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**Analyzing the Apple advertisement “1984”
through discourse analysis**

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1.0 Introduction

In 1984, Apple aired the classic “1984” advertisement at Super Bowl 22, which was inspired by George Orwell's novel of the same name, “1984”. This advertisement created an innovative and rebellious image of the Apple brand by criticizing the monopoly of technology. However, while the advertisements appear to call for freedom and innovation, behind the scenes hides more complex ideological issues and society's cultural influences. This essay will use discourse analysis, discuss how advertisement shapes social knowledge of technology and power through discourse frames, symbols and metaphors, and reveal potential problems with the advertisements itself and the manipulation of consumers.

2.0 Main body

2.1 Central discourse frames

The central discourse frame of the advertisements is to create a brand image through the dichotomy of “freedom and innovation” versus “oppression and control”. Through this contrast, Apple creates an image of itself as a “freedom fighter” against technological monopoly and societal control. Through concept of “Panopticism”, modern society maintains order through unseen mechanisms of surveillance and power, shaping individual behavior and thought (Foucault, 1975). Media can question dominant ideologies. By offering challenging alternative readings, audiences can be mobilized to propose changes to existing power structures (Hall, 1980). In this frame, IBM represents repression and control, while Apple represents individual freedom and technological innovation. By pitting “freedom” against “oppression”, appeals to consumers who are dissatisfied with the current state of affairs.

2.2 Symbols and Metaphors

This advertisement uses a number of symbols and metaphors, such as hammers, shattered screen, and the contrast of bright and dull colors. In the advertisement, the hammer wielded by the female character visually embodies the power to disrupt the old order and drive technological change, a symbol of liberation, while the shattered screen represents Apple's action to break the monopoly of traditional technology. The color contrast similarly reinforces the dichotomy

between freedom and oppression. The uniformed people in the cold and gray background symbolize a repressive society, while the orange-clad character highlights the symbols of innovation and freedom. This stark color contrast not only reinforces the visual impact of the advertisement, but also conveys the core message : freedom and innovation are gained through individual rebellion. The use of symbols not only conveys product information, but also shapes the consumer's self-perception and loyalty to the brand on a deeper level (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004) . These symbols do not just convey an ideology against totalitarianism, they also inadvertently reinforce consumerist tendencies and interpret technology as a tool to liberate consumers.

2.3 Consumerism and branding strategies

By giving the word “freedom” deep cultural meaning, advertisement successfully combines consumers' identity with Apple's brand culture. Through simplified language and strong visual symbols, this branding strategy transforms consumers' choices into brand identity, brands become “icons” by connecting with consumers' cultural and social identities (Holt, 2004). “Freedom” and “innovation” in the advertisements are not only the expression of product characteristics, but also part of Apple's brand culture. In this way, Apple is not only promoting a technological product, but also reproducing culture through advertising: consumers inadvertently accept and promote Apple's values of consumerism, while ignoring the potential problems of technology and market control.

3.0 Conclusion

Apple's “ 1984 ” advertisement constructs a brand image through language and symbols and emphasizes the values of freedom and innovation. However, this “freedom” is not universally applicable. Media is often carefully screened to present a diversity of viewpoints to create the illusion of freedom to suit the interests of the elite and maintain social control (Herman & Chomsky 1988) .This appears to oppose technological monopoly and social control, however, the advertisement itself conceal a culture of market manipulation and consumerism, and

inadvertently reinforces masking its own market control. Advertising is not only challenging the old order, but also promoting a new consumerist order led by Apple.

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