

MEDIATIZATION OF SMOKING RITUALS VIA PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN TV SERIES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the production and exposure of Product Placements of cigarettes in two television series. For this, we perform a content analysis comparing two North American series that deal with the same context at different times: House of Cards (2013-2018) and The West Wing (1999-2006). Through content analysis, we have concluded that both series present the cigarette mostly in positive emotion scenes related to stress relief. However, House of Cards features scenes containing cigarettes more often and indoors (inside the house) than the old series. House of Cards is distinguished by including the cigarette in the context of the narrative (not only as a scenario) and by presenting its consumption coupled with deep meaning and ritual characteristics.

Keywords: product placement, rituals, content analysis, narrative, media.

Introduction

Advertising is challenged to dynamize constantly, adapting to the way consumers interact with the technologies and entertainment media of each era. The cigarette industry is an obvious example of this transformation, with increasingly restricted possibilities for the dissemination of its products. Smoke-free laws expanded from the 1980s onwards and have been consistently successful in reducing cigarette smoking. In the last 20 years, the volume of smokers fell from 29% to 12% of the population.¹

Forbidden to produce commercials in the traditional fashion, Product Placement became an advertising option. According to Ginosar and Levi-Faur (2010), Product Placement is the “purposeful incorporation of commercial content on non-commercial platforms” (apud OSBORNE, 2016). Product Placement is therefore an alternative advertising strategy and difficult to ignore.

¹ Available in <https://veja.abril.com.br/blog/letra-de-medico/o-tabagismo-no-mundo-e-no-brasil/>, accessed in 12/30/2018.

The effectiveness of this tactic is high, especially when the product in question is inserted explicitly. Yang and Roskos (2007) demonstrated that consumer recall is related to the level of visual prominence displayed on the screen. Margaret Osborne (2016) explains that high prominence expands the likelihood of processing, encoding, and storing the information. An interesting point, however, is that the effects observed in Product Placement in films can be greatly reduced when viewers are exposed to anti-smoking messages before the movie (Pechmann, 2010; Pechmann & Shih, 1999).

This content analysis is part of a multi-method research project of the Laboratory of Communication and Cognitive Sciences of ECA/USP (School of Communication and Arts / University of São Paulo). Their main goal is to analyze the effect of the Product Placement of cigarettes on the cognition of viewers, as well as the impact of Product Placement on purchase intention and decision-making.

In total, four methods were used: a) content analysis to identify existing patterns in the broadcasts and to generate hypotheses for the other quantitative methods of analysis for reception effects; b) survey to analyze possible changes in attitude toward cigarettes; c) eye tracking to analyze attention to cigarette scenes; and d) disclosed measures of skin conductance to assess emotional aspects related to reception.

Such knowledge is relevant due to the known damages of tobacco consumption and the influence of media messages on attitudes and behavior. Knowledge about product placement is also extremely relevant in light of the context of changing media consumption, which increasingly engages young people with digital media and streaming (which is less regulated) rather than traditional media such as television and radio², which offer more conventional forms of advertising (commercial breaks).

Brief historical context

Following the promulgation of global tobacco health warnings, as well as the creation of World No Tobacco Day by WHO (World Health Organization) and National Day to Combat Tobacco, consumption began to be restricted in public settings. Even in the 1990s, advertising began to change: at the outset, advertising of tobacco products was banned in public and, at certain times, also on television. In the 2000s, in Brazil, advertising tobacco products was completely banned on television, in print, and in digital

² Available from <https://gq.globo.com/Prazeres/Tecnologia/noticia/2015/02/jovens-trocam-tv-por-internet-cada-vez-mais-rapido-mostra-pesquisa.html> accessed in /12/20/2018.

media, as well as via Product Placements in national soap operas and serials and sponsorship in cultural and sporting events.

Consequently, from the 1990s to the end of 2000, smoking in Brazil was halved. In 1989, about 27 per cent of women and 43 per cent of Brazilian men smoked. This was reduced to 14 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively, by 2008. Evidence from the WHO survey demonstrated high effectiveness of the advertising ban on reducing consumption. This same publication also attributed 14% of the reduction to the restriction of tobacco advertising and 6% to anti-tobacco campaigns in the media, among other factors.

Currently, the United Nations (UN) is also promoting global campaigns to ban all forms of tobacco advertising and promotion, without exception. In the meantime, actions like the ones that we will analyze below, like Product Placement, can still be carried out freely in some countries, such as the United States, which is the production site of the series used as basis in the present study.

Studies on rituals and smoking

In this work, we use an analysis of scenes that include Product Placement as a path for interpretation. To this end, we will cover theoretical aspects about rituals related to cigarette smoking, and finally, how these smoking rituals are mediated in the scenes of the chosen series.

Rituals construct narratives out of symbolic elements that are marked by repetition. Social rituals are moments in which there is a break in daily life. These breaks are characterized by a shift in time-space perspective that differs from the perspective of day-to-day activities (Segalen, 1999). Rituals have symbolic meanings that could be dispersed to participants or spectators who do not take part in these rituals (Matta, 1979). Therefore, rhetorical intent is a very important point in any ritual dynamic.

In this context, Paiano (2012) wrote a doctoral thesis by USP analyzing the speech of participants in in-depth interviews on the reasons that led them to smoke. He built an interesting picture, articulating his findings with other authors who also addressed the subject. Table 1 shows the feelings and meanings related to smoking according to Paiano's research.

Table 1 – Feelings related to smoking

Meaning	Authors
Pleasure; to feel good; stress relief; do not gain weight; I do not know why I smoke	Spindorello et al. (2007)
Anxiety, anger, impotence and rejection. Pleasure and companionship found in cigarettes	Borges & Barbosa (2008)
Seeking gender equality; image to be mature and attractive to men; to relax	Martinez & Ribeiro (2008)
Seeking the image of a charming, glamorous and independent woman	Eckerdt & Webster (2010)

Table 2 – Meanings related to smoking

Factors	Authors
Curiosity; personal influence; considering themselves as bad or regular students.	Pinto & Ribeiro (2007)
Older age; older siblings who smoke smokers; friends who smoke; low schooling	Malcon et al. (2003)
Curiosity; having friends, parents or siblings who smoke	Fraga et al. (2006)
Being shy; friends who smoke, overworking	Vasquez et al. (2006)
Being out of school; divorced parents	Horta et al. (2001)
Older age; previous experimentation, to studying at night	Silva et al. (2009)
Being a worker	Souza & Silveira Filho (2007)

This data allows us to think about how the social rituals related to tobacco occur in Brazil. The table also shows that media consumption is not reported as commonly associated with tobacco use. It seems to be off the radar of these experts and lacks empirical data. Here, it is important to point out that this is a known research bias. The Third Person Effect theory predicts that people think that others are influenced by the media, not themselves. Thus, research participants are not expected to mention media in statements about what influenced their behavior.

Complementing this view, Eckerdt and Webster (2010) conducted research aimed at describing meanings attributed to smoking by women. Participants reported that they started smoking when they were young, on average at age 17. They described being charming, glamorous, and independent women as an important cause of starting smoking.

Rituals associated with smoking in the media

For a long time, the cigarette was considered by the collective imagination as associated with sports and the practice of a healthy life. The slogan of Camel's American advertising campaign in 1944 read "Doctors Prefer Camel Cigarettes." Cinema created

great icons of Hollywood in works like “Gone With the Wind” (1939), “Casablanca” (1942) and “Citizen Kane” (1941), whose protagonists appeared smoking cigarettes.

The stereotype that was most associated with the consumption of cigarettes in American films was the cowboy, the Marlboro Man, who was a gunman on a horse, arranging and inciting fights in small villages wherever he went. According to Eric Hobsbawn (2013), this image refers to the myth of the Hobbesian State of Nature, a permanent potential conflict between men, a kind of individualistic anarchism. In the author’s words:

For the rich and powerful [individualistic anarchism] represents the superiority of profit over law and state. (...) For those who do not have wealth or power, it represents independence and the right of the little man to make himself respected and show what he is capable of doing. (Hobsbawn, 2013, p.328)

Thus, from the social point of view, the image of the cowboy represented the ideal of individualistic freedom that refers to the founding of the United States.

Scientific Studies on Product Placement

In a Brazilian study, Vargas, Barbosa, and Tavares (2014) identified that of 20 national films considered box-office success, 10 had smoking scenes. With this great dissemination, the authors began to propose to create a base of classification for several levels and modalities of Product Placement.

A study by the NGO Truth Initiative found that 79 percent of the most popular shows in the US targeting 15-24 years old contain scenes with cigarettes. On average, Netflix shows twice as many cigarette appearances as non-streaming³ television shows.

A study published by the Journal of Communication, by Yang and Roskos (2007), emphasizes that the result of Product Placement is relevant regardless of whether or not the visual positioning is connected to the content. Besides that, Law and Braun (2000) found that Visual Product Placement results in higher purchase and actual consumption rates when the product is positioned in the media using sonorous models.

The Product Placement for tobacco use is associated with what the literature calls smoking cues. According to Kang et al. (2009), a smoking cue is defined as a visual

³ KOVAL, Robin. Available in <https://truthinitiative.org/news/10-popular-shows-most-smoking>. Accessed in 12/30/2018.

representation of at least one of the following items: a) material associated with smoking (cigarettes, ashtrays, matches, lighters, etc.) or b) someone holding a cigarette, smoking or not. Several studies have observed the effects of these images, mainly when included in anti-smoking campaign material.

Pechman and Shih (1999) showed the same film for two groups of adolescents, and for one of them, the smoking cues were removed. Through a survey, the authors identified that the scenes that contained smoking cues were considered very exciting, generated social status for smokers, and doubled the rater's intention to smoke from 20% to 40%. Other more recent papers cited by the author (Pechman & Zhao, 2010) identified that adolescents who saw a large number of films were more likely to become smokers later in life (Dalton et al., 2003, apud PECHMAN, 2010).

Attitudes are mental states that allow individuals to evaluate their environments and guide the responses to perceived stimuli in these environments. In general, attitudes are considered to have three components, one cognitive (rationalized beliefs about the object of attitude), one affective (relating to the approach and withdrawal in the emotional sense), and one behavioral (intention to do something).

Thus, from a cognitive point of view, it is possible that Product Placement has an effect on the attitude towards smoking and people who smoke. By stopping and thinking in a rationalized, "slow" way, in the words of Kahneman (2012), the subjects can demonstrate that the appearance of the scenes in the programs changed the way they see smoking. However, there is a second theoretical explanation for the effects of persuasion on viewers: the automatic effects, notably the Priming Effect. In this perspective, even if the spectator does not pay full attention and think about the stimulus presented, some elements of it can generate the effect of change, without the consumer's conscious awareness. The priming effect is an automatic bias of cognitive processing that alters the ways of perceiving, judging, and behaving based on the availability of elements of the presented stimuli (Senise, 2015).

For the research problem related to cigarette Product Placement, it must be taken into account that the Priming Effect has immediate and long-term consequences. Among the immediate ones, Moriarty and Kristen (2008) demonstrated, for example, that the appearance of food affects the amount of food children consume in front of the TV. In the long term, "Cumulative Priming" predicts that stimuli that are presented with recurrence become more available in people's minds. Briefly, being constantly exposed to scenes involving cigarettes may reduce the negative attitude (rejection or intolerance)

regarding the subject. This hypothesis is complementary to the study by Droungas (1995) who demonstrated that smoking cues increase the desire to smoke among the group of smokers.

In this sense, according to Morgan and Shanahan (2010), the perception of social reality can be modified by intense exposure to television content and this has been denominated Cultivation Theory. This theory has been called the implicit association that individuals present about a topic after being exposed to certain stimuli over time. For example, a person who watches television news on a daily basis tends to think that the city is more dangerous than it really is, and thinks there are more criminals than there really are. The availability of the theme due to continued exposure to the news changes the perception of the world. This effect occurs even when the stimulus does not require much effort or evaluation from the individual (Gawronski & Conrey, 2004).

Content Analysis - Method

Rossi (2014) published a relevant methodological review on Content Analysis. According to him, content analysis is a research technique to obtain valid and replicable inferences of the data in their context (Krippendorff, 1980). In its classic formulation (Laswell, 1968), the method seeks to know WHO says WHAT to whom with WHAT EFFECT? In summary, there is an emphasis on quantifying the “what” the message communicates quantitatively, systematically, and with the purpose of describing the published phenomenon.

Based on what is proposed in Laurence Bardin’s (2008) Content Analysis, we will address possible methods of applying verbal or non-verbal and contextual communications that characterize messages. It will then be possible to apply pragmatic and objective procedures for a better description of the content mentioned, as well as the results of the subsequent research.

Choosing Corpus of Analysis

From these assumptions, an observational, descriptive, and comparative study of the insertion of cigarettes was carried out in two television series: House of Cards and The West Wing. In addition to presenting Product Placement of cigarettes, the choice of both is justified because they allow the necessary comparability to content analysis. Both series deal with the same general theme (US policy) and develop the same plot focused on the dynamics of high-level government and White House professionals, featuring the

US president. Both were broadcast in Brazil - House of Cards via streaming (Netflix) and The West Wing via broadcast on open television (SBT) and DVD sales.

Although it was produced in the 1990s, The West Wing was aired in Brazil in 2001. The House of Cards was produced and published in Brazil and abroad in 2013. This time difference will allow quantitative statistical analyses on the evolution of insertion levels and characteristics of these inserts.

Coding Criteria

The definition of coding was by criterion of existence, a binary variable that shows in which episode there was or was no insertion of Product Placement of cigarettes. And, after the identification of the scenes, the criterion was by frequency. That is, calculating how many times each category can be observed by the researchers.

Content Analysis Variables

Type: Product Placement or Brand Placement

Volumetry: Cigarettes (number of cigarettes smoked in the scene), totality (cigarette is smoked totally or not), duration (Number of seconds when the cigarette appears on the scene), prominence (Level of prominence where the cigarette appears in the scene), type (cigarette positioning model).

Context: Location (where the scene is set), environment (where one smokes is internal or external environment), time (period of the day in which the scene takes place), costumes (smokers' clothes), lighting.

Narrative: smokers (characters who smoke in the scene), plot (linking the cigarette with the plot), dialogue (presence of dialogue in the scene), characters of dialogue (who talks in the scene), connotation (valence of dialogue).

Contents: Emotion (Emotion of who is smoking in the scene), motive (which led the character to smoke in this scene), image (valence related to the cigarette in the scene), theme (main subject of the scene).

Content Analysis Results

The database contains 28 variables, based on the options that the researcher could select for each variable. We analyzed 52 episodes of 4 complete seasons of House of Cards and 66 episodes of The West Wing. In all, more than a hundred hours were analyzed.

The researcher's framework was to watch the entire episode, identify the scenes in which the cigarette is present, and from there detail each previously defined variable. The variables are clearly defined in Annex I together with the database ([link](#)) so that researchers can use this raw data as starting points for future more comprehensive analyses.

In *House of Cards*, cigarettes appear in 33% of the episodes (17 episodes of the total of 52 in total). In *The West Wing*, cigarettes appear in 14% of episodes (9 episodes out of 66 in total).

House of Cards features 9 cigarette scenes in its first season. And, over the succeeding seasons, there is a downward trend (4 scenes in the second season, 1 scene in the third, and 2 scenes in the fourth). *The West Wing* has a more consistent pattern of insertions: 2 in the first season, 3 in the second, 4 in the third, and 4 in the fourth.

In addition to the insertion analysis, the duration of the scene in which the cigarette was present was also calculated. In *House of Cards*, the average cigarette appearance was 68 seconds. If we remove an outlier episode that has 143 seconds of duration (deviant pattern compared to the other observations), the average is 63 seconds. The first season featured scenes with cigarettes that lasted on average 65.8 seconds. In the second and third seasons, the average increased respectively to 70.3 and 70.7 seconds. In *The West Wing*, the mean number of seconds is much larger, but there is no clear trend of evolution over the seasons. The first season had an average of 195 seconds, the second had 122.7 seconds, and the third of 152.7 seconds.

From an analytical point of view, there are two points to consider. The first is that the scenes of *The West Wing* were generally longer. That is, this difference of average number of seconds in scenes can be an effect of the narrative construction context of the series of the 1990s (longer scenes) and not a direct effect related to cigarette inserts. For this, it is worth further analysis that was not treated in this article.

Another point is that we can not identify the reason for the volume drops of cigarette inserts in *House of Cards*. We analyzed the news on Google (News) of the time and no press movement was identified pressing the studio because of the high volume of insertions. Should this kind of pressure have occurred behind the scenes, we could not capture and our data analysis. However, it is very interesting to see that the studio had reduced the volume of inserts and increased the volume of seconds that the cigarette is on the screen.

In House of Cards, the emotions highlighted in the scene are joy (14 scenes), and in 6 of them it is possible to identify the sense of lightness / relief - a derivation of positive emotion. Cigarette scenes that refer to negative emotions such as anger, disgust, or fear were not displayed (Ekman, 1992). Of the 9 scenes analyzed in The West Wing, all emotions referred to the idea of lightness / relief. In both series, the only reason the characters smoke was identified as “stress relief.” There were no occurrences of other motivations, although we anticipated some possible variables such as celebrating, waiting / spending time and reflecting / thinking.

From the point of view of production, there are some elements worth pointing out. In the total of scenes of both series, there is no scene of people smoking alone, which emphasizes the ritual of smoking having a gregarious characteristic. Eighty-eight percent of the scenes involving cigarettes (23 of 26) include the presence of the protagonist of the series smoking. The West Wing even features a large set of people smoking at the same time (2 scenes out of 9) and shows a greater diversity of people who smoke. Already in House of Cards, there is a great concentration of the scenes of cigarette involving the two protagonists of the series (Frank and Claire). In general, they are in their room, near the window, in a dark environment at night and talking about an achievement accomplished throughout the day. It is a moment of communion between the couple, which makes it clear that this environment is part of the construction of the characters. The cigarette comes to be part of the dialogue between the characters Figure 1) in a scene, not only part of the scenario, which forms a plot connection, according to Russell (2002).

Figure 1 - Four scenes of the couple's smoking ritual – House of Cards



Scene presented in minute 15,54 of the first episode in the first season



Scene presented in minute 46,24 of the sixth episode in the first season



Scene presented in minute 27,40 of the second episode in the first season



Scene presented in minute 16,29 of the first episode in the first season

Because of the feature of cigarettes being part of the dynamic of the couple, House of Cards features 14 of the 17 cigarette scenes in the house. The West Wing, on the other hand, shows the best balance between scenes in the home, office (work), and hotels. As a whole, it is noted that the cigarette theme seemed less controversial and more naturalized in The West Wing, reflecting public opinion at the time. Nowadays, as cigarette smoking is considered more reprehensible, House of Cards writers have sought more interesting narrative nuances (Figure 2). They do not fail to signal that it is an almost “forbidden, wrong” theme but they put it very seductively in the context of the series.

Figure 2 - Image and audio transcript of the scene presented in the minute 13'05 of the eighth episode of the fourth season – House of Cards



Night, almost null lighting, Frank appears in front of the (closed) window of his office, at home. Claire's voice appears whispering his name. Frank turns to look at her and then reveals that he has a cigarette in his hands. Claire then says,

"You should not do that. You should not."

"One will not kill me."

Frank turns back to the window and smokes. Claire walks toward him.

"Finished?"

Frank passes the cigarette to her.

More important than the specific cigarette quote is the role the cigarette plays in creating some of the psychological and complex features of the House of Cards protagonists, which is not the case in *The West Wing*.

The Smoking Ritual in House of Cards

The behavior of Frank and Claire smoking by the window can be considered a ritual because it presents several aspects of the theoretical dynamic that was explained previously. First, it is a behavior that repeats itself. Even though the series rarely shows the house of the protagonists, that environment is frequently shown in the context of this ritual. Smoking among the characters appears in this context in 17 out of 52 instances.

Smoking by the window is a ritual and not a habit for the characters, since there is great symbolic value involved for both. On an ordinary day, Frank and Claire have little interaction inside the house; their conversations are restricted to the professional environment outside the home. Only on special occasions do they smoke together by the window. Such occasions are related to the achievements and challenges of political growth that they faced and won the day before. It is always an intimate conversation, a moment of confidence and trust between the couple.

Their times of smoking by the window also show moments of pleasure, rest, and relief, without losing elegance. It is noticed that, even relaxing in the house, the characters remain very well dressed as they were in the street. A sense of "I deserve this" makes the cigarette a trophy for stress relief and a signal of progress.

Another aspect of rituality is the rhetorical intent of the act. As we saw earlier, the meanings of smoking are closely tied to interpersonal and social relationships. Thus, the cigarette in the context of House of Cards' plot is a companion to the moments of victory. The rhetorical function is to reinforce for the couple themselves who they are, why they

are here, why they are together and why this journey is worth it. And, finally, that this conquest today shows that they are on the right path.

This rhetorical function may have the effect of generating curiosity in the reader to discover “how far they go.” And this effect is further boosted by the mysterious imagistic construction of the ritual scenes. Some of them put the protagonists on their backs to the viewer, facing a point of illumination - a window, lighter fire, smoke - preventing those who watch the ability to see the faces perfectly.

Figure 3 - Image and audio transcript of the scene presented in the minute 13'05 of the eighth episode of the fourth season - House of Cards



Night, almost zero lighting, leaning against the window of Frank and Claire’s living room. The scene begins with Frank (protagonist) lighting an electronic cigarette. He passes the cigarette to Claire, who then says, “I wish I had the truth now,” while inhaling the smoke. Meanwhile, Frank rises silently from the window, goes to the lamp in the next bookcase and lifts it, pulling an object from under him. Returning to the window, he shows the cigarette he picked up for Claire and says, “Always ready.” To which Claire replies, “Francis.” As he removes his electronic cigarette from his mouth. Frank gives the cigarette to Claire, she puts it in her mouth and Frank lights it. After the first drink, Claire says, “I missed that.” She hands the cigarette to Frank, who replies, “Me too.” Before swallowing. Claire then asks, “Shouldn’t you be on the phone, getting compliments?” And Frank says, “They can wait until tomorrow.” As he blows smoke from the cigarette, his body stretched out over the window. Claire then asks Frank to sing something and he does it until the end of the scene.

According to Cultivation Theory and automatic aspects of cognitive processing (attention and implied memory), these contextual and narrative aspects are very important

for possible cognitive effects. However, there are more direct aspects at play: the moment when one of the characters speaks directly about the cigarette. These narrative tensions about the character were identified:

a) House of Cards: Confusing Aspect - “I know it’s wrong but I deserve it”

b) House of Cards: Gregarious Aspect - “It is not fun to smoke alone”

c) House of Cards: Punctual Aspect - “One will not kill me”

d) House of Cards: Relative Aspect - product is presented as a lesser evil, given that there are so many other major problems with which they are dealing.

e) The West Wing: Prohibitive Aspect - “Smoking in the White House”

Of all the aspects analyzed, it is clear that there are more critical analyses in relation to the series of House of Cards than to The West Wing. In addition to the second series having fewer scenes, they treat smoking as context (scenario). This means, the scenes (see Figure 4) lead us to interpret smoking more as a habit than a ritual, due to the lack of importance in the narrative and the symbolic-psychological construction of the characters.

Figure 4 - Scene presented in minute 18'20 of episode 3 in season 1 – The West Wing



Conclusions

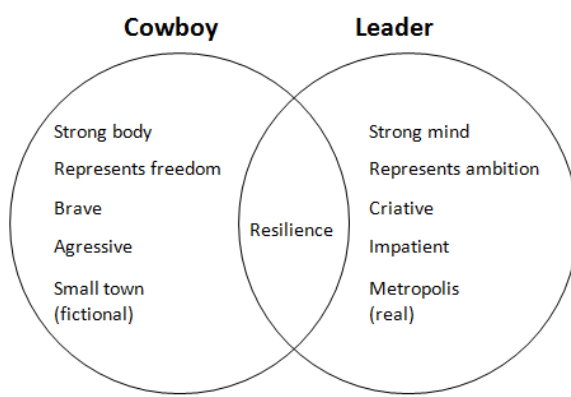
In the end, this work generated two paths of reflection. The first one is in the comparison of the ritual of tobacco consumption versus the mediated ritual in the series. The second line of analysis was inspired by Howsbawn’s text on the cowboy as a stereotype of an era.

Currently, the journalistic and entertainment media has increasingly used stereotypes to represent leaders. This appears in the various publications and biographies of people like Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, and Frank Underwood himself representing a political leader. In general, they are figures seen as greedy, eccentric, and genius, who

impose a lot of pressure and harassment on those around them. These individuals are also representatives of a culture that suggests that “The Winner takes all.”

In this analogy, it is perceived that the point of intersection between the characteristics of the Cowboy and the Leader (Figure 5) is the symbolic power of resisting pressure, dealing well with suffering, and overcoming adversity. In short, the point of intersection of qualities of cowboys and leaders is resilience.

Figure 5 – Analogy between the Cowboy and the Leader



However, the current narrative is more complex. In House of Cards, the cigarette does not signal that the protagonist is strong, perfect, and resistant. It signals, on the contrary, that he is a human being who has his own weaknesses and seeks in the cigarette (hidden from society) a comfort, a companion. As it is a deconstruction of the ideal previously represented by the cowboy, this narrative has the potential to generate proximity and identification with the spectators, who knows that they themselves also have weaknesses.

Thus, with all the changing context of the media and cigarette-use in society, there is a change in the way rituals are communicated in the media, but the underlying value of individualistic freedom remains the same.

Limitations and Future Studies

The main limitations of this study are the focus on only one category (cigarettes) and the very specific analysis corpus (political series). Future studies should analyze more

broadly the diffusion of product consumption rituals to give more ecological validity and quantitative data.

With the diffusion of technologies of computer analysis of images (deep learning) it is already possible to automatically identify when a product appears on the television screen and translate such information into a database. This will allow more extensive and frequent studies of the subject, perhaps transcending the sample perspective and passing to the census logic of all the contents of certain TV channels or streaming platforms. Thus, future researchers will get extensive quantitative data to validate the hypothesis that the cigarette industry has been increasingly using entertainment via Product Placement.

Future studies should also look at the cognitive and behavioral effects that the Product Placement of health-damaging products has on viewers. For this, techniques such as survey, experiment, eye tracking, and skin conductance can be used to measure emotion.

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