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The Importance of Fit between Moods
Elicited by TV Programs and
Commercials

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Mood Matching: The Importance of Fit between Moods Elicited by Media Content and Advertisements

We examine the effects of moods elicited by broadcast and print media content on people's responses to embedded advertisements that elicit positive or negative moods. Previous research suggests that people respond more favorably to ads when they are in a happy mood than when they are in a sad mood. However, drawing on role fulfillment evaluation theory applied to moods, we hypothesize that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content in which they are embedded. Our hypothesis leads to the novel prediction that while engaged in consuming sad editorial content (e.g., watching a sad TV program or reading a sad magazine article), people will like sad ads more than happy ads. We find support for our first hypothesis in two experiments. Furthermore, drawing on role fulfillment evaluation theory we hypothesize that the observed effect stems from people's general expectations about how they will feel while consuming the media content, which carry-over and incidentally affect their evaluations of embedded ads through a misattribution of the expectation to the ads. Thus, just as the effects of incidental mood manipulations disappear when people's attention is called to their moods (see for example Isen et al. 1978), we show (in experiment 2) that the effects of mood matching (vs. mismatching) between ads and the editorial content in which they are embedded on people's reactions to the ads disappear when their attention is called to their mood expectations.

Previous consumer research suggests that TV viewers have more favorable attitudes toward commercials when they are in a happy mood than when they are in a sad mood. Research has demonstrated this effect with moods induced by commercials themselves (Batra and Stayman 1990; Derbaix 1995; Edell and Burke 1987; Holbrook and Batra 1987) and with moods induced by TV programs in which the commercials are embedded (Goldberg and Gorn 1987; Mathur and Chattopadhyay 1991). This research has revealed two main effects. All else equal, TV viewers like commercials more when (1) they induce happy moods rather than sad moods, and (2) they are embedded in programs that induce happy moods rather than sad moods. These effects are important since attitude toward the ad reliably influences brand attitudes and purchase intentions (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch 1986; Madden, Allen, and Twible 1988; Miniard, Bhatla, and Rose 1990; Mitchell and Olson 1981; see Brown and Stayman 1992 for a review), and is the single best predictor of an ad's ability to influence sales (Haley and Baldinger 1991). However, previous research has not examined whether commercials that induce a happy mood exhibit an advantage over those that induce a sad mood, irrespective of whether the mood induced by the program is positive or negative. This is the focus of our research.

In this article, we propose that when TV viewers watch a program that establishes a mood, they expect to continue experiencing that mood throughout the duration of the TV viewing experience. We draw on research on mood as input to a role fulfillment evaluation process (Martin et al. 1997) to hypothesize that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content in which they are embedded. Our hypothesis leads to the novel prediction that, during a sad program, TV viewers will like sad commercials more than happy commercials. We find support for our first hypothesis in two experiments. Furthermore, in experiment 2 we

demonstrate that the mood matching effect disappears when people's attention is called to their mood expectations.

ATTITUDINAL EFFECTS OF MOODS INDUCED BY TV PROGRAMS AND COMMERCIALS

Moods Induced by TV Programs

Goldberg and Gorn (1987) investigated whether moods induced by TV programs influence viewers' attitudes toward commercials that are embedded in these programs. Specifically, they examined whether happy and sad TV programs induce parallel moods among viewers, whether viewers continue experiencing these moods during commercial breaks, and whether these moods influence their attitudes toward the individual commercials that appear during the breaks. Goldberg and Gorn's experimental results suggest that viewers indeed feel happier while viewing happy programs than while viewing sad programs, that they continue experiencing these program-induced moods during commercial breaks, and that on average their attitudes toward commercials are more favorable when these commercials are embedded in happy programs than when they are embedded in sad programs. Additional research has reported congruent results (Gorn, Goldberg, and Basu 1983; Mathur and Chattopadhyay 1991; Srull 1983).

Goldberg and Gorn explained their central result—that viewers' attitudes toward commercials are more favorable when these commercials are embedded in happy programs than in sad programs—using theories of mood state dependent memory (see Bower 1981; Bower and Cohen 1982) and mood congruent accessibility (see Isen 1984; Isen et al. 1978). According to these theories, people are more likely to recall experiences that are congruent with their current mood than those that are incongruent. Consequently, these theories predict that people in positive

moods will recall a greater number of positive experiences related to a target stimulus than will people in negative moods, and thus will evaluate the stimulus more favorably. Goldberg and Gorn's central result is also consistent with Schwarz and Clore's (1983, 1988) mood as information theory, which proposes that people use their momentary affective states as information when making judgments and evaluations, and predicts that people in positive moods will thus evaluate a stimulus more favorably than will people in negative moods. Importantly, the commercials that Goldberg and Gorn utilized in their experiments were all positively valenced (personal communication) as is also suggested in the article (Goldberg and Gorn 1987, 390).

Moods Induced by Commercials

Research has also investigated how moods induced by commercials themselves affect viewers' attitudes in the absence of a mood-inducing program context. This research has examined the effects of specific categories of affective responses (see Batra and Ray 1986) and changes in continuously measurable mood dimensions (see Russell 1979, 1980; Watson and Tellegen 1985) on viewers' ad attitudes (Burke and Edell 1989; Chattopadhyay and Nedungadi 1992; Derbaix 1995; Holbrook and Batra 1987; Stayman and Aaker 1988; see Brown, Homer, and Inman 1998 for a review). This research overwhelmingly concludes that viewers have more favorable attitudes toward commercials that induce a positive mood than toward those that induce a negative mood.

ROLE FULFILLMENT EVALUATION THEORY

Mood as Input to Role Fulfillment Evaluations

Although previous consumer research has identified main effects of moods induced by both programs and commercials on TV viewers' attitudes toward commercials, this research has not examined whether the valence (positive vs. negative) of moods induced by commercials and by programs interact. We investigate this possibility within the framework of role fulfillment evaluation theory.

Extending early work on role fulfillment evaluation theory (see Higgins and Rholes 1976; Woll et al. 1980; Wyer 1970) to the context of moods, Martin et al. (1997) proposed that people sometimes have mood based expectations during an experience. For example, one can imagine that most people would expect to feel happy while listening to a stand-up comedian; whereas most people would expect to feel sad while listening to a eulogy. Martin et al. proposed that when people have such mood expectations during an experience, they compare their mood during the experience to their expected mood when forming evaluations of the experience. Based on this proposed process, Martin et al. predict that when an experience induces the expected feelings (e.g., a comedic story really does make people feel happy), people will evaluate it favorably, whereas when an experience induces unexpected feelings (e.g., what at first appears to be a comedic story actually makes people feel sad), they will evaluate it unfavorably.

In their first experiment, Martin et al. incidentally placed participants in either a happy or sad mood, and then asked these participants to read and evaluate either a happy or sad story. They report that those participants who had been incidentally placed in a happy mood evaluated the happy story more favorably than did those participants who had been incidentally placed in a sad mood, because among the happy participants the happy story seemed to have fulfilled its role—they expected it to make them feel happy, and they indeed felt happy. Similarly, Martin et al. report that those participants who had been incidentally placed in a sad mood evaluated the

sad story more favorably than did those participants who had been placed in a happy mood.

Among participants who had been placed in a sad mood, because among the sad participants the sad story seemed to have fulfilled its role—they expected it to make them feel sad and they indeed felt sad.

Hypothesis Development

We propose that when people watch a TV program that establishes a mood, they generally expect to continue experiencing that mood throughout the duration of the experience. Although people also undoubtedly expect that whatever program they are watching will be interrupted by commercials, we propose that most people do not think so far as to develop one set of mood expectations for the program and a separate set of mood expectations for the commercials. Rather, they just grab the remote, and if they will be watching a comedy they expect to laugh, and if they will be watching a drama they expect to cry (or at least come close to it) without thinking clearly about the fact that they should expect to possibly experience very different moods during the intermittent commercial breaks. Thus, we propose that these mood expectations persist throughout commercial breaks, which typically comprise only a relatively small proportion of the TV viewing experience. Based on role fulfillment evaluation theory as applied to moods, our first hypothesis is therefore that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements (e.g., commercials) that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content (e.g., TV program) in which they are embedded. We test this hypothesis in studies 1 and 2.

Importantly, the process that we outline above explicitly proposes that people do not have mood expectations for the commercials themselves. Rather, we propose that people have general

expectations about how they will feel during a TV program and that these expectations carry-over and incidentally affect their evaluations of advertisements. However, we expect that most people would agree that, normatively, mood expectations about the program should not affect evaluations of embedded commercials. Thus, just as the effects of incidental mood manipulations disappear when people's attention is called to their moods (see for example Isen et al. 1978), our second hypothesis is that the effects of mood matching (vs. mismatching) between advertisements and the media content in which they are embedded on people's reactions to the advertisements will disappear when their attention is called to their mood expectations. We test this hypothesis in experiment 2.

EXPERIMENT 1

Overview

The purpose of experiment 1 was to perform a preliminary test of our first hypothesis—that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content in which they are embedded—in a realistic setting. The experiment had a 2 (program mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (commercial mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (program replicates) \times 2 (commercial replicates) between-subjects design.

Materials

Program Clips. We sought to select two happy program clips and two sad program clips, each of approximately 15 minutes in duration, for use in the experiment. We wanted the program clips to satisfy three criteria. First, we wanted the two happy program clips to induce a

significantly happy mood, and the two sad program clips to induce a significantly sad mood among viewers. These differences would serve as the basis of our program mood manipulation in the experiment. Second, since viewers' liking of programs may influence their attitudes toward embedded commercials (Murry, Lastovicka, and Singh 1992), we wanted viewers' initial liking of the happy and sad program clips to be statistically equal. Third, following Goldberg and Gorn's (1987) program selection procedure, we wanted viewers' ratings of the pleasantness, usualness, and interestingness of the happy and sad program clips to be statistically equal.

We conducted a pretest to select an appropriate set of program clips. Participants rated their reactions to a large number of 15-minute program clips on nine-point scales of induced mood (endpoints: -4 [made me feel very sad], +4 [made me feel very happy]), liking (endpoints: -4 [disliked very much], +4 [liked very much]), pleasantness (endpoints: -4 [very unpleasant], +4 [very pleasant]), usualness (endpoints: -4 [very unusual], +4 [very usual]), and interestingness (endpoints: -4 [very uninteresting], +4 [very interesting]).

The pretest results indicated that one pair of happy program clips and one pair of sad program clips together satisfied all three of our criteria. Participants indicated that the two happy program clips—excerpts from a regional comedy show—made them feel significantly happy compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two happy programs}} = 1.36$), ($t(24) = 6.32$, $p < .001$), and that the two sad program clips—excerpts from a regional dramatic show—made them feel significantly sad compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two sad programs}} = -1.44$), ($t(24) = 5.31$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, participants liked the happy and sad program clips equally, and rated them as being equally pleasant, usual, and interesting ($ps > 0.2$).

Commercials. We sought to select two happy commercials and two sad commercials that had been recorded from TV or downloaded from the internet and were each approximately one

minute in duration for use in the experiment. We wanted the commercials to satisfy two criteria. First, we wanted the two happy commercials to induce a significantly happy mood, and the two sad commercials to induce a significantly sad mood among viewers. These differences would serve as the basis of our commercial mood manipulation in the experiment. Second, we wanted viewers' initial liking of the happy and sad commercials to be statistically equal.

We conducted a pretest to select an appropriate set of commercials. Participants rated their reactions to the commercials on nine-point scales of induced mood (endpoints: -4 [made me feel very sad], +4 [made me feel very happy]) and liking (endpoints: -4 [disliked a lot], +4 [liked a lot]). The results indicated that one pair of happy commercials and one pair of sad commercials together satisfied both of our criteria. Participants indicated that the two happy commercials—one about a car and one about a bath soap—made them feel significantly happy compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two happy commercials}} = 1.78$), ($t(31) = 6.64$, $p < .001$), and that the two sad commercials—one about speeding and one about domestic violence—made them feel significantly sad compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two sad commercials}} = -3.21$), ($t(27) = 20.43$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, participants liked the happy and sad commercials equally ($ps > 0.2$).

Questionnaire. Since we are interested in viewers' liking of commercials, we utilized attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}) as our central dependent variable. Based on Bergkvist and Rossiter's (2007) finding that multiple and single item measures of A_{Ad} have the same predictive validity and their recommendation that future research utilize single item measures, we measured A_{Ad} with a single nine-point scale (endpoints: -4 [disliked it very much], +4 [liked it very much]). The questionnaire also included a suspicion probe, which asked participants to spend two minutes writing about the purpose of the experiment.

Procedure

Four hundred and twenty four people recruited from the streets outside a behavioral laboratory in the center of a large city participated in the experiment in exchange for a voucher for a sandwich and beverage. None of the participants had previously participated in the pretests. The experimenter randomly assigned participants to the 16 cells in the experimental design.

At the beginning of the experiment, the experimenter told participants that they would be participating in a pretest for a future experiment about TV programs, and that they would be asked to watch a clip recorded from TV and then to respond to some questions about their opinions of its contents. After listening to this description of the experiment, all participants signed an informed consent form.

Participants in all conditions first watched a video of approximately 16 minutes in duration. The video was displayed on a computer in full screen mode. The first 15 minutes of the video consisted of one of the two happy or two sad program clips. The last minute consisted of one of the two happy or two sad commercials. After viewing the video, participants responded to the questionnaire, which was administered using paper and pencil.

At the conclusion of the experiment, all participants received a debriefing form and were then given the opportunity to ask the experimenter questions about the experiment.

Results

Data Exclusions. We excluded the responses of 14 of the 424 participants: six whose suspicion probe responses said that the experiment was about the types of commercials that people like after different types of TV programs, five who had difficulty understanding the

directions or using the computer, two who left before completing the experiment, and one who encountered a computer problem. Thus, our results are based on a final sample size of 410.

Mood Matching. Based on our first hypothesis that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content in which they are embedded, we predicted that participants would like the happy commercials more when they were shown following the happy (vs. sad) program clips, and that they would like the sad commercials more when they were shown following the sad (vs. happy) program clips.

To test these predictions we examined participants' commercial liking ratings using a 2 (program mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (commercial mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (program replicates) \times 2 (commercial replicates) ANOVA. Consistent with our predictions, the program mood \times commercial mood interaction was significant ($F(1, 394) = 10.08, p < .005$). Participants liked the sad commercials significantly more when they followed the sad program clips ($M = 1.79$) than when they followed the happy program clips ($M = .71$), ($F(1, 394) = 14.51, p < .001$), and liked the happy commercials more when they followed the happy program clips ($M = 1.55$) than when they followed the sad program clips ($M = 1.40$), although this difference was not significant ($F(1, 394) = .22, NS$). Interestingly, participants liked sad commercials following sad programs clips ($M = 1.79$) as much as happy commercials following happy program clips ($M = 1.55$), ($F(1, 394) = .73, NS$).

Aside from the predicted interaction, the main effect of program mood was significant ($F(1, 394) = 5.27, p < .05$), as were the effects of program replicates ($F(1, 394) = 4.44, p < .05$) and commercial replicates ($F(1, 394) = 34.91, p < .001$). These main effects do not compromise

our results. None of the other effects were significant. Given that none of the interaction terms other than the predicted one reached significance, the data support our first hypothesis.

EXPERIMENT 2

Overview

Although experiment 1 fulfilled its purpose of providing a preliminary test of our hypothesis in a realistic setting, our efforts to make the setting realistic came at the expense of two weaknesses in the experiment. First, whereas the two happy commercials in experiment 1 were for products, the two sad commercials were public service announcements. Thus, one could argue that our program mood manipulation was confounded with a manipulation of commercial type. We chose to use public service announcements for the sad commercials not due to a lack of sad commercials for products and services (indeed, we were able to find a large number of these, thereby validating the managerial usefulness of our research) but rather due to the general difficulty of finding a set of four commercials that together met all of our pretesting requirements.

Second, although a large body of previous research has demonstrated a robust relationship between attitude toward the ad and more managerially relevant dependent variables such as brand attitudes, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay, one could argue that it would be better to directly test our effect with a more managerially relevant variable. However, this was not possible in experiment 1, since by necessity we had to use commercials with different messages (we did not have the facilities to produce our own fictitious commercials).

Thus, one purpose of experiment 2 was to test our hypothesis in a context that improves on both of these weaknesses of experiment 1. In the experiment, we ask participants to read

magazine articles in which print advertisements are embedded—all of which are for the same product. The dependent variable in the experiment is willingness to pay.

The most important purpose of experiment 2 was to test our second hypothesis—that the effects of mood matching (vs. mismatching) between advertisements and the media content in which they are embedded on people’s reactions to the advertisements will disappear when their attention is called to their mood expectations. The experiment had a 2 (magazine story mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (ad mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (ad replicates) \times 2 (expectations measure: included vs. excluded) between-subjects design.

Materials

Magazine Stories. We wrote one happy and one sad magazine story about a student’s first year at a university. The happy story described a wonderful year in which everything seemed to go right for the student, and the sad story described a terrible year in which everything seemed to go wrong. Both stories were approximately one and a half pages long and followed the same storyline with basic plot points changed to be happy or sad. The stories appeared to come from a new student magazine called “University Mag.”

We conducted a pretest to verify that the magazine stories elicited the intended moods. Pretest participants rated their emotional reaction to each of the stories on a 9-point scale (endpoints: -4 [made me feel very sad], +4 [made me feel very happy]). The results indicated that the happy magazine story made participants feel significantly happy compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{happy story}} = 1.54$), ($t(12) = 4.17$, $p < .005$), and that the sad magazine story made them feel significantly sad compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{sad story}} = -1.45$), ($t(10) = -3.73$, $p < .005$).

Ads. We created two happy and two sad ads for a fictitious brand of tires called Maverick Safety 360 Rain Tires. All four ads were half a page in size and contained approximately the same number of words and photographs of the same size. One of the happy ads described fun benefits that rain tires can provide to drivers (e.g., better handling and more aggressive cornering), and the other described one person—John—and how much pleasure he gets from driving with rain tires. One of the sad ads described the number of people who die every year in rain related road accidents, and the other described one person—John—who was killed in a rain related road accident. We were inspired to use tires as the focal product by a series of recent ads for Goodyear RunOnFlat tires that show people dying violent deaths while changing their tires on the side of the road (this contrasts with typical tire commercials, which tend to have a more positive tone).

We conducted a pretest to verify that the ads elicited the intended moods. Pretest participants rated their emotional reaction to each of the ads on a 9-point scale (endpoints: -4 [made me feel very sad], +4 [made me feel very happy]). The results indicated that the happy ads made participants feel significantly happy compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two happy ads}} = 1.58$), ($t(23) = 6.21, p < .001$), and that the sad ads made them feel significantly sad compared to the midpoint of the scale ($M_{\text{two sad ads}} = -1$), ($t(23) = -3.54, p < .005$).

Questionnaire. We administered questionnaire items at two points during the experiment. First, we interrupted half the participants (those in the expectations measure included condition) after they had finished reading the first full page of the magazine story, and asked them to answer the following question: “How do you expect this magazine story will make you feel as you continue reading it?” Participants responded using a nine-point scale (endpoints: -4 [expect to feel very sad], +4 [expect to feel very happy]). The other half of the participants completed

reading the article and the ad before any questions were asked. At the conclusion of the experiment, we asked all participants how much they would be willing to pay for a set of four Maverick Safety 360 Rain Tires given that a set of four tires of a competing brand costs approximately \$500. We also administered an open-ended suspicion probe.

Procedure

Four hundred and twenty four people recruited from the streets outside a behavioral laboratory in the center of a large city participated in the experiment in exchange for a voucher for a sandwich and beverage. None of the participants had previously participated in the pretests. The experimenter randomly assigned participants to the 16 cells in the experimental design.

At the beginning of the experiment, the experimenter told participants that they would be participating in a pretest for a future experiment about magazines, and that they would be asked to read an excerpt from a new student magazine and then to respond to some questions about their opinions of its contents. After listening to this description of the experiment, all participants signed an informed consent form.

Participants in all conditions were seated in front of a computer running MediaLab. All participants first viewed a screen showing the cover of the supposed new student magazine “University Mag.” On the second screen, participants viewed a page containing the first full page of the happy or sad magazine story, depending on the condition to which they had been assigned. Following this, participants in the expectations measure included condition viewed a screen that administered the mood expectations item before advancing to a screen that showed the remaining half page of the assigned story and one of the four ads, depending on the condition to which they had been assigned. Participants in the expectations measure excluded condition did not view the

screen with the expectations measure, and advanced directly to the screen with the remainder of the story and the ad. Finally, all participants viewed the screen that administered the willingness to pay item, followed by the screen that administered the suspicion probe. At the conclusion of the experiment, all participants received a debriefing form and were then given the opportunity to ask the experimenter questions about the experiment.

Results

We excluded the responses of 19 of the 424 participants who did not complete the experiment. Thus, our results are based on a final sample size of 405.

Based on our first hypothesis—that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements that elicit a mood that matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content in which they are embedded—we predicted that among those participants who were not asked about their mood expectations willingness to pay would be higher among those who viewed a happy ad embedded in the happy (vs. sad) story and among those who viewed a sad ad embedded in the sad (vs. happy) story. And based on our second hypothesis—that the effects of mood matching (vs. mismatching) between advertisements and the media content in which they are embedded on people's reactions to the advertisements will disappear when their attention is called to their mood expectations—we predicted that among those participants who were asked about their mood expectations willingness to pay would be statistically equal across the story mood and ad mood cells.

To test these predictions we examined the willingness to pay of participants using a 2 (magazine story mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (ad mood: happy vs. sad) \times 2 (ad replicates) \times 2 (expectations measure: included vs. excluded) ANOVA. In this analysis, the magazine story

mood × ad mood × expectations measure interaction was not significant ($F(1, 389) = 1.89, p = .17$). However, given that we had specific hypotheses about the effects of story mood and ad mood as a function of whether participants’ attention was directed towards mood expectations or not, we estimated the two a priori contrasts for the magazine story mood × ad mood interaction for each of the two expectations measure conditions. Consistent with our predictions, the magazine story mood × ad mood interaction was significant among those participants who were not asked about their mood expectations ($F(1, 389) = 6.41, p = .001$, see table 1), but not among those participants who were asked about their mood expectations ($F(1, 389) = .32, p > .5$, see table 1).

TABLE 1:

EXPERIMENT 2 WTP MEANS BY STORY MOOD, AD MOOD, AND EXPECTATIONS MEASURE

	Happy Ad		Sad Ad	
	Happy Story	Sad Story	Happy Story	Sad Story
Expectations Measure Excluded	406.62	294.84	316.31	365.00
Expectations Measure Included	383.96	347.92	361.00	368.78

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In this article, we proposed that when people watch a TV program that establishes a mood, they generally expect to continue experiencing that mood throughout the duration of the experience, such that these mood expectations persist throughout commercial breaks. Based on role fulfillment evaluation theory applied to moods, our first hypothesis was that people will have more favorable attitudes toward advertisements (e.g., commercials) that elicit a mood that

matches (vs. mismatches) the mood elicited by the media content (e.g., TV program) in which they are embedded. We found support for this hypothesis in studies 1 and 2.

Importantly, the process that we outlined explicitly proposes that people do not have mood expectations for the commercials themselves, but rather that one's mood expectations for media content carry-over and incidentally affect their evaluations of advertisements that are embedded in this content. Thus, our second hypothesis was that the effects of mood matching (vs. mismatching) between advertisements and the media content in which they are embedded on people's reactions to the advertisements will disappear when their attention is called to their mood expectations. We found support for this hypothesis in experiment 2.

Theoretical Implications

We show that role fulfillment evaluation theory accurately predicts consumers' attitudes in both broadcast and print advertising contexts. Future research should seek to more fully integrate role fulfillment evaluation theory and mood as information theory, which often make different predictions as demonstrated in this article. Specifically, future research should seek to identify additional factors that influence the likelihood that people will have mood expectations in marketing relevant contexts, and thereby influence the relative predictive ability of the two theories. An integrated mood model that fully delineates the boundaries between role fulfillment evaluation theory and mood as information theory would broaden our general understanding of how and why moods influence people's attitudes and our specific understanding of these phenomena within the consumer domain.

Recent research suggests that commercials that interrupt engaging TV programs tend to be disliked because they break the narrative flow of the story (Wang and Calder 2006). The

current article suggests that this effect is moderated by the degree of fit between the emotional tone of the program and the emotional tone of the commercial. Commercials that support the emotional flow of a program and thereby satisfy viewers' mood expectations are likely to be liked, whereas those that break the emotional flow of a program and thereby fail to satisfy viewers' mood expectations are likely to be disliked.

Managerial Implications

Our research also has important managerial implications. Our results suggest at least two strategies that advertising managers can use to improve viewers' liking of their commercials, even when they interrupt engaging programs. Both strategies involve matching the emotional tone of the commercial with the emotional tone of the program in order to maintain the emotional flow of the story and thereby satisfy viewers' mood expectations

First, many products and services are most effectively advertised using commercials that induce a happy mood (e.g., toys, vacations, most categories of food), whereas many others are most effectively advertised using commercials that induce a sad mood (e.g., funeral services, insurance, legal services). Furthermore, many public service announcements induce a sad mood by necessity. Our results suggest that TV viewers will like sad commercials more when they are aired during sad programs than when they are aired during happy programs, and that they will like happy commercials more when they are aired during happy programs than when they are aired during sad programs, as long as viewers are relatively focused on their moods during the TV viewing experience (such as when viewing entertaining dramatic or comedic programming). These results imply that advertising managers who have produced sad commercials should, in general, seek to schedule them during sad TV programs, and that those who have produced

happy commercials should, in general, seek to schedule them during happy TV programs, especially if viewers are likely to focus on their moods while viewing the programs.

Second, many products and services can be effectively advertised using commercials that induce either a happy or sad mood (e.g., weight loss products, self-help products, many types of medicine). Gardner (1985) asserts that, in some cases, target-market consumers may have extremely selective media habits, leaving marketers little latitude in which to select TV program contexts with specific mood-inducing properties. Our results suggest that, all else equal, during sad programs viewers will prefer sad commercials to happy commercials, whereas during happy programs viewers will prefer happy commercials to sad commercials, as long as they are relatively focused on their moods during the TV viewing experience. These results imply that advertising managers who intend to produce a commercial that will be aired during a sad program should give the commercial a sad tone, whereas those who intend to produce a commercial that will be aired during a happy program should give the commercial a happy tone.

Our suggestion that sad commercials can be more effective when aired during sad programs than during happy programs seems to go against common advertising practice. According to Mathur and Chattopadhyay (1991), several major organizations have policies that prohibit advertising during sad programs. Consistent with this, news articles report that many groups have pulled their commercials from sad programs (Atkinson 2004; Goetzl and Friedman 2000; Mandese 1995; Steinberg 2007; Umstead and Forkan 1999). Based on our findings, we believe that advertising managers should reassess the usefulness of scheduling some commercials during sad programs.

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