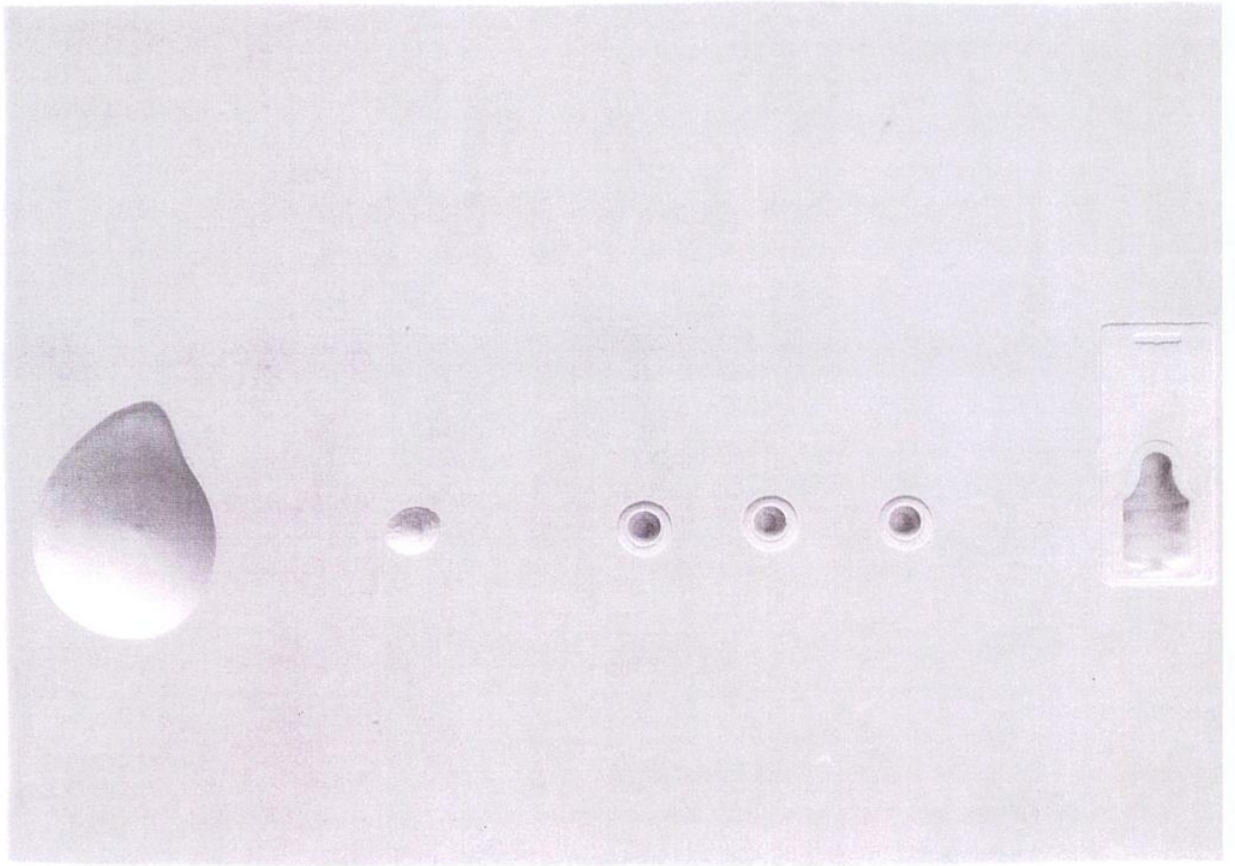


Fig. 7. Wean, 1990.

it becomes obvious that the piece starts with the imprint of a human breast and the result is packaging. The piece takes the form of a narrative and could represent the changes that the body goes through in order to keep up with consumer society's demands.

It has already been established that chocolate advertising targets women and that sometimes the advertisements incorporate the message that women should stay thin at the same time as eat chocolate. Naturally people's tastes change according to consumer society's changes. If one were to look at an advertisement for Cadbury's *Caramel*, one would notice that there is a female character and a male character. The female is a rabbit that says "Take it easy with Cadbury's Caramel". The male character is another animal, dressed as a postman. Instantly one is aware that the rabbit is relaxing and the male is working. This indicates that the man is busy working and the woman is eating chocolate. In the aforementioned advertisement for Cadbury's *Marble*, the women at a fashion show were seated while the men stood behind taking photographs. This is similar to the *Caramel* advertisement. The men in this advertisement are also working while the women are at leisure. Obviously this is not a fair representation of how men and women really behave. Advertisements for diet products would not make women instantly go on a diet. These advertisements could however cause women to be less indulgent over a period of time.

Wean incorporates Antoni's own body parts. In this piece, Antoni presents a metaphor for her own personal experience. Antoni has said that she uses her own body for the following reason. "The viewers have a charged relationship to the object because I put myself through these physical feats." (Cembalest, 1993, p.122)⁶. The packaging in the piece indicates that consumerism is involved. The piece incorporates Antoni's body, which goes through a process of alteration. The fact that all the impressions are associated with the same body part could indicate that the body does not change dramatically due to consumer society. The changes Antoni presents are subtle. For example she does not show a nipple imprint turning into an elbow imprint. It might be suggested that this piece directly relates to our own experience as

consumers. All women that watch chocolate advertisements do not turn into the Cadbury's "rabbit", however one might suggest that they could gradually develop subtle changes.

Chocolate has a distinctive smell, hence Antoni's *Gnaw* would appeal to its viewers olfactorily. Judith Findlay explains that the sensual quality in the work creates an opportunity for the viewers to engage with it (Findlay, 1995, p.14).⁷ In addition to this, viewers are aware that there are teeth marks and that there is no person present. The absent person in the work could cause the viewer to wonder where the teeth are that made the marks. The viewer is in a position to imagine what the sensation of biting into chocolate and lard would be like. The viewer could take the place of the absent person and this could enable the viewer to become a part of the piece.

There is often an absent person in advertisements. As we have seen already the advertisement for *Heaven* features a body with no head. It is probable that the head was left out purposely as a means to tempt the viewer to try to fill the gap. The viewers could fill in this gap (the missing head) by picturing their own head in the image. It has been suggested (Williamson, 1978, p.77) that advertisers use the absent body in order to let the viewer enter the advertisement. An example of the missing body in chocolate advertisements could be the recent advertisement for *Toblerone* (see fig.8). The setting for this advertisement is an exotic one. There is nobody present, therefore the scene is left open for the viewers to imagine themselves present. There is a parallel between the pyramids in an ancient land and the pieces of chocolate. The viewers are drawn into the advertisement by the representation of an exotic place that they could escape to. *Gnaw* is presented in a similar way to these advertisements. Firstly the viewer is faced with a highly sensual substance (chocolate). Secondly there is nobody present. Thirdly there are traces of human activity (bite-marks) and finally the viewer is drawn into the work in order to interpret it.

Through an investigation of chocolate advertisements it is clear that many of the issues which the advertisers raise, are also raised when discussing Antoni's *Gnaw*

and *Wean*. This emphasises the strong sense of consumerism about the work, and indicates that Antoni feels it necessary to highlight such issues.

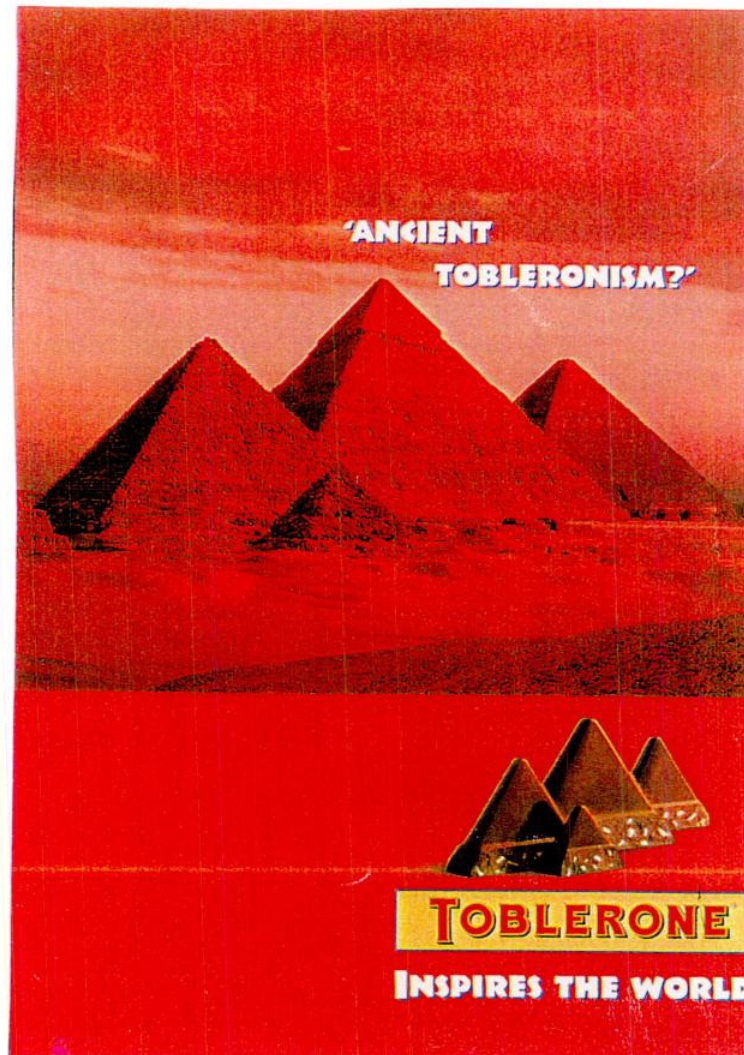


Fig. 8. Toblerone advertisement, 1998.

NOTES

1. For elaborations on Barthel's discourse on chocolate, see "Modernism and Marketing; The Chocolate Box Revisited".
2. Antoni's comments on the biting of chocolate and lard were made in response to a question from Laura Cottingham which was: Could you talk about your choice of materials and your process? (Cottingham, 1993).
3. Antoni is asked : Why do you use your own body as the foundation for your process? In response she explains that she begins work with the idea of an experience she wants to give herself. In *Gnaw*'s case the experience was to bite chocolate. Whether she swallowed it or discarded it decided the meaning of the work. (Cottingham, 1993).
4. Participants of Lupton's interviews showed their dislike for fat. For example Tony (participant) explained that he feels sick when he sees fat on meat and finds it disgusting. (Lupton, 1996).
5. My interpretation of the repulsion and attraction of *Gnaw* has also been recognised by Judith Findlay. She considers the attraction and repulsion to be elements which cause "a friction" and "a tension" in the work. (Findlay, 1995).
6. At the Whitney Biennial, 1993, Antoni speaks about the notion of her presence in the work and the fact that she creates a scenario where the viewer has to recreate a narrative in order to understand the work. (Cembalest, 1993).
7. Discussion about the sensual nature of the work. Judith Findlay suggests that Antoni uses sensual materials so that they can achieve a level of intimacy with her body. (Findlay, 1995).

CHAPTER TWO

DAILY RITUALS AND JANINE ANTONI

The female body is reconstructed according to the cultural and eminently ideological standards of physical appearance. (Balsamo, 1996, p.58)

The words above are central to my investigation in this chapter. The cosmetic industry has played a powerful part in setting the aforementioned ideological standards. One of the ways that the industry gains the consumer's attention is by alarming people. Recently many different products have been advertised in such a way that it is indicated that everyday life could be harmful to people's appearance. The advertisement for *City Block* (fig.9) indicates that the product is a protection against all the "nasty elements" of city life. The aim of this is to inform the viewer that they are damaging their skin if they don't protect it with *City Block*. This example is used to show how the cosmetic industry can draw people in by targeting their insecurities (in this case the consumers protection). Constant changes in the cosmetic industry offering new results, attempt to entice the consumers to "beautify" themselves with the latest discoveries.

Judith Tannenbaum suggested that Antoni links archetypal images and daily rituals with contemporary cultural issues (Tannenbaum, 1995, p.7). This refers to Antoni's emphasis on habitual activities. She has used materials such as make-up and hair dye in her work. She is taking the processes from her everyday life such as cleaning, and creating artistic forms from these experiences. I will be investigating Antoni's 1992 piece *Loving Care* and it's relationship to "the natural look" in cosmetic advertising. Antoni's *Butterfly Kisses* (1993) will be discussed in connection with the appearance of men in advertisements for women's products. The notion of identity will be examined in Antoni's *Mom and Dad* (1994). The play on identity in certain cosmetic advertisements will be viewed in relation to this piece.



Fig. 9. City Block advertisement, 1998.

Finally I hope to draw a parallel between Antoni's *Tender Buttons* and the cosmetic industry's pressure on people to conform to its set ideals. This investigation should indicate how Antoni has highlighted the daily rituals women adhere to in order to follow the standards of beauty which are constantly changing.

Sociologist Dorothy Smith's notion of agency, (Davis, 1995, p.62), suggests that a woman's body deficiency can cause dissatisfaction.¹ It is argued that this dissatisfaction can cause the woman to change her appearance and that therefore she herself is the agent of change. This theory suggests that the woman is responsible for altering her appearance. Consumer culture for example, influences women to indulge in chocolate, lose weight and wear make-up, however without the woman's decision to be influenced, consumer culture's demands have no weight. Antoni plays the role of the agent in the piece *Loving Care*. The performance consists of Antoni's action of dipping her hair into a bucket of hair-dye and then sweeping her dye-soaked hair across the floor (fig.10). The mopping action could perhaps be a play on the idea of women doing housework in conjunction with the task of "beautifying" one's hair. By carrying out this energetic act, Antoni emphasises the tedious process that many women go through in order to change their hair. The question one must ask is why do some women go through this process? Why does altering one's natural appearance seem appealing? One way this could be understood is by looking at advertisements for cosmetic products. The overall message in many of these advertisements is that "the natural look" is most flattering. This is paradoxical since ultimately these products alter one's "naturalness". *Loving Care* has also become a topic in fine art discourses. At Antoni's exhibition "PerForms", the piece was described as "a hilarious send-up of Yves Kleins sexist swabbing of a canvas with a paint slathered female" (Tannenbaum, 1995, p.16). This interpretation of the work indicates that Antoni showed an interest for fine art in her work and also incorporated contemporary issues concerning consumerism.

The advertisement for Clairol's *Natural Instincts* (fig.11) encourages the viewer to "go a little natural", "go with your natural instincts". These messages

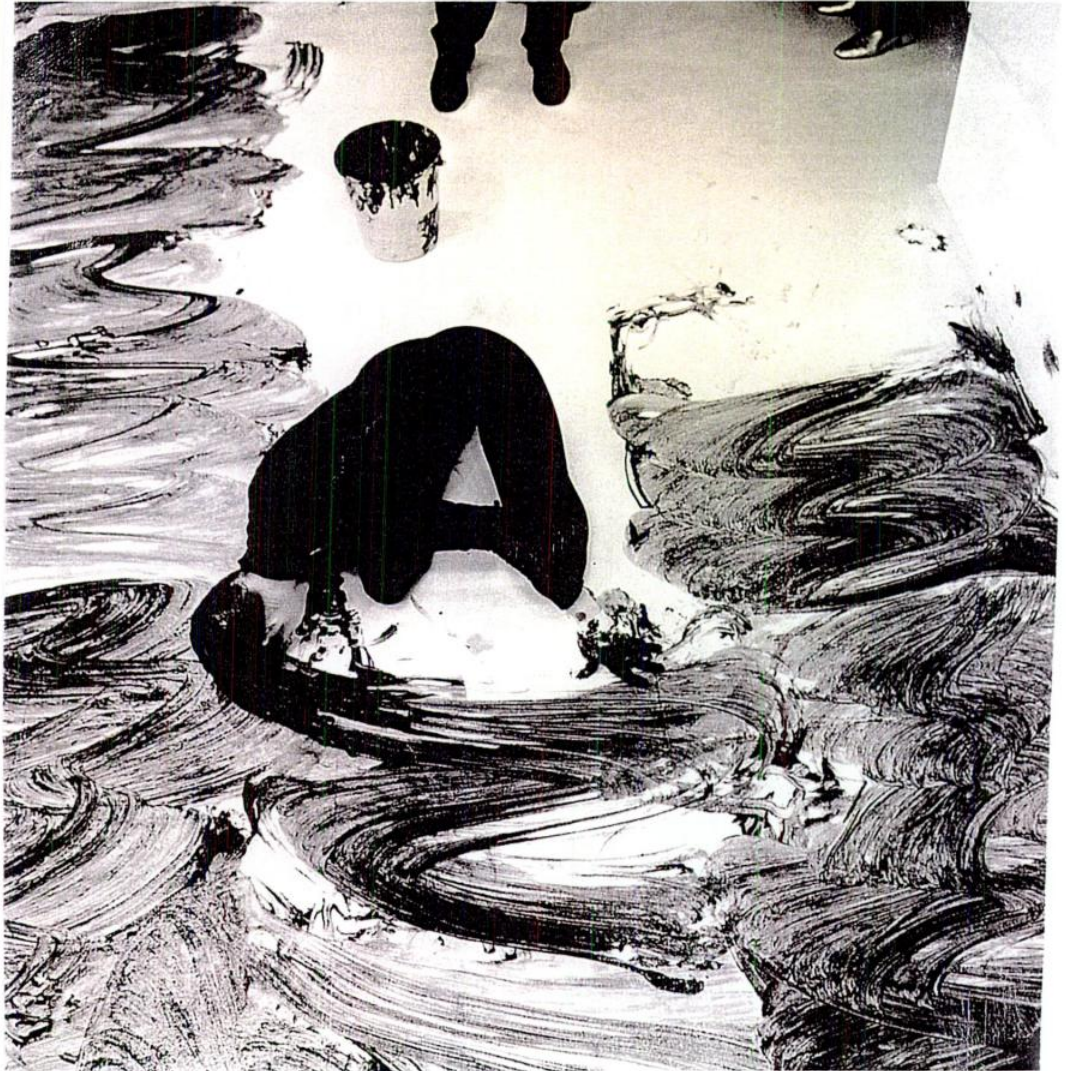


Fig. 10. Loving Care, 1993.

Go with your



Try a hair colour that's actually good for your hair.
Introducing Natural Instincts with New Aloe Replenishing Conditioner.

Natural Instincts is made with a special blend of natural ingredients - aloe, jojoba and ginseng - and gives you rich, natural-looking colour. And now our new Aloe Replenishing Conditioner works deep-down to restore essential moisture, leaving your hair softer and shinier than before.



Natural Instincts. Go a little natural.

CLAIROL™

Fig. 11. Clairol's Natural Instincts advertisement, 1998.

attempt to trick the viewer into believing that their ordinary hair is not natural and that this dye will make it natural. This implication that the product is “natural” and that the person is “un-natural” is used to sell products such as make-up as well as hair dye. An example of this could be the advertisement for *Corn Silk* make-up (fig.12). This advertisement features a man caressing a woman’s face. The implication is that if one wears *Corn Silk* one could attract a partner. In the small print it is explained that *Corn Silk* reduces facial shine. This implies that facial shine is not natural and that it should be disguised if possible. The above examples are some of the messages that women receive from the cosmetic industry. These messages encourage women to carry out certain rituals (dying hair, applying make-up). In *Loving Care* Antoni has highlighted the unnatural process of dying hair, which has become a common feature in many women’s lives. Antoni has discussed *Loving Care* in a similar way to *Gnaw*. Again she introduced the notion of a fine art discourse in the work by saying : “I imitate fine art rituals such as painting with my hair”(Cottingham, 1993, p.105).²

Antoni’s 1993 piece *Butterfly Kisses* was created by wearing mascara and blinking onto sheets of paper (fig.13). The result was two drawings, one from each eye. “Every morning I do my sixty winks. Then I wash my face and put on my make-up.”(Cembalest, 1993, p.123). These are the words from Antoni when she was describing how she created the drawings. Her incorporation of daily habits when creating her work indicates that she is concerned with issues surrounding her personal daily experience. The fact that she set a limit on her blinking (sixty times a day) could be a reflection on the systematic steps to applying make-up.³

The term “to bat one’s eyelids” at somebody is used generally when somebody is being flirtatious with another. Antoni’s act of blinking in *Butterfly Kisses* could be seen as a play on this idea. Her choice of mascara as a material could cause one to wonder what exactly is the function of mascara. One is aware that mascara does not increase good health in any way. The assumptions that there is no practical reason to use the product. In order to understand the reason women use mascara, one can turn to advertisements of the product to see how marketers promote it’s use. The range of



NATURAL ATTRACTION



Corn Silk skincare cosmetics are translucent to balance tone and enhance your natural beauty. They contain a unique walnut ingredient which is highly effective at eliminating facial shine for a longer lasting, fresh and flawless complexion.

All Corn Silk products are dermatologically tested, though naturally not on animals.

Discover how Corn Silk can bring out your natural attraction with our special trial offer below, or visit the Skincare section of Boots and other leading outlets.

CORN SILK

Chattem (UK) Ltd, (Dept. EL a), Guerry House, Ringway Centre, Edison Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6YH.

For just £2.00, you can sample the Corn Silk range of powders and foundations which includes two trial pots of loose powder (Original Satin and Semi-Matt) and three foundation sachets.

Simply send a cheque or postal order for £2.00 made payable to Chattem (UK) Ltd, and post to: Chattem (UK) Ltd, (Dept. EL a), Lenstone, PO Box 1570, Slough, SL3 8XR.

Name (Miss/Ms/Mrs) _____ Address _____

Age _____ Postcode _____

Please allow up to 28 days for delivery

Fig. 12. Corn Silk advertisement, 1998.

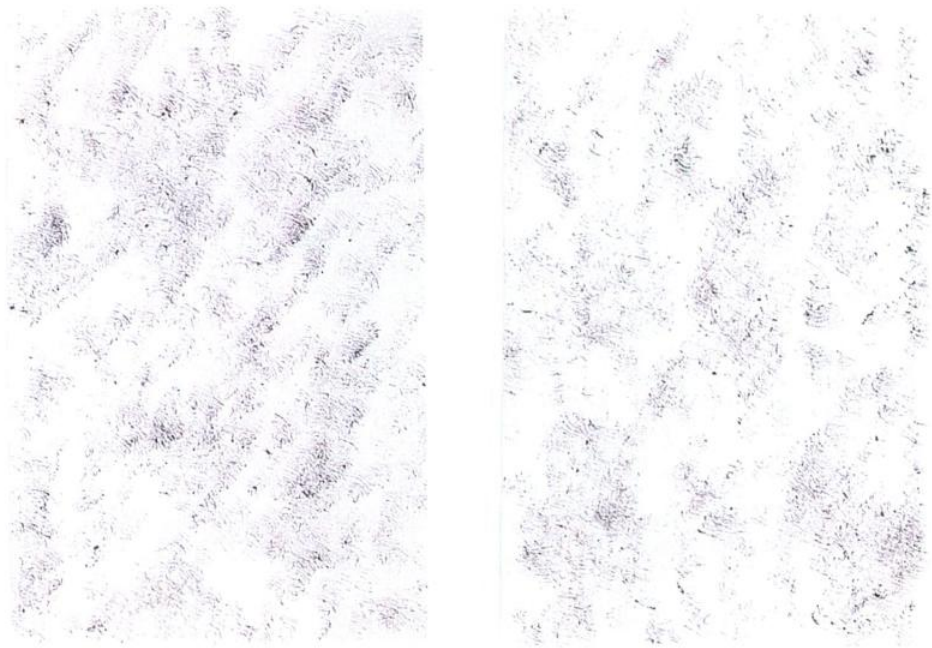
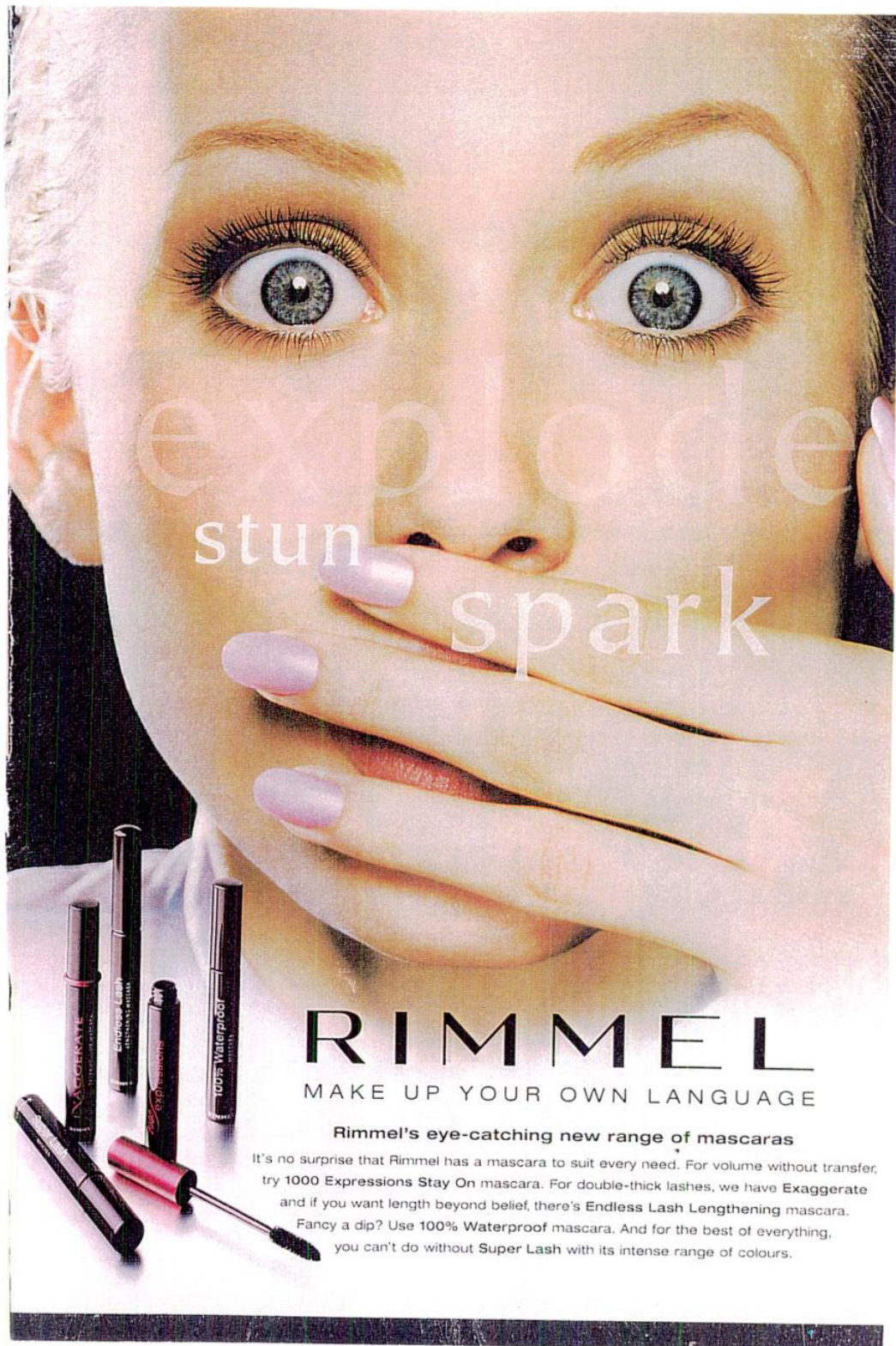


Fig. 13. Butterfly Kisses, 1993.

mascara's from Rimmel's advertisements (fig. 14) feature a close-up of a woman's face. She is wearing mascara and her eyes are open wide. The way that she is staring out of the magazine could encourage the viewer to stare back. Once she has got the viewer's attention, one becomes aware that she is covering her mouth with her hand and the words "explode", "stun" and "spark" are written across her face. This indicates that the woman is speechless. "Make up you're own language" is written underneath the image. These words in conjunction with the image imply that if you wear this mascara, you can "stun" and "spark" without saying a word. Perhaps it could indicate that it is not necessary for you to have your own voice or personality if you wear this mascara, it will speak for you. The message conveyed in this advertisement is that mascara can make you look fantastic. There is no evidence that mascara is anything more than an accessory. Antoni's use of the material disrupts the idea that mascara is purely an accessory. She uses it as an ink or a paint in order to create an image. The fact that she removed the mascara from her eyes by blinking, could be an attempt to rid herself of this "new language".

Another way mascara is advertised is by focusing on the idea of sexual attraction. The assumption is that because mascara is purely used to aid facial "beauty", it's function would be to attract a partner. The advertisement for Bourjois's *Volume Glamour* mascara is an example of the sexual connotations that can be attached to mascara (fig. 15). The woman in the advertisement is hanging onto the giant, erect mascara bottle. The marketers have emphasised the woman's confidence through her body language. She is confident enough to feel that the man on the far side of the mascara is impressed with her. The man attempts to impress her by weight-lifting. It is indicated that the woman's confidence is due to her mascara and that she does not notice the man because of this. The advertisement sells the product by emphasising the confidence the mascara wearer has. Bourjois uses this same tactic in other advertisements concerning women's beauty. For example the advertisement for lipstick (fig. 16) is very similar to the mascara advertisement. The woman in this advertisement is again separated from the man, due to the giant lipstick dividing them. The lipstick is

acting in the same way as the mascara was. Both giant cosmetic products emphasise the sexual nature of the advertisements.



explode
stun
spark

RIMMEL

MAKE UP YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

Rimmel's eye-catching new range of mascaras

It's no surprise that Rimmel has a mascara to suit every need. For volume without transfer, try 1000 Expressions Stay On mascara. For double-thick lashes, we have Exaggerate and if you want length beyond belief, there's Endless Lash Lengthening mascara. Fancy a dip? Use 100% Waterproof mascara. And for the best of everything, you can't do without Super Lash with its intense range of colours.

Fig. 14. Rimmel mascara advertisement, 1998.

BOURJOIS
— PARIS —

Impressed?

With my lashes -
absolutely

NEW VOLUME GLAMOUR,
the mascara that doubles
the volume of lashes

For your nearest stockist / telephone 0800 269 836

A line drawing illustration on a yellow background. In the center is a large, dark brown mascara bottle with a pink cap. The bottle has the text 'VOLUME GLAMOUR', 'MASCARA ULTRA-VOLUMATEUR', and 'BOURJOIS - PARIS -' on it. To the left of the bottle is a man in a tank top and shorts, looking up at the bottle with a surprised expression. To the right is a woman in a dress, leaning against the bottle and looking at it with a confident expression. The man's speech bubble says 'Impressed?'. The woman's speech bubble says 'With my lashes - absolutely'. At the bottom, the text 'NEW VOLUME GLAMOUR, the mascara that doubles the volume of lashes' is written in red and black. At the very bottom, in small black text, it says 'For your nearest stockist / telephone 0800 269 836'.

Fig. 15. Bourjois mascara advertisement, 1998.

BOURJOIS
— PARIS —

long for your lips
to whisper my name

If only he wasn't
called Norman

ECLAT DE RIRE
lipstick sprinkled with golden pigments
for intense, vibrant colour

For your nearest stockist freephone 0800 269 836

Fig. 16. Bourjois lipstick advertisement, 1998.

The focus in the lipstick advert is again on the woman's desirability. This is shown by the man's begging action in the advertisement. The examination of advertisements for mascara indicates that it is a highly sexualised product and that its main use is to attract another. Antoni's wording in the title of her piece *Butterfly Kisses* is an appropriate name due to the flirtatious manner of fluttering one's eyelashes. Antoni could have been investigating the ritualistic process of applying make-up and the reasons for its use.

The qualities that a given period calls beautiful in women are merely symbols of the female behaviour that a period considers desirable. (Wolf, 1991, p.13)

Wolf's words refer to the constant change in the standards of female beauty. Social psychologists, Hatfield, Sprecher and Miller have suggested that from an early age boys have better body images of themselves than girls have (Davis, 1995, p.43). They suggest that young girls are concerned about their physical appearance and that they compare themselves to their peers. They suggest that young boys tend not to do this so much. The implication is that young girls who grow into teenagers, who in turn grow into women, are more susceptible to the demands of society. Throughout the centuries standards of women's beauty have changed and it has been suggested that many women have followed the different ideals (Thesander, 1997, p.16). This suggestion indicates that women alter their appearance in an attempt to conform to cultures demands. For example women today are conforming to consumer culture's ideals, i.e. the thin woman. The purpose of mentioning the changing ideals of female body appearance is to emphasise the possibility of changing identities of women in our society.

The idea of fixed and unstable identity is an issue that Antoni deals with in her 1994 piece *Mom and Dad*. In this piece Antoni uses make-up and clothes in order to make her mother look like her father, and her father look like her mother (fig.17). It is clear that by using her own parents in the piece, Antoni shows concern for her own identity. The way in which she has focused on her parent's features so closely could indicate her interest in the similarities and differences in her parents faces and also the parts which she might have inherited from them.

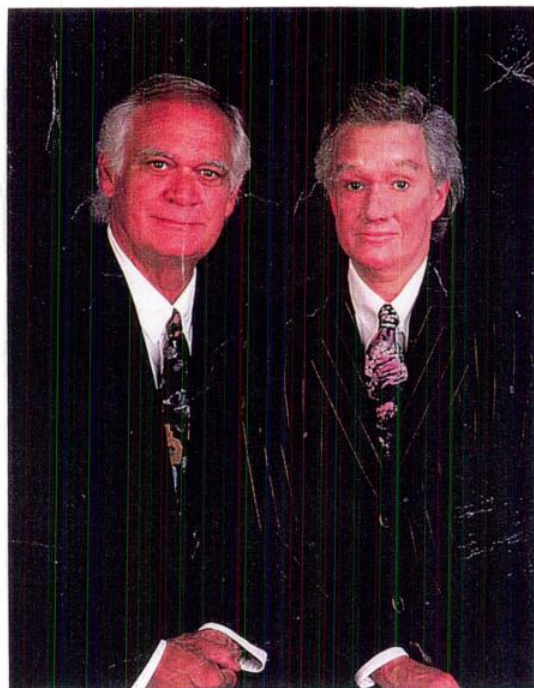
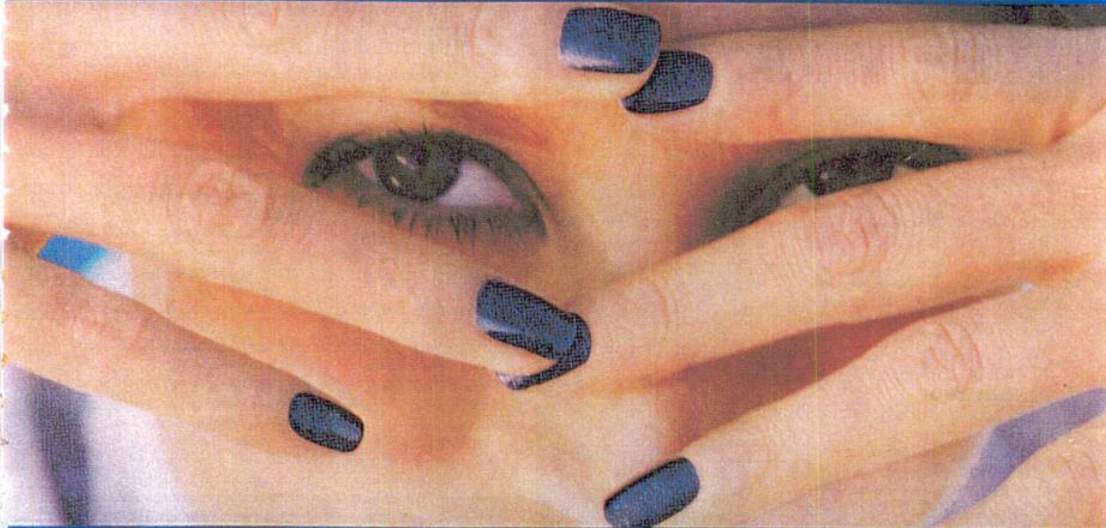


Fig. 17. Mom and Dad, 1994.

In order for Antoni to make work she had to imitate her father's face on her mother and vice-versa. This process of imitation is a necessary task for some women if they are conforming to the unstable standards of beauty of our society. I suggest that Antoni's imitation in the piece is a reflection on this cultural imitation. The constant encouragement's to change, improve and rejuvenate one's natural appearance could create an unstable body image. An example that shows how women's body images can be de-stabilised could be the advertisements for Maybelline products (figs.18,19 & 20). Fig.18 shows a portion of the woman's face accompanied by the words "Maybe it's her nails". Fig.19 shows a similar image alongside "Maybe it's her eyes". Finally fig.20 features another portion of her face and states "Maybe it's her lips". Due to the images below each picture it becomes clear that the advertisements are for nail-varnish, mascara and lipstick, respectively. The advertisements are implying that the products (lipstick, nail-varnish, mascara) are what makes the woman attractive. It indicates that maybe it's her mascara, maybe it's her nail-varnish and maybe it's her lipstick that is appealing. The subtle message being relayed here is that the woman's features would not be considered attractive without being covered with Maybelline products. This would indicate that the woman's ideal body image is formed through the use of cosmetics. *Mom and Dad* plays on this notion of personal identity and the cultural structuring of the fixed ideal which will change over a period of time. In an attempt to make her father look like her mother, Antoni would have had to use a lot of make-up. As a finished piece, Antoni succeeded to make her father look quite female and her mother to look quite male. The likeness that was achieved could have been Antoni's reflection on how make-up can have the power to alter one's appearance dramatically as well as well as subtly.

The idea that the female body requires camouflage, alteration, or re-creation is promulgated regularly in the media. (Winkler and Cole (eds.),1994, p.215.)

MAYBE



IT'S HER NAILS

MAYBE YOU'VE GOT LOADS OF TIME TO DRY YOUR NAILS. EXPRESS FINISH NAIL COLOUR, IT'S WET TO SET IN ONE MINUTE FLAT. AT LAST BEAUTIFUL NAILS THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT AROUND FOR.


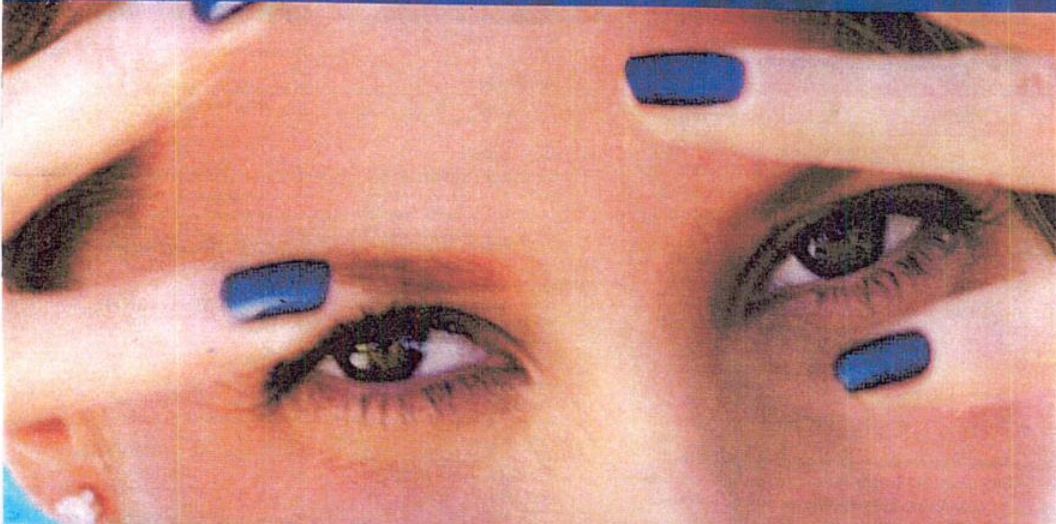


Fig. 18. Maybelline nail varnish advertisement, 1998.

MAYBE



IT'S HER EYES

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR LASHES?
PLAYFUL, DANGEROUS OR JUST
PLAIN AMAZING? ONE MASCARA
DOES IT ALL. GREAT LASH. FOR
LASHES NATURE NEVER GAVE YOU.


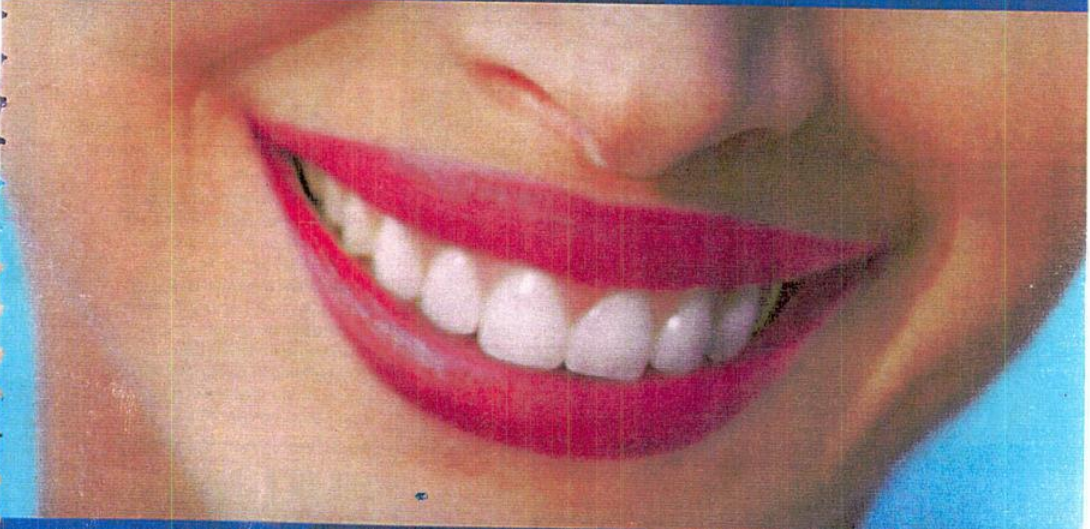


Fig. 19. Maybelline mascara advertisement, 1998.

MAYBE



IT'S HER LIPS

GIVE YOUR LIPS HOURS OF
LUSCIOUS, BUDGE-PROOF COLOUR
WITH GREAT WEAR LIP COLOUR.
PUT IT ON - IT STAYS ON. IF ONLY
EVERYTHING IN LIFE FELT THIS GOOD.




Fig. 20. Maybelline lipstick advertisement, 1998.

Evidence of this encouragement to camouflage, could be seen in the advertisement for Roc's *Retinol Concentre Pur* (fig.21). The product claims to "visibly reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles". On the left there is an image of a woman's face which is meant to look like a painting. This is no ordinary painting since it has cracks all over it. The words above the image - "You're always looking for ways to improve the appearance of your wrinkles", imply that all women have wrinkles and that they can never get rid of them. The image on the right is the same as the one on the left, except it does not have the cracking paint. It could be argued that the cracking is meant to resemble wrinkles and that the face on the right must be wrinkle-free. Roc claim that the smooth skin of the woman on the right is due to her use of their product. Professor Albert Kligman argues that anti-ageing and anti-wrinkle creams do not exist (Wolf, 1991, p.111). He argues that producers of these products should be stopped because they are damaging the credibility of the industry. A connection has been established between youth and attractiveness (Nettleson and Watson (eds.), 1998, p.261). If it is true that youth enhances attractiveness, then old age would be associated with unattractiveness. A reason for companies to produce anti-ageing creams is because they are aware that women are concerned about their appearance and that if old age is unattractive, women will try to fight it. Hence their anti-ageing creams will be bought.

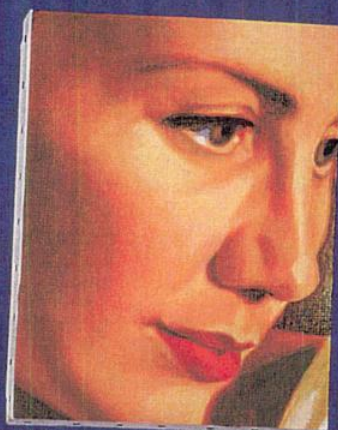
The investigation of this advertisement was carried out in order to establish the ways in which the cosmetic industry can convince people that their product will improve people's natural appearance. They focus on a small facial component such as a wrinkle, and imply that it is not meant to be there. They offer to remove that wrinkle if one uses their cream.

The idea of altering somebody's natural appearance (replacing wrinkles with smooth skin) is an issue that Antoni has dealt with in *Tender Buttons*. In this piece Antoni cast her own nipples in gold. She then inscribed "left" on the back of one nipple and "right" on the other. These nipples were presented in the form of brooches (fig.22). The fact that Antoni indicated which nipple was her right one and which was her left, implies that she intended people to wear them.⁴ By writing on them

You're always
looking for ways
to improve
the appearance of
your wrinkles.



New
Retinol Concentré Pur
has twice as much
Retinol* for RoC's best
ever results.



VISIBLY REDUCE THE APPEARANCE
OF FINE LINES AND WRINKLES.

New Retinol Concentré Pur All-Night Anti-Wrinkle treatment now contains twice as much Retinol for even better effectiveness. The Retinol, concentrated into microspheres, is gradually released throughout the night, deep into the skin. Result: in four weeks, the appearance of fine lines is visibly improved, and in twelve weeks, there will be a noticeable reduction in the appearance of wrinkles. Guaranteed. Ask your pharmacist or dermatologist for advice.



INTO: MARGENQUE / 100% NATURAL



WE KEEP OUR PROMISES.

Efficacy and safety proven by clinical tests.
*Compared to Retinol Acid Pur.

Fig. 21. Roc advertisement, 1998.

people would know on which side they should be worn. It is likely that the intention was for the brooches to be placed on other peoples breasts, so that their own nipples would be replaced by Antoni's.



Fig. 22. Tender Buttons, 1994.

An advertisement for *Sunshimmer* false tan (fig.23), implies a similar message. The offer is that you can change your ordinary skin colour by using this product. The intention of this offer is to inform the viewers that their normal skin tone is not attractive enough and that by darkening it, they will look better. The words used “Fake it with Sunshimmer, They’ll never know” could be implying that the fact that you had to change your skin colour should be a secret. This indicates that you should not let people know that you weren’t born with tanned skin. Instead you should pretend that “Sunshimmered” skin is natural skin.

The new idea for cosmetic surgery at present is that you (the patient) should not let people know that you have had it (fig.24). This image of a woman lying on a lilo, surrounded by surgeons, is an advertisement for cosmetic surgery abroad. The article that accompanies the picture explained that it is better to go away for a holiday,

sunshimmer

Fake it with
Sunshimmer...

They'll never
know.



With Sunshimmer you can achieve a radiant Mediterranean tan without damaging your skin or your bank balance!

"Wash Off" formulations give an instant sun-kissed glow that you can take off as easily as you put on. "Wear Off" formulations provide a long-lasting natural tan for up to 5 days.

Sunshimmer's NEW Personal Colour System is a unique "Wear Off" formula combining both DHA & Liposomes. Choose from either a Golden Tan or Bronze Tan.

This summer, treat yourself to a natural, flawless tan without the sun... no one will ever know.

Fig. 23. Sunshimmer advertisement, 1998.

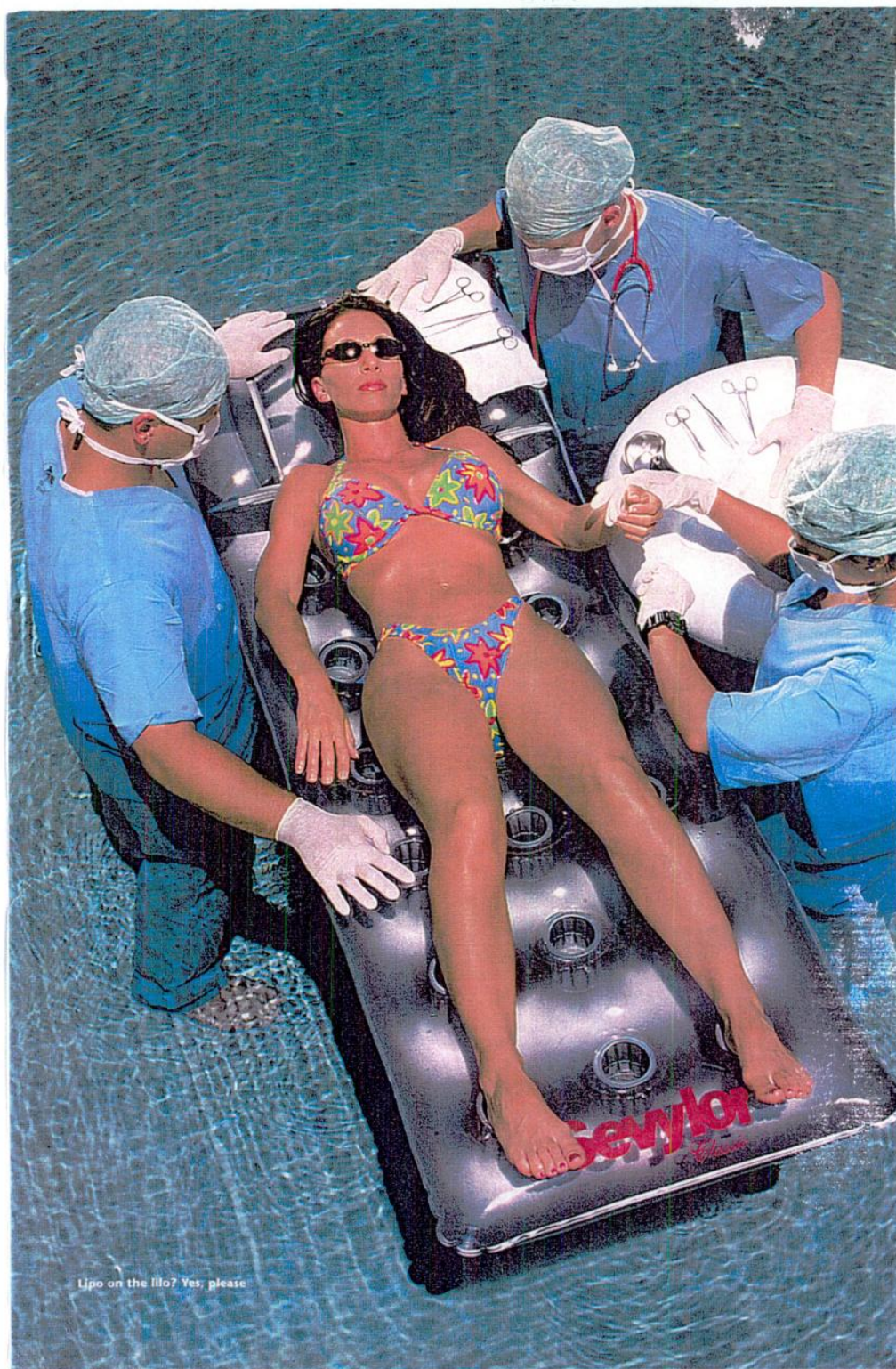


Fig. 24. Cosmetic surgery advertisement, 1998.

have the surgery, recover, and then return home without the bruises. Underneath the image there are hints on how to keep the surgery a secret. These hints encourage one to change one's entire appearance (wardrobe, hair, make-up) in order to draw attention away from their surgery. The "new look" that is being recommended by the media, is the issue that Antoni could be raising in *Tender Buttons*. By using parts of herself and intending other people to take on these parts, Antoni highlights the pressure the media places on people to change their appearance.

Only when a woman ceases the fretful struggle to be beautiful can she turn her gaze outward, find the beautiful and feed upon it. (Nettleton and Watson (eds.), 1998 p.259).

This quote suggests that women are largely concerned about their body image and that only when they stop this concern will they realise that there are more important things. The investigation in this chapter has established the ways in which the media urges women to be concerned about their appearance. This concern is reflected in Janine Antoni's work. I have investigated the ways in which *Loving Care*, *Butterfly Kisses*, *Mom and Dad* and *Tender Buttons* have highlighted the ritualistic behaviour of many women who are following the trends set by the cosmetic industry.

NOTES

1. Sociologist Dorothy Smith believes that although women are agents of change, their dissatisfaction with their physical appearance and their attempts to improve appearance, is due to patriarchal systems of ruling. (Davis, 1996).
2. Antoni also relates her process in her other pieces to fine art rituals. For example in *Lick and Lather* and *Wean*, she describes her actions as “modelling and moulding with my own body”. (Cottingham, 1993).
3. In spring of 1993 Antoni exhibited her work at the Whitney Biennial. It was there that she explained her reference to minimalism in *Gnaw* and described the process of blinking against sheets of paper in *Butterfly Kisses*. (Cembalest, 1993)
4. Judith Findlay argues that because other people are intended to wear the brooches, this means that people will be dressing up and that the piece then represents a form of cross dressing. (Findlay, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE

CONSUMER SOCIETY, EATING DISORDERS AND JANINE ANTONI

Our bodies no less than anything else that is human, are constituted by culture. (Bordo, 1993, p.142)

I have chosen Bordo's words to open this chapter because they are relevant to the relationship between consumer culture and eating disorders. English physician Thomas Morton labelled a disorder in 1969 as "consumption of nervous origin". In the nineteenth century physicians Gull and Lasegne called the same disorder "Anorexie Hysterica" (Moorey, 1991, p.9). It was believed that the illness in question was a physical one - a disorder of the pituitary gland. Today we know this illness as "Anorexia Nervosa" and it is now believed to be a psychological illness. This illness has escalated over the past few decades alongside its sister illness, Bulimia Nervosa. I shall discuss the significance of Janine Antoni's work in relation to these psychological illnesses for the following reason. Antoni's works which were discussed in chapters one and two (*Gnaw, Wean, Loving Care, Butterfly Kisses, Mom and Dad, Tender Buttons*) have a number of common features. Each of them is centred around the female body (with the exception of *Mom and Dad* which plays on the difference between the male and female body). Judith Findlay has asserted the fact that there is a strong sense of consumerism in the work's final presentation.¹ Also the materials used in most of her pieces are food and cosmetic products. The words which are most significant when describing her work such as, the female body, consumerism, food and cosmetics, are also words that are used in discourses on eating disorders. In this chapter I hope to indicate the relationship between consumer culture, eating disorders and Antoni's work. Two of her pieces from 1993, *Eureka* and *Lick and Lather*, will be discussed in this chapter because of their close connection with anorexia and bulimia. In an attempt to examine the relationship

between consumer culture and eating disorders, I feel it necessary to discuss both the scientific and the sociological arguments on the development of these illnesses.

Bordo has attempted to differentiate between some of the contributing factors of anorexia by her creation of the "axes of continuity". The first axis that she discusses is the "Dualist axis" (Bordo, 1993, p.144). This theory goes back to the ancient philosophers such as Plato, Augustine and Decartes. The theory suggests that the dualist person sees themselves in two parts: the mind-self and the body-self.² Bordo argues that this is one of the roots of anorexia. She suggests that the anorectic sees herself in two parts. The mind is in charge and the body is the enemy. This theory might explain how the anorectic has the power to fight against her own body and to cause it actual harm. The second axis that Bordo discusses is the "control axis". She argues that anorexics have the trait of perfectionism and that they cannot abide a loss of control (Bordo, 1993, pp. 151-152). Bordo suggests that when the anorectic's life is out of control, the anorectic then clings on to something that she can control (food) so that she can have a sense of accomplishment and stability again. This indicates that by planning to cut down on food and to ultimately stop eating, the anorectic has a regime to follow. If she perfects her plan and stops eating, she has reached her goal. This gives a sense of control to the sufferer which she does not want to lose, so she continues with her plan. The final axis that Bordo raises is the "Gender/Power axis" (Bordo, 1993, p.154). Considering that 90 - 95% of anorexics are female, Bordo suggests that there must be a reason for so many girls to be affected. She argues that many female adolescents are fearful of maturing into women. They do not want to become sexual or womanly and many of them fight to keep their child-like, flat-chested bodies.³

Biological and psychological studies on patients with anorexia or bulimia share some similarities with the axis of continuity. Sharlene Hesse-Biber has suggested that there is a 20 - 30% increase in body fat during puberty in girls (Hesse-Biber, 1996, p.101). This sudden increase in weight could lead the adolescent to feel that to be a woman is to be fat. Psychiatrist Hilde Bruch suggests that many young anorexics are afraid that they will turn out like their submissive mothers (Bordo, 1993,

p.156). She argues that they refuse to eat as a metaphor for refusing to be their mothers. Bordo's "gender/power axis" has also been described as a psychosexual development problem (Hesse-Biber, 1996, pp.14-16). It is argued that the anorectic denies her sexuality because of a fear of impregnation. Psychiatrist Arthur Crisp strengthens this argument by saying that the anorectic suffers from "psychobiological regression" (Moorey, 1991, p.47). He argues that the anorectic avoids food because of fears of maturity and that her starvation causes amenorrhea (loss of menstruation). He suggests that this lack of fertility in the anorectic is a huge relief to her and it encourages her to continue fasting. Psychotherapist Marilyn Laurence has said that mother and daughter relationships play a part in the construction of the anorexic (Moorey, 1991, p.59). She argues that a confusing relationship between the mother (feeder) and the daughter (receiver) can contribute to the illness. Moorey has also suggested that a passive, nurturing, calm home can clash with contemporary society's busy and frantic outlook. He argues that the dichotomy between the home life and the working life can contribute to anorexia.

Economic and political retaliation against female appetite is far stronger at this point than family dynamics (Wolf, 1991, p.198).

Naomi Wolf does not examine anorexia and bulimia from a scientific viewpoint. Her investigation concentrates on the position of gender in society and how the position of women could be a catalyst for eating disorder. The aforementioned words from Wolf suggest that the background to anorexia is highly political and that familial relationships have a minor part to play in the construction of the illness. It has been argued that an overweight girl has one third less chance of getting into college than a thin girl (Hatfield and Sprecher, 1986, p.209). This discrimination could cause many young students to compete by maintaining a lower weight than their peers. This low weight contest could explain why so many middle-classed, intelligent students suffer from anorexia and bulimia. This investigation of the medical and cultural theories on the development of eating disorders leads me to examine the role that consumer culture plays in this development.⁴

In 1993 Antoni was submerged in a bath of lard. From the fat that poured over the side, Antoni made a giant cube of soap. This work was called *Eureka* (fig.25). *Eureka* was the word that Archimedes used when he discovered that the weight of a solid when immersed in water (liquid) could be measured by the amount of liquid that was displaced. Antoni did not create this work in order to honour Archimedes as her main emphasis was on materials rather than the experiment itself. Instead of submerging her body in water, Antoni chose to use fat. Judith Findlay, when writing about Antoni's work in the CCA exhibition in Glasgow, suggested that *Eureka* was a means for Antoni to "formulate a theory" (Findlay, 1995, p.15). She argued that like Archimedes, Antoni was experimenting with her own body in *Eureka* in an attempt "to prove or disprove" her ideas. These ideas which Antoni may have been trying to investigate could be issues surrounding weight. In the piece Antoni had managed to free herself from the fat. She is absent and just her body shape is left in the lard. The fact that Antoni is absent could be a play on the loss of weight. I suggest that *Eureka* highlights the conflict that goes on in the mind of a weight conscious person. The fact that the body was bathing in fat could be a metaphor for a body that feels it is surrounded by fat, full of fat and stuck in fat. This exaggeration and immense fear of fat is something that an anorectic feels constantly.⁵ There is another play on weight in this piece which has to do with monitoring and measuring weight. Although Antoni has removed herself from the work, the audience are aware that she was in the bath at some stage and that the fat that was displaced represents her weight. Her entire body mass is measured in terms of solid fat. This form of measuring body weight emphasises the way in which the anorectic would view her body. A sufferer of the illness does not think about the weight of bone and muscle tissue because they are preoccupied with the idea that weight is fat and fat must be lost. When Antoni created the cube of soap by mixing the lard with lye, she started a process of washing herself with it. Generally people use soap in order to remove dirt. The fact that Antoni washes herself as a part of the piece could indicate that cleansing the body plays a part in the meaning of the work. Antoni's use of lard and soap could be symbolic of the need to purify the body after it has been



Fig. 25. Eureka, 1993.

saturated in fat. This association of fat with dirt has been investigated by Deborah Lupton (Lupton, 1996, p.82).⁶ The link between fat and cleansing has been mentioned before in discussions about “holy anorexia”.

“Holy anorexia” was a phrase that was coined by Rudolf Bell and was based on starvation due to religious beliefs (Lupton, 1996, p.133). The Judeo-Christian beliefs of medieval women led them to believe that their soul would be purified if they starved themselves. The fat body was considered unholy and it was suggested that the less one ate the more pure one became. It was also believed that the fatter the body the more womanly the body became. Women were encouraged to deny their womanly flesh by starving. The starvation caused suffering and the more one suffered the more holy one became. I suggest that there is a parallel between washing the body when it has been surrounded by fat in *Eureka* and the cleansing of the body when it was considered too fat in Medieval times. This cleansing of the body which was done because of the ingestion of food is still going on today. Consumer culture often highlights the need to purify the body if it has been spoiled with rich food. For example, the health club (fig.26), encourages people to sign up for the courses by making the viewer feel guilty. The advertisement concentrates on Christmas activities. Christmas is a time when people eat more than they usually would and calories are forgotten about for a few weeks. The words used; “If you had a lot of chocolate over Christmas, join our club”, are an attempt to convince the viewer that if you indulge in chocolate (even at Christmas) you should join the health club to rid the body of its impurities. The indication is that by taking exercise and using saunas and steam rooms, the body will be rejuvenated, fit and clean after eating that chocolate.

Lick and Lather (fig.27) was created by Antoni in 1993. The work consisted of a group of self-portrait chocolate heads, facing a group of self-portrait soap heads. Again Antoni entered the piece through a process of licking the chocolate and washing with the soap. When interviewed by Laura Cottingham, Antoni explained that the self-portrait busts in *Lick and Lather* mimicked nineteenth century classicism. This strengthens the notion made earlier that Antoni incorporates contemporary issues with

traditional fine art practice. In *Lick and Lather*'s case the issue being raised is eating disorders. *Lick and Lather* could be seen as a similar work to *Eureka* because again it involves indulging and cleansing. The illness which could be seen as a variant of anorexia: Bulimia Nervosa, involves a process of eating food (usually large amounts) and subsequently getting rid of the food by vomiting. It has been said that as well as getting rid of the food, the bulimic rids herself of feelings of guilt and panic by vomiting (Moorey, 1991, p.26). The parallel between the actions of the bulimic and *Lick and Lather* is quite evident. The bulimic's relief through vomiting after eating a "shameful" food such as chocolate is symbolised by Antoni's cleansing of the body after indulging in chocolate. The way in which the heads became featureless due to the licking, could symbolise the way in which the bulimic's body deteriorates because of the rigorous activity. The feelings of guilt which the sufferer experiences after eating, are also experienced by people who do not have anorexia or bulimia. Writer A. Bray has argued that eighty per cent of all women suffer from a "sub-clinical" eating disorder. (Lupton, 1996, p.110). This occurs when a woman becomes highly conscious of her weight, constantly counting calories and exercising, and feels guilty after eating.⁷ This disorder does not include severe weight loss, however one might suggest that it could damage self-esteem. The advert for Kellogg's *Special K* (fig.28) makes light of this guilt that eighty per cent of women are supposed to feel. It uses text in an attempt to show how natural it is for a woman to feel guilty about her weight. The same message is repeated throughout the text, although it is worded slightly differently each time. The repetition is a tactic used to enforce the notion that women should be weight conscious. The tone of the piece of writing is quite light-hearted, however the subtle messages being sent out, such as "I've got to get into that dress if it kills me" and "it's easy. Don't eat...(I'm hungry)" are quite disturbing. By representing the average woman, this advertisement attempts to convince the female viewer that it is typical behaviour to be concerned about your weight and even to consider to stop eating.

■ HEALTH & FITNESS CLUB

IF YOU HAD
A LOT OF
CHOCOLATE
OVER
CHRISTMAS. .

JOIN
OUR CLUB!

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

no excuses now!!!

This is all for YOU!!

GYM

- Full Fitness Evaluation •
- Personal Programme •
- Regular Reassessments •
- Unlimited Use of Gym •

STUDIO

- Aerobics •
- Step •
- Body Conditioning •
- Hip Hop •
- Circuit Training •
- Aqua Aerobics •

THE CHOICE IS YOURS
 ALL CLASSES ARE FREE TO MEMBERS

HEALTH SUITE

- Swimming Pool •
- Sauna •
- Steam Room •
- Jacuzzi •
 and for the kids
- FREE Creche •

THE CLUB IS OPEN 7 DAYS FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN

Fig. 26. Health Club advertisement, 1998.

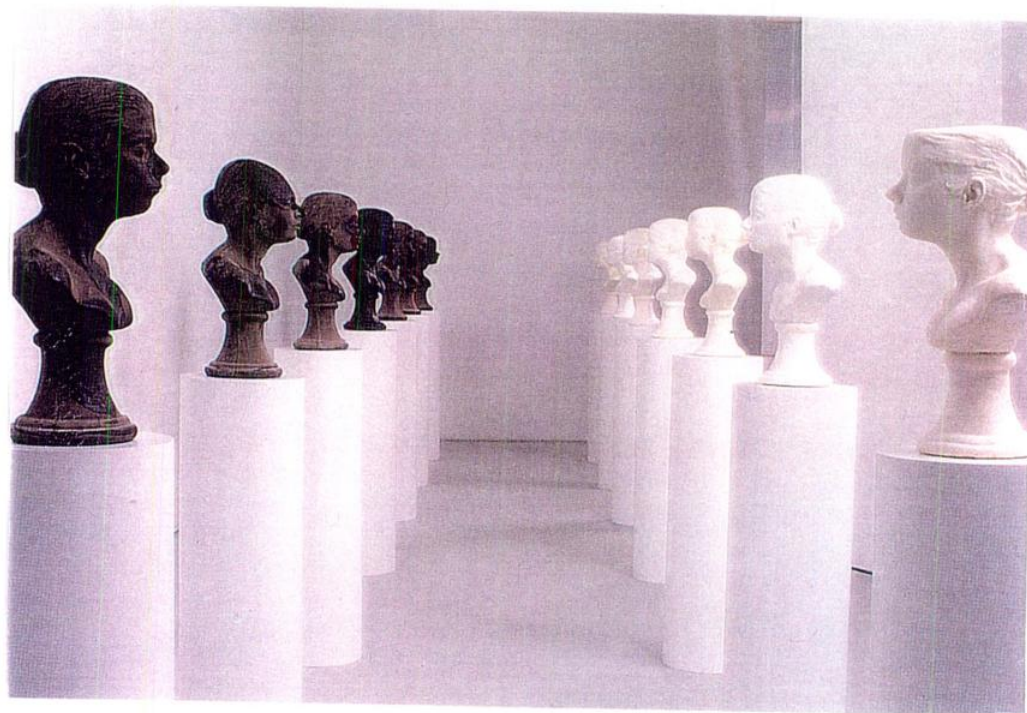


Fig. 27. Lick and Lather, 1993.



What a great dress. I've got to get into that dress. I've got to get into that dress if it kills me. I've got to go on a diet. I hate diets. *You can't eat.* You can eat carrots. You can eat apples. (You can eat lots of carrots and apples.) I've got to lose weight. *I could join a gym.* (Pigs might fly.) I've got to get into that dress. It's easy. Don't eat... *(I'm hungry.)* I can't eat breakfast. But I *ought* to eat breakfast. *I like breakfast.* I like that dress. That dress is me. I am that dress. I am too big for that dress. Hmm... Life can be cruel.

EAT.

CHEER UP! EAT! START THE DAY WITH A KELLOGG'S SPECIAL K BREAKFAST. IT'S CRISPY. IT'S DELICIOUS (REALLY!) AND IT PROVIDES MORE PROTEIN, VITAMINS AND IRON THAN MOST OTHER CEREALS. BUT OF COURSE THE REALLY GOOD BIT IS ITS LOW IN FAT, (WHO NEEDS IT?). BON APPÉTIT!

Kellogg's SPECIAL K. GET THE TASTE. GET THE SHAPE.

Fig. 28. Special K advertisement, 1998.

In Chapter One the “double-bind” that women are faced with was investigated. I would now like to discuss the relationship the double-bind has with eating disorders. As mentioned before, the double-bind stands for the conflicting messages presented by the media. The message is that chocolate is a “woman’s food” which should be enjoyed by women, however at the same time women should stay thin. What I did not discuss in chapter one was the effect that this double-bind has on women. If a woman was to obey the demands of our culture (to eat voraciously and stay slim) she would have to devise a plan. The only possible way to eat lots of chocolate and remain a size eight to ten would be to eat the food and then get rid of it. This could be done by vomiting or using laxatives. This woman would then be considered bulimic. Of course this does not happen to all women. This occurs only when a woman goes to extreme measures in order to obey the ideals of society. S. Srikameswaren, P. Leichner and D. Harper have challenged the idea that the bulimic is conforming to society (Gammen and Mackinen, 1994, pp. 128-129). They believe that the bulimic is independent of society and is constantly fighting to succeed. This notion of the bulimic being an independent, strong-minded individual has been disturbed by the suggestion that bulimia is a form of fetishism (Gammen and Mackinen, 1994, p.123). This argument has its roots in my discussion in chapter one. What I was discussing was the way in which chocolate products are eroticised in advertising. Much of the time chocolate is shown as a romantic object which is surrounded by diffused, cloudy lighting. The argument suggests that because women are aware that they have to be thin if they want to be socially attractive, and the fact that they are exposed to tempting advertisements, they tend to see chocolate as a bold, daring and almost sexual object to fantasise about (Gammen and Mackinen, 1994, p.148). The argument suggests that chocolate is a fetish object. The reason that bulimia was considered to be a possible candidate for fetishism was because it has a strong oral component, most of its sufferers are female and it involves a system of doing and undoing, - bingeing and purging (Gammen and Mackinen, 1994, p.123). I feel that that there is a similarity between *Gnaw* (discussed earlier), and the aforementioned theory. The fact that Antoni

re-used the chewed chocolate could be a play on the “doing and undoing” behaviour of the bulimic. This interpretation of Antoni’s *Gnaw* was also made at the 1993 Whitney Biennial. According to Robin Cembalest, the piece was “ghettoized” in the “Bulimia Art” category of the show’s reviews. This connection between the conflicting ideals in women’s culture, the guilt and excitement of indulging in chocolate and the habits of the bulimic could indicate that consumer culture has a significant role in the construction of eating disorders.

Antoni has emphasised the double-bind in *Eureka* and *Lick and Lather* by using the female body in conjunction with conflicting materials such as fat (the repulsive) and soap (the beautiful). Her work highlights many of the aspects of eating disorders by playing on issues which have been associated with anorexia and bulimia such as guilt, cleansing, purity and monitoring of weight.

NOTES

1. Findlay associates consumerism with Antoni's *Wean*. She believes that because the end product is packaging, the overall image of the piece becomes packaging rather than product. (Findlay, 1995).
2. Further reading on the mind/body dichotomy. (McNay, 1992).
3. Deborah Lupton has argued that children rid themselves of pent-up anger by rebelling against parents. She argues that sometimes the rebellion is in the form of refusing food and that this is another contributing factor to the formation of the anorectic. (Lupton, 1996).
4. Naomi Wolf has discussed the pressure on people to stay thin. She focuses on an older age group- people in the workforce. Her studies have asserted that 38% of dancers show anorexic behaviour due to the pressure to compete. (Wolf, 1991).
5. This parallel between Antoni's work and eating disorders is not obvious to Antoni when she makes the work. She has said that she does not begin with a concept or theme when working. She starts doing something such as bathing in fat because she likes the thought of it. It is only afterwards when she realises the themes that have occurred. (Cottingham, 1993).
6. Participants of Lupton's interviews associated fat with dirt. She explained how they considered healthy food such as chicken or fish to be clean, fresh food and how they considered grease to be a dirty substance. (Lupton, 1996).
7. Lupton comments on the need for many women to seek help when they are overweight. She describes how women feel a lack of control because of their undesired weight. She explains how many women enter a type of "group surveillance" such as "Weightwatchers" in order to gain a sense of control. (Lupton, 1996).

CONCLUSION

An advertisement for the low fat spread *Delight Diet* (fig.29) raises similar questiones to those mentioned in this thesis regarding Antoni's work, consumer society and eating disorders. The advertisement features three versions of the female body in the form of dolls. The first issue that is raised concerns satisfaction with the body. The doll on the right has a pleasant smile on her face, unlike the others which have a rather sad expression. By varying facial expression the advertisement indicates that the doll on the right is different to the others and that her difference is what makes her happy. The most obvious difference between the dolls is that the one on the right has a tall, thin and shapely body and that the others have fatter bodies and are shorter in height. This representation of the tall, thin body as the happy body was an issue which was dealt with in relation to the double-bind in chocolate advertising. The message which is conveyed in the *Delight Diet* advert, i.e. the slim body resulting in the happy body, is the same message that was conveyed in the *Heaven* advert in Chapter One. It has been established that the doll on the right in the *Delight Diet* advert is happy because she is satisfied with her body. The subject of unhappiness due to body image was also discussed in Chapter Two. Advertisements for products such as Maybelline cosmetics were seen to indicate that the product made the woman beautiful and that without them she would not have any impact. Antoni's work emphasised this notion of the need for women to change their appearance in order to feel acceptable. An example could be *Butterfly Kisses* where she illustrated the tedious tasks that women perform in order to "feel happy".

Another substantial difference between the "ideal" doll and the others would be her lack of clothing. The fact that the other two reveal very little and that she wears only underwear (and a head scarf) conveys the idea that the tall, thin, happy doll is more sexually appealing. This eroticisation of the female has been investigated in Chapter One regarding the sexualisation of women in chocolate advertisements.



New Delight Diet spread has only 23% fat. Delicious and light,
it's an easy step towards unveiling the whole new you.

Delight Diet is a trademark. Delight Diet can help slimming or weight control only as part of a calorie controlled diet.

Fig. 29. Delight Diet advertisement, 1998.

Issues surrounding identity have been investigated in relation to the conforming body in consumer society. Both *Wean* and *Tender Buttons*, have played on the notion of change in the body due to consumerism. The advertisement under discussion also represents change and identity. The dolls featured are of Russian origin and always appear in traditional dress. Also they have typically rounded bodies and resemble the broad facial features of Russian women. The advertisement destroys the traditional nature of the dolls by removing their clothes and changing the original body into an elongated thin form.

The idea that women compare themselves to their peers was an issue dealt with in the investigation of eating disorders. The notion of a trait of self-consciousness in women was used in the advertisement for *Delight Diet*. The happy, thin doll stares straight ahead exuding confidence and satisfaction, however the gaze of the other two is directed at her. The different expressions used is a way for the advertisers to indicate that if we buy the product we will feel like the “ideal” doll that is happy, beautiful and confident.

My reason for describing the dolls in this advertisement is because I feel that they incorporate many off the issues which are central to this thesis. The issues which it raises are; the ideal body shape, satisfaction with the body, eroticisation of the body, identity, and self confidence. I feel that these subjects are the fulcrum of this thesis and are relevant to Antoni’s work, consumerism and eating disorders. The words below the dolls in the advertisement epitomise the central message conveyed in our consumer society, which this thesis has concerned itself with.

It’s an easy step towards unveiling the whole new you.
(*Delight Diet* advert, 1998)

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