

Oil paintings are valuable, the things that are painted inside of them also. When you own a painting it's almost like you own the objects depicted in the painting also. European oil painting placed a special emphasis on the tangible in their paintings. The tangibility in European oil paintings were things such as: the solidity, texture, weight, and the graspability of what was depicted. The real became that which you could touch. Before oil painting existed, artists used goldleaf in their paintings. After oil painting they discontinued the use of gold leaf and instead used gold in the frames. However they still represented things that could be bought with gold in the paintings such as: objects, food, animals, livestock, properties, fancy clothes and the owners themselves. These paintings were symbols of the owner's wealth.

John Berger compares two self portraits by Rembrandt, one when he was young and the other when he was an old man. He begins by pointing out the obvious in the paintings which is that age changes a man's character. Interpreting these paintings further, he points out how in the young portrait Rembrandt is using styles and methods from the traditional style. He is using the traditional style for the traditional purpose which was to advertise his good fortune, prestige, and wealth. However in the older portrait Rembrandt uses the old traditional method against itself. Instead he depicts in this painting the question of existence. Overall oil painting is a medium that celebrates personal possessions.

Society is constantly selling us something, something that will make us better. This is the thing society uses to market to us, if we buy x,y,z we will be thinner, sexier, popular, wealthier, healthier, etc. Berger starts off by talking about how glamour is in a sense a product that is sold to us. In place of the beautiful female creatures, such as nymphs, in the old paintings; we have now models. Much of these old paintings are recreated in a commercial scene. We see things such as: symbols of prestige, gestures, and signs of love are recreated from paintings to modern day advertisement.

Publicity and oil painting share many of the same ideals and use many of the same principles: that you are what you have; however their purpose and effects are different. Oil painting like mentioned earlier shows what the owner had, these paintings showed facts of how his/her life was. Publicity is the opposite, it appeals to a way of life that we aspire to have, but haven't quite achieved yet. This is where consumerism comes into play; the advertisements show us that if we buy what is advertised, we will achieve that dream life once we have said object. Publicity convinces us that we are not adequate; and it consoles us with a promise that we can achieve glamour if we purchase whatever product is being sold.