

Myth in slim jim's
"camouflage" and
gm's "elevation"
essay sample



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Myth In Slim Jim's "Camouflage" And Gm's "Elevation" Essay Sample

Commercials often take their viewers to another world. As a rule, this world must imitate our own for any sense of understanding and purpose.

Advertisers take advantage of this aspect of video storytelling to help people connect with their products and view them in ways which are desirable for the company. A myth is created around the product being advertised to position the item favorably in the consumer's mind. Two commercials which display examples of mythologizing products and our society are Slim Jim's, "Camouflage," and GM's, "Elevation."

"Camouflage," by the Crispin Porter and Bogusky agencies, begins with a young man (about 20) sneaking through a gas station convenience store wearing a jumpsuit that is printed with rows of soft drinks mimicking the store's refrigerated drink section. The only sound is the hum of the machinery. Then, music begins, a comedic and suspenseful plucking of banjo strings. Sweat drips down the man's face as he stands motionless in front of the drinks and eyes the creature made of packaged slim jims that resembles an antelope and slowly grazes down an aisle.

The "snapalope" does not notice the camouflaged person as he draws near, then the sweat falls and the chase begins. The music flows with the chase, now dueling banjos and a fiddle. The snapalope is getting away when another young man jumps out of a fridge and catches the creature after it slams head first into the door. He is dressed like an outdoorsman in the winter wearing a vest, stocking cap, and gloves. He holds up his catch

victoriously in front of the other man and text fades in reading, " it's snapalope season.

" The commercial ends with the slim jim logo and the company's slogan, " snap into a slim jim," being yodeled to the mountain music. There are two myths in this commercial. The first is the idea that a convenience store can serve as the wilderness in our modern society. The appalachian music supports this view. The men hunting, the gear they wear, and blending in with soda rather than plants and trees are examples of mixing the concept of a store and the wild into a mythologized society.

The images of what appears to be coke and pepsi products places the company's product into the established world's of the these products which have similar demographics. This leads to the second myth which concerns the product itself, which is not a snapalope, but a slim jim. Depicting the product as an animal that must be hunted makes it seem more natural than the condensed and highly processed meat that the customer is actually buying.

It also positions the product as something to be enjoyed on a very basic and instinctual level, the idea of hunting rather than buying adds excitement to what would actually be a very mundane social transaction. " Elevation," by the Deutsch inc. agency, begins with horns honking and shot of stagnant traffic in New York City. We see frustrated drivers and move into one car where the traffic report is playing on a nice radio with a large lcd screen.

The driver changes the station to music and his GM Caddillac Escalade begins to float into the air. The woman in front of him driving a GM Chevrolet
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Corvette looks back then she begins to float. Suddenly dozens of cars rise into the air above the traffic, they are of all types in the range of the GM family, drivers in other cars look up in amazement. The music is contemporary rock music and while showing a wide range of cars, the most expensive models are given the most attention; all of the cars are 2006-07 (current) models.

An announcer, followed by text, introduces the new GM 100, 000 mile warranty. He tells viewers that GM has delivered a "new level of confidence," and the confused drivers step on the gas and begin flying all over the city (one car does a barrel roll). The song repeats, "you're going to get what you need." The ad finishes with the GM logo and the announcer saying, "the best coverage in America from the biggest brand in America." This commercial mythologizes GM and its cars as a super company with a super product.

By literally showing that these cars have the ability to fly and lift their drivers over their problems and repeating the phrase, "you're going to get what you need," the advertisers want to establish that the product is a powerful answer to troubles in people's lives (especially when it comes to their transportation). Society is skewed in this commercial by showing a highly above average number of people driving brand new GM brand cars, leading people to see them not only as powerful, but popular and something that everyone else wants and many already have.

This picture also helps to sell the idea that GM is the largest brand in America (which may somehow be somewhat true when it comes to cars, but

it is certainly not true to its statement as the largest overall "brand.") Both of these commercials exist in worlds that are recognizable and similar to our own, however, each one takes liberties distorting our actual society to place their product in a favorable light. Both give their products mythical abilities in pursuit of the same goal. The role of product myth and a mythologized society are important tools that advertisers use when selling their products to viewers through television ads.