

Debbie Danowski

Bet You Can't Eat Just One: Binge Eating Disorder Promotion In American Food Advertising

ABSTRACT

„Eat Like Andy“ „What Would You Do For A Klondike Bar?“ For well over a century, American food manufacturers have been competing for consumers' attention through the use of catchy jingles, iconic characters and celebrities. At the same time, the products being advertised contain greater amounts of addictive ingredients, which encourage binge eating resulting in an unprecedented obesity epidemic. Combine this with the „full-scale commercialization of the culture today“. Jhally identifies and the powerful impact of food advertisements becomes clear as does the need to evaluate these ads. As Kilbourne noted nearly a quarter of a century ago, the majority of food advertisements „normalize bingeing“ to the point of making it societally acceptable. This chapter uses content analysis methodology to analyze American food advertisements in print, electronic, and digital media format using the criteria for Binge Eating Disorder outlined in the American Psychiatric Association's Fifth edition of *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSMV) and intake criteria from the National Eating Disorders Association and the Food Addiction Institute to determine the percentage of ads that promote BED/food addiction characteristics to increase product sales. In total, more than 100 ads for foods with the NOVA Ultra-Processed classification were analyzed.

KEY WORDS

Binge Eating Disorder. Eating disorders. Food addiction. Food advertisements. Normalize bingeing. NOVA Ultra-Processed Foods. Obesity epidemic.

1. Introduction

„Eat Like Andy“¹

„What Would You Do For A Klondike Bar?“²

For well over a century, American food manufacturers have been competing for consumers attention through the use of catchy jingles, iconic characters and celebrities. The first jingle broadcast in America is widely attributed to General Mills for Wheaties cereal, which was heard on radio in 1926 on Christmas Eve.³ A male quartet sang, „Have you tried Wheaties? They're whole wheat with all of the bran. Won't you try Wheaties? For wheat is the best food of man.“⁴ Sales in the area where the jingle was broadcast increased drastically thus cementing the use of slogans and jingles in food advertising for decades to come.

Similarly, the introduction of the Quaker Oats Man (1877), Aunt Jemima (1889), Mr. Peanut (1916), Snap, Crackle and Pop (1928), and thousands of other characters over many decades would be used to entice both children and adults to purchase food products as would the use of celebrities to sell everything from Kraft Cheese (Andy Griffith) to Whitman's Sampler Chocolates (Bob Hope).

Food advertisements as Parkin notes, „offer a unique opportunity to explore the cultural discourse, because of the centrality of food to the human experience.“⁵ Add to this, the fact that, according to the January 2019 UCONN Rudd Center for Obesity & Food Policy Rudd Report, the amount of money companies spent on television food, beverage and restaurant advertising from 2013 to 2017 was \$10.9 billion and it becomes clear exactly how powerful the influence of food advertisements has become.⁶

As Jhally notes. Even if we were to somehow give up our smartphones and other screens, advertising and corporate brands would be impossible to avoid, confronting us at every turn as we make our way through the spaces and places of daily life. And the sheer amount of time, talent and money that businesses have expended to accomplish this has been nothing short of astonishing. Corporations now spend more than \$200 billion a year on advertising in the U.S. Alone, a figure that's greater than the total GDP of many countries.⁷

With the large number and wide variety of segments in the food industry, finding a total figure for food advertising spending is problematic due to the widespread scope though individual corporate statistics are available. For example, the McDonald's Corporation alone spent \$1.51 billion on U.S. advertising in 2017⁸ while the food industry in total spent \$1 billion each specifically targeting children ages 2 – 11 and 12 – 17 years old.⁹

¹ WOHL, J.: *Ad Age*. [online]. [2019-02-03]. Available at: <<https://adage.com/article/cmo-strategy/burger-king-andy-warhol-super-bowl-ad/316498/>>.

² *Klondike Commercial*. *YouTube*. [online]. [2019-12-2019]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQgOVn3cHxI>>.

³ DAYE, D.: *Great Moments in Advertising*. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2007/12/great-moments-1-3.html#.XGMAYS2-LgE>>.

⁴ DAYE, D.: *Great Moments in Advertising*. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2007/12/great-moments-1-3.html#.XGMAYS2-LgE>>.

⁵ PARKIN, K. J.: *Food Is Love*. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, p. 2.

⁶ *Rudd Report*. *Connecticut: UCONN Rudd Center for Obesity & Food Policy*, 2019. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <<http://uconnruddcenter.org/files/Pdfs/TargetedMarketingReport2019.pdf>>.

⁷ JHALLY, S. (Director): *Advertising at the Edge of the Apocalypse*. [DVD]. Northampton, MA : Media Education Foundation, 2017.

⁸ *McDonald's Corporation advertising spending in the United States from 2009 to 2017*. *Statista*. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/192159/us-ad-spending-of-mcdonalds/>>.

⁹ BERNING, J., RABINOWITZ, A. N.: Targeted advertising in the breakfast cereal industry. In *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics*, 2017, Vol. 49, No. 3, p. 382–399.

Add to this the fact that Americans see over 5,000 ads per day with some experts putting this number at twice that and the power to influence consciousness becomes all too clear. Percentages about the portion of these ads that are for food-related products has been estimated as high as 98%.¹⁰

As Kilbourne pointed out nearly a „quarter of a century ago, the majority of food advertisements normalize bingeing“ to the point of making it societally acceptable to eat large amounts of unhealthy, addictive food.¹¹

Taking Gerbner's theory about media portrayals „cultivating“ the way viewers see the world into account, and it becomes clear exactly how dangerous food advertisements that normalize binge-eating behavior are to the already overweight American public.¹²

According to the most recent statistics from The State of Obesity website, „adult obesity rates now exceed 35% in seven states, 30% in 29 states and 25% in 48 states“¹³ with the lowest rate being 22.6%. The same website notes that the childhood obesity rate is 18.5 percent, varying by age group and ethnicity.¹⁴ Combining these two statistics to estimate an average, it can be reasonably concluded that the obesity rate for Americans, both adults and children, is over 50%.

The American Psychiatric Association's recent addition of Binge Eating Disorder (BED) in the chapter on Feeding and Eating Disorders in the 5th edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) was added „to better represent the symptoms and behaviors of patients dealing with these conditions across the lifespan.“¹⁵ This addition can also be viewed as a move to reflect the need for diagnosis of the rapidly rising American obesity rates.

It's important to point out that several researchers have noted the limitations of the criteria listed in the DSM-5 for Binge Eating Disorder. Wilfley, Citrome, and Herman point out in their study,

Characteristics of binge eating disorder in relation to diagnostic criteria point to previous clinical research points out that, Individuals diagnosed with BED often exhibit a unique clinical profile consisting of psychiatric (e.g. mood, obsessive-compulsive, and impulsive disorders) and nonpsychiatric medical (e.g. sleep disturbance, gastrointestinal symptoms, metabolic syndrome, and type 2 diabetes) comorbidities, psychopathologies (e.g. overvaluation of shape and weight), and personality/behavioral traits (e.g. overconsumption of calories, emotional eating, and interpersonal problems).¹⁶

Similarly, Kenney, Singleton, and Carter note in their study that, „In particular, individuals with BED reported more difficulties with awareness and nonacceptance of emotions, impulsivity in response to emotions, and difficulties accessing adaptive ER [Emotion Regulation] strategies when experiencing emotions.“¹⁷ Thus providing methodological proof for inclusion of stronger behavioral characteristics in BED diagnostic criteria.

¹⁰ WELLER, C.: *Do TV Ads Contribute to Childhood Obesity? 98% Of Commercials Feature Unhealthy Foods.* *Consumer News.* [online]. [2019-02-14]. Available at: <<https://www.medicaldaily.com/do-tv-ads-contribute-childhood-obesity-98-commercials-feature-unhealthy-foods-265345>>.

¹¹ PAPPERT, C. et al. (Director): *Slim Hopes.* [DVD]. Northampton, MA : Media Education Foundation, 1995.

¹² GERBNER, G.: The importance of being critical – in one's own fashion. In *Journal of Communication.* 1983, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 355-362.

¹³ *The State of Obesity.* [online]. [2019-02-14]. Available at: <<https://stateofobesity.org/adult-obesity/>>.

¹⁴ *The State of Obesity.* [online]. [2019-02-14]. Available at: <<https://stateofobesity.org/childhood/>>.

¹⁵ *American Psychiatric Association DSM-5 Fact Sheets.* [online]. [2019-02-14]. Available at: <<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/educational-resources/dsm-5-fact-sheets>>.

¹⁶ WILFREY D.E., CITROME L., HERMAN B.K.: Characteristics of binge eating disorder in relation to diagnostic criteria. In *Neuropsychiatric Dis Treat.* 2016, Vol. 12, No. 2 p. 2220. [online]. [2019-02-14]. Available at: <doi:10.2147/NDT.S107777>.

¹⁷ KENNY, T. E., SINGLETON, C., CARTER, J. C. Testing predictions of the emotion regulation model of binge-eating disorder. In *International Journal of Eating Disorders.* 2017, Vol. 50, No. 11, p. 1298.

To compensate for the limitations in the DSM-5 BED criteria identified by researchers, diagnostic criteria outlined by the National Eating Disorders Association will be combined with the criteria in DSM-5. The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) is the largest nonprofit focused on assisting individuals and families with eating disorder treatment and information. As a nonpolitical, nonprofit organization with both medical and psychiatric scientific advisors founded in 2001, information from this organization is science-based and well vetted medically.

Additionally, though the concept of a physical and/or emotional addiction to food has been widely debated, there exists a substantial enough body of research that the concept deserves inclusion in this study.^{18, 19} While the debate about whether food addiction is physical or behavioral or both is outside the scope of this study, criteria reflecting both ideas will be included in the measurement tool used in this study.

The NOVA Food Classification system will also be used. As firmly established in nutrition literature and emphasized recently in the Monteiro, Cannon, Levy et al. 2016 study, „NOVA. The star shines bright“ in World Nutrition.

NOVA is the food classification that categorises foods according to the extent and purpose of food processing, rather than in terms of nutrients. In recent decades some attention has been paid to the increasing importance of food processing in global food supplies and dietary patterns, and its role in the pandemics of diet-related non-communicable diseases. But the specific types of processing that modify food attributes and risks of disease – either negatively or positively – have not been precisely defined.²⁰

Furthermore, the researchers point out that, „NOVA is now recognised as a valid tool for nutrition and public health research, policy and action, in reports from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Pan American Health Organization.“²¹ Thus, making this classification widely accepted and a useful way of determining the food product types of advertisements used for this study.

According to the NOVA system, there are four food group categorizations:

Group 1: Unprocessed or minimally processed foods, Group 2: Processed culinary ingredients, Group 3: Processed foods, and Group 4: Ultra-processed food and drink products. For the purposes of this study, Group 4 foods will be used as these are not only the unhealthiest but also the most widely advertised thus having the greatest impact on the largest number of American viewers.

Following is the NOVA Group 4 definition. These are industrial formulations typically with five or more and usually many ingredients. Such ingredients often include those also used in processed foods, such as sugar, oils, fats, salt, anti-oxidants, stabilisers, and preservatives. Ingredients only found in ultra-processed products include substances not commonly used in culinary preparations, and additives whose purpose is to imitate sensory qualities of group 1 foods or of culinary preparations of these foods, or to disguise undesirable sensory qualities of the final product. Group 1 foods are a small proportion of or are even absent from ultra-processed products.

¹⁸ GORDON, E. L. et al.: What Is the Evidence for “Food Addiction?” A Systematic Review. In *Nutrients*. 2018, Vol. 10, No. 4., p. 477.

¹⁹ See also: LERMA-CABRERA, J. M., CARVAJAL, F., LOPEZ-LEGARRA, P.: Food addiction as a new piece of the obesity framework. In *Nutrition Journal*, 2016, Vol. 15, No. 5. ISSN 1475-2891. [online]. [2019-03-22]. Available at: <<https://nutritionj.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12937-016-0124-6>>; MEULE, A., GEARHARDT, A. N.: Food addiction in the light of DSM-5. In *Nutrients*, 2014, Vol. 6, No. 9, p. 3653-3671. ISSN 2072-6643.

²⁰ MONTEIRO, C. A. et al.: NOVA. The star shines bright. [Food classification. Public health] In *World Nutrition*. 2016, Vol. 7, No. 1-3, p. 28. [online]. [2019-03-21]. Available at: <<https://archive.wphna.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/WN-2016-7-1-3-28-38-Monteiro-Cannon-Levy-et-al-NOVA.pdf>>.

²¹ Ibidem.

Substances only found in ultra-processed products include some directly extracted from foods, such as casein, lactose, whey, and gluten, and some derived from further processing of food constituents, such as hydrogenated or interesterified oils, hydrolysed proteins, soy protein isolate, maltodextrin, invert sugar and high fructose corn syrup. Classes of additive only found in ultra-processed products include dyes and other colours, colour stabilisers, flavours, flavour enhancers, non-sugar sweeteners, and processing aids such as carbonating, firming, bulking and anti-bulking, de-foaming, anti-caking and glazing agents, emulsifiers, sequestrants and humectants.

Several industrial processes with no domestic equivalents are used in the manufacture of ultra-processed products, such as extrusion and moulding, and pre-processing for frying. The main purpose of industrial ultra-processing is to create products that are ready to eat, to drink or to heat, liable to replace both unprocessed or minimally processed foods that are naturally ready to consume, such as fruits and nuts, milk and water, and freshly prepared drinks, dishes, desserts and meals. Common attributes of ultra-processed products are hyper-palatability, sophisticated and attractive packaging, multi-media and other aggressive marketing to children and adolescents, health claims, high profitability, and branding and ownership by transnational corporations.

Examples of typical ultra-processed products are: carbonated drinks; sweet or savoury packaged snacks; ice-cream, chocolate, candies (confectionery); mass-produced packaged breads and buns; margarines and spreads; cookies (biscuits), pastries, cakes, and cake mixes; breakfast „cereals“, „cereal“ and „energy“ bars; „energy“ drinks; milk drinks, „fruit“ yoghurts and „fruit“ drinks; cocoa drinks; meat and chicken extracts and „instant“ sauces; infant formulas, follow-on milks, other baby products; „health“ and „slimming“ products such as powdered or „fortified“ meal and dish substitutes; and many ready to heat products including pre-prepared pies and pasta and pizza dishes; poultry and fish „nuggets“ and „sticks“, sausages, burgers, hot dogs, and other reconstituted meat products, and powdered and packaged „instant“ soups, noodles and desserts.²²

2. Methods

A BED Advertising Analysis Chart was adapted for use in analysing advertisements [included within]. Information was used from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), the Food Addiction Institute and the National Eating Disorders Association.

Criteria based on intake/diagnostic questions for potential patients and the general public were re-written to reflect use in food advertisement analysis.

Following that, food items listed in the NOVA Group 4 Ultra Processed category were selected based on choosing five that appear to be most unhealthy and five that appear to be least unhealthy. The first five appearing most unhealthy are: ice cream, candy, cookies, chips, and snack cakes. The second five appearing least unhealthy are: cereal, granola bars, fast food, frozen prepared meals and fruit yogurt. Fast food was included in the appearing least unhealthy category due to current attempts by companies to include healthier food options.

In total, 100 ads were viewed. To begin, an internet search was conducted to determine at least ten of the most popular brands in each category. Every effort was made to include the top five brands, however, if one category was dominated by one brand then those further down on the list were used. For example, the Pepsi-Cola Company owns the Lay's potato chip brand and Lay's, Wavy Lay's, and Kettle Cooked chips are included in the top six (omitting the

²² MONTEIRO, C. A. et al.: NOVA. The star shines bright. [Food classification. Public health] In *World Nutrition*. 2016, Vol. 7, No. 1-3, p. 33. [online]. [2019-03-21]. Available at: <<https://archive.wphna.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/WN-2016-7-1-3-28-38-Monteiro-Cannon-Levy-et-al-NOVA.pdf>>.

private label brands which are a consolidation of all store brands). Rather than analyse three out of five Lay's products, only two were included in the study (Lay's including new Poppables and Wavy Lay's).²³

All private label brands which include store brands were excluded based on the need to research nationally available brands. Similarly, regional brands were excluded as well.

Following that, a search using Google was conducted to find a current and historical ad for each of the brands in the top categories. Every attempt was made to locate older advertisements, generally from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In some cases, this was impossible due either to lack of digitized ads during this period or companies that were not yet established during this time. If no air date of the ad was available, the published date when the commercial was uploaded was used. Two ads from each brand were analysed using the BED Advertising Analysis Chart then a results table was created [included within].

BED Advertising Analysis Chart	
Label	Description
Addictive	
A1	Signs of using food to relieve emotional discomfort/seek emotional change
A2	Evidence of neglecting daily responsibilities due to eating
A3	Representations of deep emotional attachment to food
A4	Indicators of doing anything to obtain food/inability to control cravings
A5	Portrayals of using food to replace relationships or as a means of bonding
Behavioral	
B1	Images of eating alone
B2	Signs of stealing, hiding, or hoarding food
B3	Portrayals of frequent dieting/appetite control/grazing throughout the day
B4	Evidence of frequently checking the mirror for body flaws
B5	Signs of food rituals (won't let foods to touch, only eating red candy, etc.)
Emotional	
E1	Portrayals of feeling out of control with regard to food
E2	Indicators of feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment, disgust with eating
E3	Evidence of distress before or after eating
E4	Portrayals of feeling uncomfortable eating around others
E5	Representations of negative feelings about body weight/size/shape
Physical	
P1	Representations of eating large amounts of food
P2	Indications of eating quickly
P3	Signs of difficulty concentrating due to food presence/thoughts
E4	Portrayals of feeling uncomfortable eating around others
E5	Representations of negative feelings about body weight/size/shape
Physical	
P1	Representations of eating large amounts of food
P2	Indications of eating quickly
P3	Signs of difficulty concentrating due to food presence/thoughts
P4	Portrayals of weight fluctuations

²³ *Sales of Leading Potato Chip Brands of the United States in 2017*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/188222/top-potato-chip-brands-in-the-united-states/>>.

P5	Indicators of stomach/gastrointestinal distress/complaints
**Adapted for food advertising analysis using information from <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i> (DSM-5), the Food Addiction Institute, and the National Eating Disorders Association.	

SCHEME 1: BED Advertising Analysis Chart

Source: own processing, 2019

Six columns were used in the results chart. The first is the product name, the second to identify the parent company, the third to record the gender representations in the ad, the fourth the format (electronic, digital, print), the fifth the label as outlined on the BED Advertising Analysis Chart, and the last the link to view the ad for future reference.

Each ad was viewed and evaluated using the BED Advertising Analysis Chart by a primary researcher. A secondary researcher was used to determine ambiguous representations then a determination was made among the two.

The majority of ads were viewed in electronic format and had been aired on television. When not available, ads digitally at the brand's website or social media site or print ads digitalized were analysed.

Following this results in the Label category were counted using the find tool in Microsoft Word and analysed to determine the major BED eating characteristics present in the ads viewed.

3. Results

Following is the raw data on the Results Chart then the percentages as outlined in the BED Advertising Analysis Chart.

Product	Company	Gender	Format	Label	Link
Breyers Ice Cream	Unilever	Female -children	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3	https://www.breyers.com/us/en
Breyers Ice Cream	Unilever	Families	Electronic - 1970s	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIWGdTvdy9A
Ben & Jerry's Light	Unilever	No People	Electronic - 2018	A1, A5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVOrqlf3s70
Ben & Jerry's	B&J	Male - B&J	Electronic - 1986	A1, A3, P2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RqTzelNMbiY
Haagan-Dazs	Gen. Mills	YA, M/F	Electronic - 2018	A1, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQeMy8epmWA
Haagan-Dazs	Gen. Mills	Male - children	Electronic - 1990s	A1, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YqZh4durak
Turkey Hill	Kroger	Female/ Male	Electronic - 2018	A1, A3, A5, P1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dYu9/turkey-hill-triopolitan-cant-ever-decide-triple-chocolate
Turkey Hill	Kroger	Children - M/F	Electronic - 2000	A1, A3, A5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxVIYnHkSAc
Klondike	Unilever	Food Chrs. Adults - M/F	Electronic - 2018	A1, A5, B5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/w0Se/klondike-half-time-snack-time
Klondike	Unilever	Adults - M/F	Electronic - 1988	A1, A3, A4, E1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQgOVn3cHxl
M&Ms	Mars/ Wrigley	Food Chrs. Male	Electronic - 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sON3ARGmNU

M&Ms	Mars/ Wrigley	Food Chrs. Santa – M	Electronic – 1996	A1, A3, A5	https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/mms-santa-fainting-campaign/
Hersheys	Hershey Trust	Adults – M/F Chilrn – M	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV0uxCBtiZQ
Hersheys	Hershey Trust	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic - 1990	A1, A3, A5,	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHenuq3q12c
Reese's	Hersheys	Male – Voice Only	Electronic - 2018	A1, A3, A5, E1, P1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dvnm/reeses-mouthstuffers
Reese's	Hersheys	Children – Male	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_PnntM451Uk
Hersheys Kisses	Hershey Trust	Adults – M/F Food Chrs.	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wJ6N/hersheys-kisses-2018-valentines-day-with-a-kiss
Hersheys Kisses	Hershey Trust	Food Chrs.	Electronic – 1989	A1, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oKY3pnNht0
Dove Choc.	Mars	Adult – Woman	Electronic – 2013	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwPwQ4S4op8
Dove Choc.	Mars	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/l60R/dove-chocolate-soulmates
Oreo	Nabisco	Adult – Male Child – Female	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5, B5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wa6r/oreo-synchronized
Oreo	Nabisco	Children – M/F	Electronic - 1983	A1, A3, A5, B1, B5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3xuFkaaLhE
Chips Ahoy	Nabisco	Adult – Female Children – M/F	Digital - acebook	A1, A3, A5, P1, P3	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=974898648217
Chips Ahoy	Nabisco	Adults – M/F	Electronic - 1989	A1, A3, A4, B2, E1, E2, E3, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18yTV3o5UE0
Keebler Fudge Cookies	Kellogg Co.	Male Elves	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A5, B5	https://www.tvcommercialad.com/watch/JzXOwR8pGKLoM4j
Keebler Fudge Cookies	Kellogg Co.	Male Elves	Electronic – 1980	A1, A3, A5, B5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRIG2uU4paU
Pepperidge Farm Milano	Campbell Soup Co.	Adult – Female Children - M Voice Only	Electronic – 2019	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1, B2	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/waDH/pepperidge-farm-milano-save-something-for-yourself
Pepperidge Farm Milano, Geneva, Bordeaux	Campbell Soup Co.	Adult – Male	Electronic – 1986	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuhlSMqkJSQ
Nestle Toll House Morsels	Nestle	Adult - Female Child - Male	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dl9T/nestle-toll-house-morsels-cookie-pizza
Nestle Toll House Morsels	Nestle	Children – M/F	Electronic - 1987	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gB-EIRIM_MA

Lay's Poppable	Pepsi-Co Company	Adults – M/F	Digital – 2019	A1, A2, A3, A5, B5, P1, P2	https://www.lays.com/?fbclid=IwAR3EXEmZfP1SVHV8iwBXUBx6F6buvF3zAFf5xcO3f_HhPX4QKe4PB4Y0g1ns
Lay's Potato Chips	Pepsi-Co Company	Adult – M	Print – 1950s	A1, A3, A4, B1, B2, E1, P1	https://www.pinterest.com/offsite/?token=493-602&url=https%3A%2F%2Fi.pining.
Pringles	Kellogg Co.	Adults – M	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5, B2, B5, E1, E3, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tYrXkw6sYk
Pringles	Kellogg Co.	Adult – F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5, B5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvSmcWnrTfA
Ruffles	Pepsi-Co. Company	Adults – M	Digital – 2019	A1, A3, A4	https://www.facebook.com/ruffles/
Ruffles	Pepsi-Co. Company	Adults – M/F Children M/F	Electronic – 1983	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAIlpGVu1c0
Cape Cod Chips	Synder's-Lance	None	Digital – FB – 2/10	A1, A3, A5	https://www.facebook.com/CapeCodChips/photos/a.304285072962797/2201436219914330/?type=3&theater
Cape Cod Chips	Synder's-Lance	Adult – M Seagulls Anim.	Electronic - 2012	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89GjGq08x5A
Wavy Lay's	Pepsi-Co. Company	Adults – M/F	Electronic -2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Xqb6783nlc
Wavy Lay's	Pepsi-Co. Company	Adult – M Children – M	Electronic – 2007	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, E1, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iObWs8BExKA
Little Debbie	McKee Foods	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic - 2019	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1,	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dxwQ/little-debbie-today-we-bake-sweetheart-of-american-snacks
Little Debbie	McKee Foods	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1986	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B2, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WN-u2k0Yj38
Hostess Cupcakes	Gores Group	Adult- F Unicorn	Digital – FB – 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.facebook.com/Hostess/videos/308777826499394/
Hostess Cupcakes	Gores Group	Adults – M/F Dragon - M	Electronic – 2005	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKsYOeuq7kM
Enten-mann's	Bimbo Bakeries	Adult – F Voice Only, Child Hands	Electronic - 2017	A1, A3, A5, P1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/A8YJ/entenmanns-everyones-got-a-favorite
Enten-mann's	Bimbo Bakeries	Adults – M/F Children – F Dogs – M Voices	Electronic - 2008	A1, A2, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lplvd63lqR4
Hostess Twinkies	Gores Group	Adult – M Opossum - M	Electronic – 2014	A1, A2, A3, A4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWVsBw3w9LA

Hostess Twinkies	Gores Group	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1988	A1, A3, A5, B2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdHKdqQ95OA
Sara Lee Snack Cakes	Hillshire Brand	Adult – F Voice Only Child – F	Electronic – 2013	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7blV/sara-lee-devils-food-creme-cakes-delicious-snack-moment
Sara Lee Pound Cake Snack	Hillshire Brand	Adult – M Voice Only	Electronic – 1988	A1, A3, E1, E2, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFC-kWyL8Ek
Cheerios	General Mills	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dXX7/maple-cheerios-good-goes-around-reduced-heart-disease-risk
Cheerios	General Mills	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1984	A1, A2, A3, A5, B5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6-2HAI5eDo
Honey Nut Cheerios	General Mills	Adults – M/F Children – F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5,	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/lZm2/honey-nut-cheerios-to-the-honey
Honey Nut Cheerios	General Mills	Child – F Honey Bee – M	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yG45oOLHGk
Frosted Flakes	Kellogg Co.	Adult – M Children – M/F Tony Tiger	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A4, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/lB1A/frosted-flakes-new-trick#
Frosted Flakes	Kellogg Co.	Child – M Tony Tiger – M	Electronic – 1980	A1, A3, A5, B2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BELFGI11bel
Honey Bunches of Oats	Post	Adults – M Children – F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/lVJD/honey-bunches-of-oats-breakfast-time-with-dad
Honey Bunches of Oats	Post	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1989	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSfZvbBPYzY
Cinn. Toast Crunch	General Mills	Adults – F Squares	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5, E1, P1, P2	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/woB8/cinnamon-toast-crunch-filter
Cinn. Toast Crunch	General Mills	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1985	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRNsy4pxw6s
Nature Valley	General Mills	Adult – M	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dKD2/nature-valley-natures-powerful-energy
Nature Valley	General Mills	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkoEU4ChIzW
Quaker Chewy	Pepsi-Co. Company	Adult – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wVA4/quaker-chewy-granola-bars-welcome-wagon-song-by-andy-grammer
Quaker Chewy	Pepsi-Co. Company	M – Voice Only	Electronic – 1991	A1, A3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRjrTFkm3gA
Kashi Granola Bars	Kellogg Co.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 2017	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/AOZE/kashi-chewy-nut-butter-bar-support-american-farmers

Kashi Granola Bars	Kellogg Co.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 2009	A1, A3, A4, A5, B1, E1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU0pxPURK08
Atkins Granola Bars	Simply Good Foods Co.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wByy/atkins-chocolate-chip-granola-bar-atkins-effect-ft-lauren-alaina
Atkins Granola Bars	Simply Good Foods Co.	Adult – F	Electronic 2015	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7xef/atkins-bars-snack-on-the-run-featuring-sharon-osbourne
Sunbelt Bakery Granola Bars	McKee Foods	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Digital – 2017	A1, A3, A5	https://www.facebook.com/SunbeltBakery/videos/10158217024350574/?v=10158217024350574
Sunbelt Bakery Granola Bars	McKee Foods	Adults – F/ Male Voice	Electronic – 2010	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6PP9x-IIZE
McDon.'s	McDon.'s Corp.	Adults – M	Electronic – 2019 Super Bowl	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSXvGHuaQUk
McDon.'s	McDon.'s Corp.	Children – M/F Charc.s	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdwyZPNofT8
Subway	Doctor's Assoc., Inc.	Adults – M/F	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A4, A5, E1, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0NR02PRFhE
Subway	Doctor's Assoc., Inc.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1977	A1, A3, A5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wkiHZkDFu4
KFC	Yum China	Adults – M/ Voice Body Parts Only	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A4, A5, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmsor_xpaUc
KFC	Yum China	Adult – F Children – M/F	Electronic – 1980	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqD_I0Wj-20
Domino's Pizza	Bain Capital	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 2018	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, E1, P1, P3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-okiOcwjvTQ
Domino's Pizza	Bain Capital	Adults – M/F Child – F	Electronic – 1985	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9mnpRVjfJQ
Burger King	Restaurant Brands Int.	Adult – M	Electronic – 2019 Super Bowl	A1, A3, B1, B5	https://www.eater.com/2019/2/3/18209563/burger-king-super-bowl-commercial-2019-andy-warhol
Burger King	Restaurant Brands Int.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1980s	A1, A3, A5, B1, E1, P2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovahk9IGFcQ
Stouffer's Party Size Lasagna	Nestle	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic - 2018	A1, A3, A5, P1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dmgi/stouffers-party-size-lasagna-with-meat-and-sauce-together-for-the-holidays
Stouffer's Frozen Entrees	Nestle	Adult – M/ Voice Only	Electronic - 1990	A1, A3, P1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KQ5XlpqLE
Marie Callender Chicken Pot Pie	ConAgra Foods	Adult - F	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dWYx/marie-callenders-chicken-pot-pie-good-mood

Marie Callender Chicken Pot Pie +	ConAgra Foods	Adults – M/F Children – M/F	Electronic – 2013	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7YgZ/marie-callenders-these-are-days
Lean Cuisine Farmers Market Pizza	Nestle	Adults - F	Electronic - 2018	A1, A2, A3, A5, B1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/d5w6/lean-cuisine-origins-farmers-market-pizza-patrice
Lean Cuisine Frozen Dinners	Nestle	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1987	A1, A3, A5, B1, P4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Dw4RYQHJ9I
Banquet Chicken Pot Pie	ConAgra Foods	Adult – F Children – M	Electronic – 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wWOO/banquet-pot-pies-feel-like-family
Banquet Frozen Dinners	ConAgra Foods	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 1960s	A1, A3, A4, A5, E1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqx9zbdFK9k
Healthy Choice Café Steamers	ConAgra Foods	None	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A5, E1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dXUR/healthy-choice-plant-based-power-bowls-white-bean-and-feta-salad
Healthy Choice Café Steamers	ConAgra Foods	Adults - F/M Voice Only	Electronic - 2016	A1, A3, A5, B1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hQ8NhnEbiU
Dannon Two Good Yogurt	Danone	Adult – F Voice Only	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A5, B5, E1, E5, P1	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/lflA/dannon-two-good-friday-night
Dannon Yogurt	Danone	Adults – M/F	Electronic - 1982	A1, A3, A5, B1, E5, P4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooDZ_bdRVJ8
Activia Yogurt	Danone	Adults – F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, B1, E3, P5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkS3NBYxRd4
Activia Yogurt	Danone	Adults – M/F J.L. Curtis	Electronic – 2012	A1, A3, P5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/7kc2/activia-irregularity-featuring-jamie-lee-curtis
Stonyfield Organic YoBaby	Danone	Adults – M/F Baby – M/F	Digital - 2018	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__l58Y-ngD8
Stonyfield YoBaby	Danone	Adult – F Babies – M/F	Digital - 2015	A1, A3, A5	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49mUWtXDg9U
Yoplait Oui and YQ	General Mills	Adult - F	Electronic - 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/l2al/oui-by-yoplait-and-yq-upside-down-spoon
Yoplait Yogurt – First Comm.	General Mills	Adult – M Jack Klugman	Electronic - 1979	A1, A3, A5, B1, P2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLLq1ifsoYw
Chobani Less Sugar Greek Yogurt	Chobani Global Holdings, Inc.	Adults – M/F	Electronic – 2019	A1, A3, A5	https://www.ispot.tv/ad/lpux/chobani-less-sugar-greek-yogurt-wonderful-world-of-less-song-by-rosco-gordon
Chobani Yogurt	Chobani Global Holdings, Inc.	Adults – M/F	Electronic - 2011	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ro96Au4eqVs

SCHEME 2: Raw Data on the Result Chart

Source: own processing, 2019

BED Advertising Results Chart	
Label	Description
Addictive	
A1 – 100%	Signs of using food to relieve emotional discomfort/seek emotional change
A2 – 15%	Evidence of neglecting daily responsibilities due to eating
A3 – 95%	Representations of deep emotional attachment to food
A4 – 15%	Indicators of doing anything to obtain food/inability to control cravings
A5 – 87%	Portrayals of using food to replace relationships or as a means of bonding
Behavioral	
B1 – 25%	Images of eating alone
B2 – 8%	Signs of stealing, hiding, or hoarding food
B3 – 0%	Portrayals of frequent dieting/appetite control/grazing throughout the day
B4 – 0%	Evidence of frequently checking the mirror for body flaws
B5 – 11%	Signs of food rituals (won't let foods to touch, only eating red candy, etc.)
Emotional	
E1 – 15%	Portrayals of feeling out of control with regard to food
E2 – 2%	Indicators of feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment, disgust with eating
E3 – 2%	Evidence of distress before or after eating
E4 – 0%	Portrayals of feeling uncomfortable eating around others
E5 – 2%	Representations of negative feelings about body weight/size/shape
Physical	
P1 – 24%	Representations of eating large amounts of food
P2 – 5%	Indications of eating quickly
P3 – 2%	Signs of difficulty concentrating due to food presence/thoughts
P4 – 2%	Portrayals of weight fluctuations
P5 – 2%	Indicators of stomach/gastrointestinal distress/complaints
**Adapted for food advertising analysis using information from <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i> (DSM-5), the Food Addiction Institute, and the National Eating Disorders Association.	

SCHEME 3: Percentages outlined in the BED Advertising Analysis Chart

Source: own processing, 2019

4. Discussion

The majority of ads categorized portrayed characteristics in the food addiction category with 100% of those viewed showing signs of using food to relieve emotional discomfort and/or seek emotional change. Much of this was evidenced by the inclusion of the „euphoric bite“ into the product advertised that clearly was designed to promise consumers emotional and, many times, sexual satisfaction by eating the products. Whether it was Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, Lay's Poppables, Honey Nut Cheerios, or Atkins Granola Bars, the message was the same throughout each and every category studied: This food is special and eating it will provide great happiness, comfort and satisfaction.

This portrayal of satisfaction is taken to an extreme in a 2013 Dove Chocolate „My Moment, My Dove“ commercial where a woman dressed in a camisole interacts with a piece of chocolate in a way very obviously designed to imitate a sexual experience that culminates in the explosion

of an almond mimicking an orgasm.²⁴ Using an entirely different approach yet still equating food with emotional satisfaction, a 2019 Pepperidge Farm „Save Something For Yourself“ commercial first equates eating the cookie with sexual satisfaction as a woman wrapped in a towel is seen slowly savoring her cookie in what appears to be a spa-like setting until the camera pulls back and shows her surrounded by a bathtub filled with children’s toys.²⁵ In a voiceover, the woman is told, „You gave them your bathtub, don’t give them your cookies. Save something for yourself,“ clearly reinforcing the idea of gaining intense satisfaction from the cookies.²⁶

Similarly, 95% of the ads viewed included representations of deep emotional attachment to food. In much the same way as previously described, most of the humans and also all of the food characters expressed deep bonding with the products advertised. This is evident in a 2018 Banquet Chicken Pot Pie „Feel Like Family“ commercial where the product is used to cement good family and racial relationships by including a white friend in a black mother and son dinner that reminds viewers are „the moments that matter most.“²⁷

By the same token, many of the products took the deep emotional attachment a step further to present themselves as the solution to world problems as evidenced by a 2018 „Heartwarming the World“ Hershey’s Chocolate Bar commercial, which reminds viewers that „...the world could use some warmth“ while showing images of people of all ages and races sharing the product.²⁸

This deep emotional attachment to food products even extends to electronic devices as portrayed in the Pringles „Sad Device“ 2019 Super Bowl commercial where an electronic device points out that there are 318,000 stacking combinations of Pringles chips and says, „Sadly, I will never know the joy of tasting any. For I have no hands to stack with, no mouth to taste with, no soul to feel with. I am at the mercy of a cruel and uncaring...“ after which she is cut off by one of the two males in the commercial and directed to play „Funky Town.“²⁹

Another data point worth noting is that 87% of the ads viewed included portrayals of using food to replace relationships or as a way to bond with others. This can be seen most especially in the many ads portraying family dinners or events centered around the product. While portrayals of family dinners and holiday celebrations in themselves do not necessarily indicate the presence of food addiction or BED characteristics, the images in the ads viewed put the product as the most important element in the meal and as the reason for the bonding, which differentiates the two.

For example, in a 2018 Nestle Toll House commercial, a mother is shown wondering how to „top pizza night“ then comes up with the idea of making a Nestle Toll House pizza for her son. The two are shown laughing and bonding while eating the chocolate pizza. At the end consumers are reminded to „Bake your heart into it.“³⁰ Thus, implying that the entire reason for the bonding meal is the product.

This is also seen in the 2018 Hershey’s Kisses „Valentine’s Day with a Kiss“ commercial, which shows a couple in a dimly lit room with candles cuddling together and gazing into each other’s eyes while eating Hershey’s Kisses.³¹ This ad also includes another phenomenon seen

²⁴ *Dove Commercial Senses*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwPwQ4S4op8>.

²⁵ *Pepperidge Farm Milan „Save Something For Yourself“ Commercial*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ispot.tv/ad/waDH/pepperidge-farm-milano-save-something-for-yourself>>.

²⁶ *Ibidem*

²⁷ *Banquet Chicken Pot Pie „Feel Like Family“*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <<https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wWOO/banquet-pot-pies-feel-like-family>>.

²⁸ *Hershey’s Kisses (2018) USA*. [online]. [2019-02-18]. Available at: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=uV0uxCBtiZQ>.

²⁹ *Pringles Sad Device 2019 Super Bowl Commercial*. [online]. [2019-02-20]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tYrXkw6sYk>>.

³⁰ *Nestle Toll House Morsels Commercial: „Cookie Pizza“ 2018*. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<https://www.ispot.tv/ad/dl9T/nestle-toll-house-morsels-cookie-pizza>>.

³¹ *Hershey’s Kisses TV Commercial 2018: Valentine’s Day With A Kiss*. [online]. [2019-02-22]. Available at: <<https://www.ispot.tv/ad/wJ6N/hersheys-kisses-2018-valentines-day-with-a-kiss>>.

in food ads during this study: the „Anthropomorphism“ as described by Andrews, et. al. in their book *Hidden Persuasion*. According to the authors, anthropomorphism is „when a brand or product is seen as human-like“, which tends to result in consumers liking it more and „feeling closer to it.“³² In this Hershey’s Kisses commercial, kisses are show being patted lovingly by other kisses as they dance down the convey belt to be catapulted into the human female’s hands. Before entering the catapult, one kiss gives another flowers thus cementing the idea of anthropomorphism as a means of making consumers feel closer to chocolate kisses.

The idea of anthropomorphism was also evident in the 2018 Crunchy M&M’s Pampered Commercial with the famous M&M candy characters. This ad, however, takes the idea even further with humans acting as slaves to the candy characters. In the ad, consumers are encouraged to „Try them all and vote for their favorites“.³³ The idea that humans are slaves to the chocolate candy is an interesting one and signifies the way most food addicts feel about their physical cravings and their inability to control them.

Another significant portion of the ads viewed reinforced additional characteristic of food addiction: eating alone with 25% of the commercials including portrayals of people eating alone. While at first this may not seem significant, it’s important to keep in mind that eating alone to hide how much food is eaten is one of the main characteristics of food addiction and paired with the large percentage of images using food to replace relationships or as a means of bonding, the two combined present even more reinforcement for addictive behavior.

Some examples of eating alone can be seen in the previously-mentioned Dove Chocolate advertisement as well as ads for Pepperidge Farm Milano Cookies, Lay’s Potato Chips, Ruffles Potato Chips, Cape Cod Chips, Little Debbie Snack Cakes, Sara Lee Snack Cakes, Honey Nut Cheerios, Honey Bunches of Oats, Cinnamon Toast Crunch Cereal, Nature Valley Granola Bars, Kashi Granola Bars, Marie Callender’s Pot Pie, Lean Cuisine Farmers Market Pizza, Healthy Choice Steamers, Activia Yogurt, Yoplait Yogurt, and Chobani Yogurt.

Though some of these ads also contain images of people eating together, there are also portrayals of individuals eating alone, which appears to be advertisers both encouraging the solitary, addictive behavior of addiction while also promoting the use of food as a means of bonding, which is also a characteristic of food addiction thus covering all bases.

Similarly, 24% of the ads viewed included representations of eating large amounts of food. Some of these ads were for Ben & Jerry’s Light Ice Cream, Turkey Hill Ice Cream, Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups, Oreo Cookies, Chips Ahoy Chocolate Chip Cookies, Keebler Fudge Cookies, Lay’s Poppables, Pringles Potato Chips, Wavy Lays Potato Chips, Little Debbie Snack Cakes, Entenmann’s Donuts, Cinnamon Toast Crunch Cereal, Subway Sandwiches, KFC Fried Chicken, Domino’s Pizza, Stouffer’s Frozen Entrees, and Dannon Two Good Yogurt.

While it’s important to note the addictive characteristics present in the ads viewed, it’s equally as noteworthy to highlight those lower percentages or characteristics not present. These include Behavioral characteristics, B3: Portrayals of frequent dieting/appetite control/grazing throughout the day (0%); B4: Evidence of frequently checking the mirror for body flaws (0 %) as well as Emotional characteristics, E2: Indicators of feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment, disgust with eating (2%); E3: Evidence of distress before or after eating (2%); E4: Portrayals of feeling uncomfortable eating around others (0%); and E5: Representations of negative feelings about body weight/size/shape (2%) and Physical characteristics, P2: Indications of eating quickly (5%); P3: Signs of difficulty concentrating due to food presence/thoughts (2%); P4: Portrayals of weight fluctuations (2%); and P5: Indicators of stomach/gastrointestinal distress/complaints (2%).

³² ANDREWS, M., LEEUWEN, V., BAAREN, V.: *Hidden Persuasion: 33 Psychological Influence Techniques in Advertising*. Netherlands : BIS Publishers, 2013, p. 104.

³³ *M&Ms Commercial 2018 Crunchy M&Ms Pampered*. [online]. [2019-03-02]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sON3ARGmNU>>.

The majority of these characteristics, if not all of them, indicate the negative or dark side of BED/food addiction. Obviously, this is not an effective method of selling food nor something advertisers want to highlight. Yet, they are the very real effects experienced by both food addicts and those affected with BED.

Instead, advertisers focus on highlighting the thrill that goes along with tasting something delicious or the unsubstantiated hidden promises of zero consequences to eating unhealthy, high calorie, high fat foods. This is evidenced by the myriad of food ads that contain images of healthy people participating in physical activities such as white dirt biking in the desert (Nature Valley Granola Bars); children riding bikes (Quaker Chewy Granola Bars), young adults dancing with ice cream bars (Haagen-Dazs), adults and children dancing and using hula hoops (Cheerios), or children playing stickball (Breyer's Ice Cream).

Clearly, these images are designed to take away viewers concerns about obesity and gaining weight from eating these products. This idea mimics Gerbner's „Happy Violence“ in his classic studies of whether or not television violence affects viewers. As he outlines in „Profiling Television Violence“ with Morgan and Signorielli, „This happy violence is swift, cool, thrilling, painless, effective, designed not to upset but to lead to a happy ending and to deliver an audience to the advertiser's message in a receptive mood.“³⁴

It's easy to translate the „Happy Violence“ concept into food advertising which promotes „Happy Eating“ moments. These moments were visible in 100% of the ads viewed while the consequences of eating ultra-processed foods and the resulting obesity were absent. Some of these are,

Strokes occur more frequently among the obese, which usually results in paralysis or even death. With obesity, the death rate from heart disease, primarily caused by blood vessel disease, is approximately 50% higher in men and 75% higher in women than in the normal-weight population. Likelihood of cerebral hemorrhage or stroke is about 60% higher than normal, and the presence of kidney disease appears to be approximately 100% higher.

Recent studies also indicate that there is an increased risk of breast and endometrial cancer (cancer of the inner lining of the uterus) in obese individuals. Cancer of the liver and gallbladder is 70% more frequent in obese men and 110% more frequent in obese women than it is among their normal-weighted counterparts. Incidence of cancer of the intestines and rectum is 15% higher, and cancer of the female organs is 20% higher. Additionally, when compared with the normal-weight population incidence of diabetes is 300 percent higher in people who are obese. Cirrhosis of the liver is 150% higher; appendicitis, 120%; hernia and intestinal obstruction, 50% higher; gallstones, 100%; complications during pregnancy, 60%; and cancer of the pancreas, 50% higher in obese women.³⁵

Clearly none of these obesity consequences are present in American food advertisements. Quite the opposite. „Happy Eating“ moments abound with 100% of the ads viewed promising emotional change or satisfaction. Taking the ever-growing obesity rate into consideration and the health of Americans in general as a result of this, and it becomes clear exactly how dangerous these portrayals of „Happy Eating“ are.

As Gerbner, et. al. note in their study about television violence, „Happy violence“ is the by-product of a manufacturing and marketing process. The real problem of television violence reflects structural trends toward concentration, conglomeration and globalization in media industries and the marketing pressures fueling those trends.”³⁶

³⁴ GERBNER, G., MORGAN, M., SIGNORIELLI, M.: *Profiling Television Violence*. [online]. [2019-03-02]. Available at: <<http://web.asc.upenn.edu/gerbner/Asset.aspx?assetID=1804>>.

³⁵ DANOWSKI, D., LAZARO, P.: *Why Can't I Stop Eating? Recognizing, Understanding, and Overcoming Food Addiction*. Center City, MN : Hazelden, 2000, p. 38.

³⁶ GERBNER, G., MORGAN, M., SIGNORIELLI, M.: *Profiling Television Violence*. [online]. [2019-03-02]. Available at: <<http://web.asc.upenn.edu/gerbner/Asset.aspx?assetID=1804>>.

Gerbner's ideas about „Happy Violence“ reflect the food advertisements viewed in this study and also the consequences of „Happy Eating“ throughout America. Analysing American advertising for promotion of BED/food addiction portrayals is a critical first step in a „Food Advertising Literacy“ program to make people aware of the dangers of desensitization to the messages normalizing addictive behaviour.

Expanding the scope and number of advertisements analysed would benefit future studies in this area as would an examination of additional types of NOVA classified Ultra-Processed Foods.

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Author



Debbie Danowski

School of Communication,
Media, and the Arts,
Sacred Heart University,
Fairfield, CT 06825
USA
danowskid@sacredheart.edu

Dr. Debbie Danowski is an associate professor at Sacred Heart University in the School of Communication, Media and the Arts where she teaches advertising, public relations and journalism courses including Food Advertising and Magazines and Body Image. She is the author or co-author of several journal articles about body image and wellness including „One Size Doesn't Fit All: New Continua of Figure Drawings and Their Relation to Ideal Body Image”, with Jocelyn Novella, and Jennifer T. Gosselin in the *Journal of American College Health* as well as five popular books about food addiction and body image, including the best-selling *Why Can't I Stop Eating?: Recognizing, Understanding, and Overcoming Food Addiction* co-authored with Dr. Pedro Lazaro. She is currently working on an academic book titled *Stuff Your Face and Lose Weight, Too: Food Addiction in American Advertising*.