

# National Stereotypes in Whiskey Advertisement

Seminar Transatlantic Migrations  
Module Die anglo-amerikanische Welt im globalen Kontext  
Hannes Eichblatt

12 July 2012

I argue that advertisements use stereotypes as shortcuts to connect a product with positively connotated characteristics originally attributed to the country of production.

## Whiskey

- earliest distillation of alcohol in 13th century Italy, medicine in monasteries
- first written record of Whiskey in 1405, Scotland 1494
- Old Bushmill's Distillery oldest distillery in the world (1609)
- "a type of distilled alcoholic beverage made from fermented grain mash"
- different grains, aging
- anglicization of Gaelic *uisge* ("water"), *uisce beatha* ("lively water"); Roman *aqua vitae*
- USA, Ireland: Whiskey; otherwise Whisky

## Stereotypes

### Definition

Webster's:

something conforming to a fixed or general pattern; especially: an often oversimplified or biased mental picture held to characterize the typical individual of a group

## Relevance

Roland Barthes "Modern", *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975)

All official institutions of language are repeating machines: school, sports, advertising, popular songs, news, all continually repeat the same structure, the same meaning, often the same words: the stereotype is a political fact, the major figure of ideology.

- Benefits
  - effective sense-making through categorization
  - reduce complexity
  - apply existing knowledge in new situations
  - shared collective group beliefs
- Problems
  - new information tends to be overlooked
  - oversimplification
  - self-fulfilling prophecies

## Role in Advertisement (Warlop)

They are part of the mental toolbox we use to understand and communicate reality. We can use stereotypes as 'the sender' of information, and interpret these messages as 'the receiver'. It can facilitate communication (shared understanding of the meaning of the communication), while neither of us has to BELIEVE that the stereotype is true. I also don't think many people actually believe that. But we DO share the illusion that the stereotypes in such ads might affect other peoples perception of reality.

## Examples

### Ireland

- Jameson *Fire* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6orZrn-WrY>
- Tullamore Dew *Glasses up* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acmn312GqCo>
- Tullamore Dew *Pure as friendship* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBw0k11ajMc>
- The Knot *A Binding Agreement* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcjKTDIRCKI>

## Scotland

- William Lawson's *Haka and Kilts* [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z\\_WEP9ZkpS4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_WEP9ZkpS4)
- Bell's *Great Catch* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwO3GQVAcwM>
- Red Bowler *That's Scotland* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9n0gmNKH4wI>

## USA

- Jack Daniel's *American as* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXBzgAWv1TE>
- Jack Daniel's *Number 7* [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2IU51bv\\_g8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2IU51bv_g8)
- Jack Daniel's *Tennessee Whiskey* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcnZLGidXx0>

## Common Characteristics

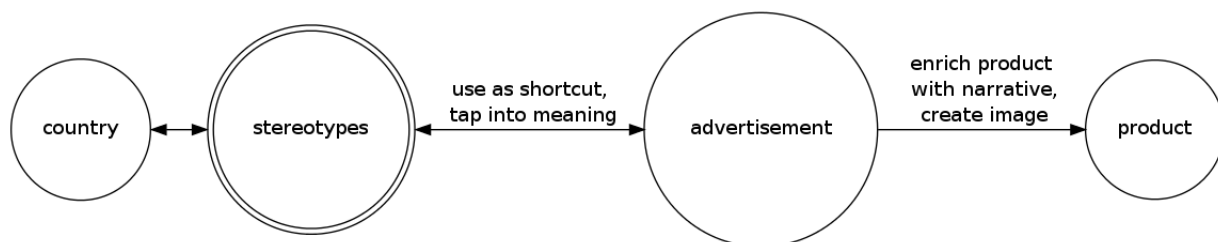
### Common characteristics of Whiskey advertisements of each country

- *Ireland*: nature, shore, ingenuity, resilience, music, singing, instruments (violin), roughness, pub, purity of simple, optimism
- *Scotland*: kilts, ingenuity, community, nature, rugby, bagpipes, understatement, manliness
- *USA*: independence, freedom, quality, purity of simple, rock music, countryside, farming, the heartland

### Common characteristics of all Whiskey advertisements

- purity, tradition, music, roughness, directness, cleverness

## Conclusion



## Works Cited

Birungi, Patricia. "Stereotype - Vorurteile". *Cultural Studies - Patricia Birungi*. 14 Jun. 2001. Web. 3 Jul. 2012. <<http://patriciabirungi.wordpress.com/2011/06/14/stereotype-vorurteile/>>.

During, Simon. *Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2005. Print.

McGarty, C., Yzerbyt, V. Y., and R. Spears. "Social, cultural and cognitive factors in stereotype formation." *Stereotypes as explanations: The formation of meaningful beliefs about social groups*. Eds. C. McGarty, V. Y. Yzerbyt, and R. Spears. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 1-15. Print.

Merali, Zeeya. *Exploding the myth of cultural stereotypes*. 6 Oct. 2005. Web. 2 Jul. 2012. <<http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn8111-exploding-the-myth-of-cultural.html>>.

Osley, J. and Allan Bird. "Beyond Sophisticated Stereotyping: Cultural Sensemaking in Context". *Academy of Management Executive* 14 (2000): 56-79.

Pickering, Michael. *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001. Print.

Schneider, David. *The Psychology of Stereotyping*. New York: Guilford Press, 2005. Print.

Terracciano et al. *National Character Does Not Reflect Mean Personality Trait Levels in 49 Cultures*. *Science*. 7 (2005): 96-100. Print.

Merriam-Webster's Online. *Definition: Stereotype*. Webster's Online Dictionary. 2 Jun. 2012. Web. 8 Jul. 2012. <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/stereotype>>.

Warlop, Luk. *Stereotypes in Ads*. Consumer Science Group Blog. 3 Oct. 2010. Web. 4 Jul. 2012. <<http://econshp2.econ.kuleuven.ac.be/consumerscience/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=72>>

Wikipedia contributors. *Stereotype*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 8 Jul. 2012. Web. 11 Jul. 2012.

Wikipedia contributors. *Whisky*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 8 Jul. 2012. Web. 11 Jul. 2012.