

# ***Gillette***



## **The Constitution of Boundary Objects:** An approach to the performance of Corporate Political Advocacy

Master Thesis

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# 1 Introduction

Corporations are forced to explore and redefine themselves in order to maintain their competitive status on the market. The millennial generation are demanding more from corporations than them just delivering goods (Hydock et al. 2019). Products alone are in some cases not adequate anymore.

*Corporate Political Advocacy*<sup>1</sup> is a field within communication strategies, which is seen more frequently amongst big corporations and high profiled brands. It is a communicative strategy that emphasizes businesses' engagement in socio political causes and controversial societal debates. When performing CPA, it is therefore essential that the corporation takes a stance on one or more national or global issues. By displaying their values according to that issue, they reflect their ethics and general core values. It is not only about the product anymore, the customers are buying an identity, a set of values (Fog et al. 2005).

In 2018, during our 7th semester, we did a study about Nike's Dream Crazy campaign, which has been further developed into the research article, "The contingency of corporate political advocacy: Nike's 'dream crazy' campaign with Colin Kaepernick" (Hoffmann et al. 2020). Based on our findings, we discovered Nike's use of CPA when they involved themselves in the societal debate about the American football player, Colin Kaepernick, who kneeled before the Stars and Stripes during an NFL game in 2016. Nike's encouragement to support Kaepernick worked for their advantage, in spite of it creating a deep cleavage in opinions in the American society, depending on if you were a Kaepernick supporter or an opponent. This led to an alienation of a considerable quantity of their customers. However, their subtle yet obvious support of Kaepernick also created an even stronger consumer-brand identification amongst supporters of Nike and their Dream Crazy campaign, which launched in 2018 (Hoffmann et al. 2020). The campaign was a financial success, and Nike came out with a boost of their sales numbers (Ernst 2019).

The grooming brand Gillette, owned by the American company, Procter and Gamble, launched a campaign named, "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" in January 2019. The campaign

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<sup>1</sup> Will from now on be mentioned as CPA.

sheds light on toxic masculinity<sup>2</sup>, including topics such as bullying and sexual harassment, with an ambition of encouraging men to be the best they can be.

Similar to the case of Nike, the video commercial, as a part of the Gillette campaign, caused a heated discussion amongst American consumers due to their positioning on these issues (Taylor 2019).

Gillette received a significantly bigger amount of negative feedback, alongside with their revenues going down, than Nike did (cf. section 4.2). Men in particular have accused Gillette of being two-faced, based on their previous brand image which has always promoted standardized content that suited a type of masculinity, many people would refer to as traditional (cf. section 2.2). Audiences have complained about this shift in brand direction, and about the contents which are displayed in the commercial. This has led people to feel directly insulted, accused and generalized because of its contents (cf. section 4.2).

Gillette decided to embrace the trend of businesses not only selling products, but also having a purpose (cf. section 2.1). Although in Gillette's case, this attempt has seemed to go wrong. Their strategy for this commercial falls into the category of CPA, of businesses engaging in socio political causes, similar to Nike and their creation of "Dream Crazy".

Considering both corporations have used CPA as their communicative strategy, why has the performing of CPA turned out with such different results for Gillette compared to Nike?

In the research of CPA, we have found *boundary objects*, originally conceptualized by Star and Griesemer (1989), to be a substantial, complementary theory, which can help explain the different turnouts. Although, the *boundary objects* and CPA should not be considered codependent. The *boundary object's* purpose is to portray a word or a meaning with enough concreteness to be understood across different communities yet abstract enough to be interpreted uniquely. This notion raised the question, if the use of *boundary objects* is key to perform CPA successfully? As another possible complementary theory, *agonistic pluralism* by Chantal Mouffe (2000), provides a contrary approach to CPA, which emphasizes conflict and confrontation as an important and beneficial element of communication. Through the lens of these theories, we want to investigate why Gillette's commercial has received such a heavy amount of negative feedback, despite their attempt of being practitioners of CPA. They have taken a stance on a societal issue about genders, portrayed their values and served an overall relatable message through their headline, "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be". But did they manage to insult more instead of inspiring?

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<sup>2</sup> Toxic masculinity: "A social science term that describes narrow repressive type of ideas about the male gender role, that defines masculinity as exaggerated masculine traits like being violent, unemotional, sexually aggressive, and so forth" (Urban Dictionary 2020).

## 1.1 Thematic framework statement

The American grooming brand, Gillette, released a commercial in 2019, which focuses on current societal debates about toxic masculinity and the “Me too” movement<sup>3</sup>, that received an immensely big amount of criticism, especially from their male audience. This breeds an interest to investigate the theoretical reasoning for corporations to engage themselves in socio political causes, knowing there is a risk of receiving massive negative feedback from the public.

Having previously investigated the impact and results of corporations performing the communication strategy, *Corporate Political Advocacy*, this study seeks to scrutinize the concept and investigate collaborative theories which can influence the effectiveness of this strategy.

## 1.2 Theory of science

The theory of science utilized in this study to understand and explain our respective theories and our research results, is social constructivism. As social constructivist researchers, we understand the world as being socially constructed due to individual and societal interpretation and processes (cf. section 4.1.1).

This will inevitably affect our study, due to the process of subjective constructed data and subjective interpretation of data. We view Gillette’s choice of trying to modify men’s behavior and portraying them in a certain way, as a result of socially constructed norms. Subsequently, we will be adding meaning into the responses to the commercial, based on our own understanding, which is affected by our social world and the social constructs we are surrounded by.

Our results of the study will be representative, however not generalizable. As social constructivist researchers, we are not seeking a result that can be directly transferable to other cases. Instead, our results will be unique for this particular study (Collin and K ppe 2015). However, the results can inspire to other similar studies made within the same field of research, with the purpose of creating a pattern amongst these qualitative results.

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<sup>3</sup> “Me Too” Movement: A movement driven by survivors of sexual assault, that supports women who have suffered sexual harassment and sexual assault as well (Me too 2020).

## 1.3 Problem statement

Gillette has received a massive amount of negative feedback on their commercial, "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" from 2019, whereas Nike had success with their "Dream Crazy" campaign, in spite of the fact they both used *Corporate Political Advocacy* concerning socio political causes. Our pre-understanding of Gillette's outcome might differentiate over the course of our research.

By the theory of *boundary objects* and *agonistic pluralism* in relation to *Corporate Political Advocacy*, we seek to answer our problem statement below:

*By the practical implication of boundary objects, how can we explain the general negative response to the Gillette commercial, "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" from 2019?*

*We will analyze Gillette's encoding as well as the receiver responses to "The Best a Man Can Get" 1989 and "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" 2019, to investigate the presence of potential Boundary Objects in both commercials. In order to supplement these results, we will conduct a mass media analysis to gain a perspective on responses to the "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" 2019 commercial, based on political conviction and gender.*

*By implying new theoretical aspects to our previous research of Nike's "Dream Crazy" commercial, we seek to compare the two commercials in relation to their constitution of boundary objects. By this comparison, we will detect if the possible boundary objects were constituted successfully in both cases.*

## 1.4 Structure of study

This is an outline of how we have chosen to structure the sectional buildup of our study.



*Illustration 1a - Structure of study*

We will start by introducing what other researchers have identified within our field of study in a literature review in section 2. In section 3, we will outline and connect our theoretical foundation, which will be applied for analyzing our empirical data. In section 4, our methodology will be explained. This containing our theory of science, implication of theories and a research design for our analytical procedure. That will be followed



by a case description disclosing information of importance about the Gillette "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" commercial and the Nike "Dream Crazy" campaign. Lastly, we will present our empirical data, followed by our data collection method and our data analysis method. In section 5, we will conduct our analysis, which will be followed by a discussion of our results in section 6. Our findings will be summarized in a conclusion in section 7.

## 2 Literature Review

This section will outline the salient notions on theories related to CPA. Subsequently, we will also briefly map the historical development within gender stereotyping in advertising, as a supportive dimension to our analysis on Gillette's shift in brand direction.

### 2.1 Corporate Political Advocacy

CPA is an aspiring concept within the field of corporate communication strategies, which is still in the process of being outlined by various theorists and scholars (Hydock et al. 2019). In this section, we will distinguish the theory from other resembling communication theories, we find relevant in this field of research.

CPA is a concept that differs from other more traditional corporate communication strategies, such as *Corporate Social Responsibility*, which is seen to a great extent in various corporate communication strategies (Moon et al. 2005). CPA takes a more holistic approach in terms of engaging in society and social causes. It is described as, "*CPA is divisive; it seems to invite both opposition and support.*" (Hydock et al. 2019, 78). It is characterized by a corporation's engagement in public socio-political causes, that does not have a direct connection to their bottom line nor their corporate core activities (Hydock et al. 2019). It takes a divisive stand, in terms of corporate reputation and corporate image, based on the engagement in political causes which often holds a controversial character, "*corporate political advocacy may not rest on the impartial consideration and balancing of stakeholder interests. Instead it implies the pursuit of normative convictions potentially in favor of some stakeholders over others.*" (Wettstein and Baur 2015, 17). Another alternate term for CPA is *Corporate Social Advocacy* (Dodd and Supa 2014), which also emphasizes the need for political engagement as a strategic part of corporate communication.

CPA invites conflict and dissensus, since it has a tendency to alienate some customer segments and attract others due to the public acknowledgement of/ distancing from certain socio-political causes (Wettstein and Baur 2015).

This dissensus-oriented approach bridges the connection between CPA and Chantal Mouffe's notion on *agonistic pluralism*, where she argues that conflict is necessary in a democratic society and that people can have contrary opinions, but opponents should still be respected and acknowledged (Mouffe 2000). This notion on conflict and the necessity of it could be implicated as an essential ground element of CPA, which makes *agonistic pluralism* a substantial complementary theory.

CPA has been performed by the American fast food chain, Chick-fil-A and their positioning towards gay marriage, the American fashion mall Nordstrom, dropping President Trump's daughter's clothing line, and Nike's choice of putting Colin Kaepernick as the frontline person of their 30 year annual Just Do It-campaign, just to mention a few examples (Hydock et al. 2019). All cases have been public and divisive and has created a cleavage of supporters and opponents. Those cases are the ones the corporations have chosen to represent their values.

By engaging in and advocating for certain controversial social causes, performers of CPA portray their values through these stances, which they ascribe to their corporate identity, and the way they portray themselves (Hydock et al. 2019). By engaging in political causes that involves controversies and varied opinions, such as racism, LGBT-rights, the "Mee Too" Movement, gun control/rights etc., they now associate themselves with topics and causes that are not pleasing to all (Hydock et al. 2019). This approach is contrary to e.g. engaging in sustainability initiatives, where the majority of the corporation's stakeholders agrees on the good outcomes of this cause and the societal benefits that come with it. An initiative often seen in CSR (Freeman et al. 2004) (Moon et al. 2005).

CPA has a high resemblance with *Corporate Social Responsibility*, but there are some distinctions which separates the two concepts. Corporations that are committed to performing Corporate Social Responsibility, would engage in social causes, they believe have a direct advantage to society, e.g. minimizing their environmental footprint or launching cruelty free products (Moon et al. 2005). Initiatives like this create an immediate consensus amongst most stakeholders in accordance to the predominant *stakeholder theory*<sup>4</sup>. A theory that most CSR scholars would define as instructive for which moral guidelines a company should adopt (Wettstein and Baur 2015). If a corporation's performance of CSR is traced back to financial motives, if their accountability is unstable in reference to their promises or if their initiatives are a misfit to the company, this strategy can backfire and cause distrust and damage their

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<sup>4</sup> Stakeholder theory: "*Stakeholder theory begins with the assumption that values are necessarily and explicitly a part of doing business. It asks managers to articulate the shared sense of the value they create, and what brings its core stakeholders together.*" (Freeman et al. 2004, 364)

reputation (Hydock et al. 2019). It is important to note, that the causes the corporation decides to engage in, revolves around the corporation's core activities and how these may have a positive or negative impact on society, such as sustainability initiatives. Whereas CPA is focusing on corporate values which does not have a direct connection to core business activities. Another factor that distinguishes CPA from Corporate Social Responsibility is the divisive character of CPA and the inclination of suggesting change instead of defending existing policies (Hydock et al. 2019).

CPA could be mistaken for *lobbying* by some scholars, but some notable differences distinguishes the two theories. *Lobbying* is a strategic way of influencing political decisions mainly to favor the company and its core interests (Scherer et al. 2013). Even though *lobbying* can mean the corporation using their position to influence politics that are not necessarily averse to society, the main driver for *lobbying* is still to benefit the corporation's competitive position. This course of action is often associated with corporations' abuse of their power position, which is why it is often undisclosed and hidden behind closed doors (Wettstein and Baur 2015). CPA distinguishes from lobbying, due to its proactive character and the relevance of public advocacy (Wettstein and Baur 2015). When corporations perform CPA, for instance by supporting gay marriage rights, the action cannot be linked to their core business activities or claimed as being directly beneficial for their business operations. The choice of supporting gay marriage rights, is a reflection of values and ideals on a social level, that the corporation wishes to reflect. However, it cannot be denied that CPA has a beneficial impact on the corporation's competitive position, but it is important to stress the fact that it is not directly linked, "*Granted that reputational considerations can never be entirely ruled out (e. g. we do not claim that Ben and Jerry's decision to get engaged was entirely free from business considerations), but our notion of advocacy applies to activities where it is safe to assume that the 'business case' has not been their primary or even the sole driving factor.*" (Wettstein and Baur 2015, 15).

Another closely related theory to mention is *Corporate Political Activity* (Hillman et al. 2004). This concept also circulates around corporations engaging themselves in societal causes likewise CPA. However, their intent is to advance their own interests prior to society's, e.g. by using their political engagement purely for advertising, "*Corporate political action, from that point of view, is seen as the advancement of private interests through engagement and involvement in collective decision-making processes*" (Moon et al. 2005, 436). Hence their engagement is used for commercial purposes, and not as an initiative to enhance the greater good in society in any other way (Wettstein and Baur 2015). This fact distinguishes *Corporate*

*Political Activity* from CPA, based on our previous definition of CPA not being driven by core business benefits despite significant similarities (Wettstein and Baur 2015).

Research suggests that consumers care about corporations' social and political engagement, and that they are likely to punish or reward them depending on them agreeing with the corporation in their actions or not (Hydock et al. 2019). Drastic moves within the corporate use of CPA can lead to boycotts of products from angry customers, who now feel alienated from the corporate identity (Hydock et al. 2019). On the contrary, these associations are also capable of breeding strong customer relationships with existing and potential new customers, who agrees with the corporate political values, which leads CPA to be a controversial, yet possibly effective, corporate communication strategy (Hydock et al. 2019).

## 2.2 Development in Gender Stereotyping in advertising

Main discussion topics on behalf of the Gillette "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" commercial are their portrayal of men and their change in brand direction, which is the reason why we find it relevant to cover research related to the development of gender stereotyping in advertising.

Stereotypes differentiated by gender are firm beliefs about a social category (Ashmore and Del Boca 1981). Gender stereotyping in advertising has been researched for more than five decades. During this time, women have generally been presented in more nurturing and empathetic roles, which has often been related to beauty, family and less professionalism and authority (Zotos and Lysonski 1994). A study from 1971, identified four gender stereotype dimensions: *1. a woman's place is in the home, 2. women do not make important decisions, 3. women are dependent on men, and 4. women are depicted primarily as sex objects* (Courtney and Whipple 1983, 7). Men on the other hand, has been portrayed with emphasis on independency, authority and professionalism (Reichert and Carpenter 2004). A study from 2001 has divided conditional notions of men into positive and negative conceptions. Positive: *problem solving, logical thinking, risk taking, anger expression, and assertive behavior*. Negative: *unemotional, tough, unattached, and sexual* (Good and Sherrod 2001).

Recent research shows that gender stereotyping is still represented in current advertising, in particular for women (Grau and Zotos 2016).

A reason of why gender stereotyping is still occurring, is the popular phenomenon of creating a gender image for a brand, that looks as the typical user of the product to target the right

audience. By this, we move back to the older gender roles of women advertising for beauty, decoration, shopping and cooking and men advertising products related to hard work, business and sport (Lee 2014).

Even though the stereotyping is still happening, the development of how gender is portrayed has slowly changed over the years. The portrayals have been affected by the social world and movements, such as the rise of feminism, changes in the labor market and the changing roles in families. It has created variation in the female and male roles with less inequality and more focus on resemblances between gender rather than differences (Zotos and Lysonski 1994) (Zotos and Tsihla 2014).

Newer research also argues that non-stereotyping gender role representation in advertising has been increased over time. Today, we do more often see males representing stereotyped female products and vice versa. That could be a man advertising for e.g. a cooking product or skin care. It is found that advertising is one of the most influential tools in disseminating stereotypical ideas, and that portraying non-stereotyping gender roles can influence people's perceptions of gender. Furthermore, it has potential to target new and alternate customer groups. Effects, that besides challenging the stereotypical ideas in the society, can increase brand awareness, customer interest and it can increase sales (Eisend 2010)(Chu et al. 2016).

These findings do also agree with Fowler and Thomas' (2015) research, regarding men lately has been shown in softer roles as "staying at home-fathers", raising and interacting with children. Furthermore, they found that fewer men are portrayed in lead in advertising and thereby men, as a character, are being portrayed as an reflect of the society and the equality between men and women (Fowler and Thomas 2015). Likewise, recent research on "femtivism", which is advertising focused on the 'empowered' woman, is supporting the development. Here, they women are portrayed as strong women, and are being celebrated for their independence instead of objectified (Bahadur 2014).

### 3 Theoretical foundation

For our theoretical foundation, we have chosen to conduct our research based on the theoretical knowledge of *boundary objects* and Chantal Mouffe's notions on *agonistic pluralism*. In this section we will elaborate the theories, discuss the deviations in relation to our study and finally explain how the theories are relevant in relation to CPA.

### 3.1 Agonistic Pluralism

*Agonistic pluralism* by Chantal Mouffe (2000) origins between the two distinctions of democracy, *aggregative* and *deliberative*. *Deliberative* democracy is constituted by decision making central to *deliberation*, and it is based on consensus and majority rules amongst authorized decision makers. *Aggregative* democracy is based on the preferences of the citizens, where voting is an essential part of decision making and implementing social policies (Andersen and Loftager 2006).

Mouffe describes an alternative to the *aggregative* democracy model and the *deliberative* democracy model by introducing *agonistic pluralism*. Mouffe emphasizes on the distinction between “the political” and “politics” in the explanation of *agonistic pluralism*. “The political” is understood by the antagonism and conflicts that inevitably exists in human relations and can happen in many different situations. “Politics” is the system of discourses and institutions that constantly seek to establish a hegemony in society which is ever in transition. This constant transition is due to the influence of “the political” (Mouffe 2000, 15).

Modern democracy is often constituted by reducing and domesticating hostility as much as possible by denying the antagonism that exists in human relations, which according to Mouffe is not necessarily beneficial for society. This democracy model is based on the creation of an “us” and a “them” where the diversity and the conflict is not embraced as a beneficial element. Viewing political democracy through the lens of *agonistic pluralism*, the distinction of “us” and “them” should not be terminated, but the construction should be different. The opponents, or “them”, should not be viewed as enemies that need to be conquered, but as “adversaries”. The conflict of interest towards the adversary should never be neglected, however, their right to defend their ideas should be overall accepted and tolerated and not considered hostile. Upon this description, Mouffe distinguishes *agonism* from *antagonism*<sup>5</sup> (Mouffe 2000).

As previously mentioned, Mouffe does not favor a common consensus in society, but rather political and democratic space where *antagonism* can be transformed into *agonism*. A common acknowledgement of the need for confrontation in a democratic society, “*It is for that reason that the ideal of a pluralist democracy cannot be to reach a rational consensus in the public sphere. Such a consensus cannot exist. We have to accept that every consensus exists as a temporary result of a provisional hegemony, as a stabilization of power, and that it always entails some form of exclusion.*” (Mouffe 2000, 17). In order to establish hegemony in a democratic way, the existing hegemony must be constantly challenged and re-established by

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<sup>5</sup> Mouffe distinguishes between agonism = struggle between adversaries, from antagonism = struggle between enemies (Mouffe 2000).

conflict and confrontation. If confrontation is absent and avoided in politics, this can lead to confrontation unfolding in other and unhealthier political aspects, such as identity politics that revolves around e.g. race, religion etc. and moves away from traditional broad-based parties (Mouffe 2000). Another scenario that could unfold, are issues which are fought collectively in society due to political parties' incapability of managing them. In both cases we would remove ourselves from *agonism* back into *antagonism* (Mouffe 2000).

## Discussion of theory

*Agonistic pluralism* distances itself from false consensus of any kind and instead emphasizes the favorability of conflict. An important detachment from the objective of *boundary objects*, which is to create space for different perceptions and interpretations.

Mouffe talks about *agonistic pluralism* from a political and societal point of view, which cannot be directly translated into interpretations of communicative message in the shape of a commercial. However, we believe that the need for confrontation, in order to establish hegemony in society, comes from passions and personal experiences, which can be led back to impressions a person has received from culture, relationships, history etc. Therefore, we find Mouffe's notions relevant based on communication and interpretation of corporate and institutional messages.

## 3.2 Boundary Objects

*Boundary objects* are given the definition as, "... objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use and become strongly structured in individual site use. These objects may be abstract or concrete" based on the study carried out by Star and Griesemer (1989, 393). This means, that the *boundary object's* structure makes them recognizable for different social worlds, yet they may reflect different meanings depending on the world they are interpreted in.

*Boundary objects* are described as a tool which can create coherence and understanding between different social worlds. For example, in the science of natural history, a specimen would function as a *boundary object* to different teams of researchers and archaeologists in order to make them collaborate, as shown in the study by Star and Griesemer. For this use, the *boundary object* would bridge the way between different discourses as a way of reaching consensus or accept from groups with conflicting interests (Star and Griesemer 1989).

## Robustness and plasticity

Star and Griesemer emphasizes the robust continuity and the plastic adaptability of *boundary objects* as an essential part of its function. The robustness determines a general common ground, whereas the plasticity leaves space for different interpretations of the *boundary object*, and what it represents.

*Boundary objects* are defined as “artefacts that reside in the interface between communities and are capable of bridging assumed and experienced differences.” (Huvila 2011, 1).

Huvila (2011) agrees with the studies of Star and Griesemer, that *boundary objects* are capable of bridging translations and understandings between different social worlds and across different discourses. Both for the purpose of reconciliation and the purpose of challenging meanings, which leaves it with a critical power and ability to either reconcile or divide communities. They challenge the perception process of different communities based on the different discourses the *boundary object* is identified by (Huvila 2011).

The bridging should not be considered neutral or consensual at all times, but also as an expression of hegemony, “*The aim of the present study is to discuss how power (as a universal notion) is exercised and resisted in creating and reshaping boundary objects, by whom and whether an agenda is necessary for the emergence and functioning of a boundary object.*” (Huvila 2011, 3). The *boundary object* is hereby given a political function, as a way of expressing or resisting power, based on the individual’s own interpretation. Hereby, it is a of establishing hegemony within or across competing discourses. However, that is not based on direct confrontation e.g. like *agonistic pluralism* (cf. section 3.1), but it is possible because of the space for different interpretations.

The establishing of hegemony can be connected and explained by the notion of robustness/plasticity of *boundary objects*. The following distinctions of robustness/plasticity will be based on the notions of Star and Griesemer (1989). We have adjusted the theory according to our study, by inflicting our own terms and elaborations to the robustness/plasticity notion. These terms can therefore not be referenced to previous studies. The distinctions are essential for the way we will analyse the receiver’s decodings in the analysis.

There is the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, which serves a general meaning and often a common ground across communities, but without further interpretation, is it left as vague. The *plastic dimension* represents a range of interpretations, which are made upon the *robust part*, which determines the overall meaning of the *boundary object* for that individual interpreting it. These interpretations, we will refer to as *solidified* interpretations.



The communication of the *robust part*, based on the *solidified* interpretations, can be rather implicit or explicit by the sender.

If the *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*, are made too dominant by the sender, it significantly reduces the space for other *solidified* interpretations and conceptions of the *robust part* by the receivers, and hereby determines one dominant meaning. By other words, it establishes hegemony with a narrow opportunity to grasp it in any other way and terminates other interpretations. Hereby, the function and purpose of the *boundary object* is lost, and the hegemonic order is unchallenged.

On the contrary, the *solidified* interpretations can also be more implicit, which naturally creates more space for other receiver's *solidified* interpretations.

There is reason for claiming that different interpretations of *boundary objects*, through the *plastic dimension*, is an example of the individual's attempt of establishing hegemony and ideologies. They put their own context into the *boundary object* and interpret it, based on this context. It is also important to notice the difference in power between the sender and the receiver, as the sender determines the overall meaning of the message and touches a larger surface of people with their encoding than a single person.

Based on the theory made by Star and Griesemer (1989), Huvila (2011) and our own notions, we argue that a *boundary object* simply must contain both elements, namely the *robust part* and *solidified* interpretations, to identify as a successfully constituted *boundary object*. These two dimensions allow the sender to create a message which is concrete enough to be understood across communities but can blur and cross the boundaries generated by these different communities and open for different interpretations (Meyer and van de Port 2018).

Eric Eisenberg (2007) conceptualizes the use of ambiguity in communicational aspects, which is relational to the purpose of *boundary objects*. He talks about *strategic ambiguity* and how it can be used as a strategic tool for corporations regarding their communication strategy both internally and externally. *Strategic ambiguity* describes the way people are able to communicate unclearly, but still manage to reach their goals (Eisenberg 2007). It means that the sender is able to construct a message which may be perceived different, depending on the audience that needs to decode the message. This notion of ambiguous messaging aligns with the ground theory of *boundary objects*, namely robustness and plasticity (Star and Griesemer 1989).

*Strategic ambiguity* emphasizes the positive elements of having multiple perceptions and viewpoints in organizations (Eisenberg 2007). In the same way, that the plasticity of *boundary objects* offer space for unique interpretations of each individual decoding it, Eisenberg argues

that ambiguity, from a corporate point of view, allows different perceptions and viewpoints to coexist simultaneously with creating a sense of unity because of these differences.

## Discussion of theory

The main purpose of *boundary objects* in the study by Star and Griesemer (1989) is to reach consensus and understanding across communities, mainly used for work purposes and collaboration. The context that *boundary objects* are used in our study differs from this concept, and we find that the purpose of *boundary objects* suggested by Star and Griesemer (1989) does not align with our investigations for this study. However, we found the basic notions of *boundary objects* proposed by Star and Griesemer essential to include. Also, we put special emphasis on the robustness and plasticity dimensions, as essential elements to analyse individuals' interpretations of *boundary objects* in encoded in messages. The existing theory written on this specific aspect of *boundary objects* is not particularly clarifying, which has drawn us to build our own interpretations of the concept in relation to our study and our application of the theory. We have drawn upon knowledge from other theories, such as Eric Eisenberg (2007), to conceptualize the dimensions of robustness/plasticity in relation to the successful constitution of *boundary objects*. We are also aware, that our lack of knowledge in regard to social communities decreases a level of depth to our analysis. This regarding identifying different perceptions from YouTube users of the potential *boundary objects* in the Gillette and Nike commercials. However, we do argue that the robustness/plasticity can be found in the level of language in a sufficient amount.

## 3.3 Conclusion of theories in accordance to CPA

Our reasoning for choosing the two theories, *boundary objects* and *agonistic pluralism* in accordance to CPA, is their interesting opponents and yet their few similarities to one another.

Chantal Mouffe (2000) argues that a common consensus is not possible nor beneficial in a democratic society, and confrontation and conflict is inevitable and necessary to challenge existing hegemonies. These thoughts of direct communication and confrontation align with the key notes of CPA, due to its direct character and its reliance on publicity. An important notice is, that the two theories should not be considered coherent but possibly collaborative.

The common consensus from successfully constituted *boundary objects* by the use of *plasticity* and *robustness*, would be considered false from an *agonistic* point of view, since the confrontation is avoided (cf. section 3.1). Based on the definitions made of CPA being reliant

on directness and publicity, it is likely to assume a CPA scholar would define this consensus as “false”, since the sender avoids taking a clear stand and avoids the confrontation.

Chantal Mouffe’s notions on *agonistic pluralism* is the theory with most similarities to CPA of our two chosen theories. CPA and *agonistic pluralism* both emphasize the importance of conflict and directness, and how it has an impact of the development of our society, discourses and hegemony, as well as it opposes false consensus (cf. section 2.1) (cf. section 3.1).

In spite of crucial differences, Huvila (2011) bridges this gap between *agonistic pluralism*, CPA and *boundary objects*, by discussing the *boundary objects* as a way of challenging existing hegemonies due to different interpretations because of the *plastic dimension* of *boundary objects* (cf. section 3.2), “*In spite of their transience, (in terms of Laclau and Mouffe 2001) the power of boundary objects may be argued to lie in their capability to smooth and partially bridge discourses with antagonising tendencies.*” (Huvila 2011, 22).

*Boundary objects* used in communicative purposes focuses on the aspect of coexistence and the ability to create a common consensus amongst receivers. This consensus is created by the partial vagueness in the message containing *boundary objects*, keeping in mind that the *boundary object* must contain an even amount of *robustness* and *plasticity*. The fact that *boundary objects* can create room for different and unique interpretations, yet still come across communities with a general message, gives the *boundary object* an ability to create a common ground between decoders in spite of ambiguous interpretations. This gives the receivers a way of challenging the *robust* meaning and existing discourses and they are able to challenge existing hegemonies similar to *agonistic pluralism*.

To sum up, *agonistic pluralism* and *boundary objects*, in spite of their overall differences, share similarities about the importance of coexistence of viewpoints. Like *boundary objects* are given the purpose of creating room for heterogeneous interpretations, *agonistic pluralism* emphasizes the need of acceptance and acknowledgement of your opponent in a confrontation. In relation to CPA, it is interesting which theory would benefit the communicative effectiveness.

In the light of this theoretical knowledge, we desire to illustrate and explain the different communicative responses the Gillette commercials have received.

## 4 Method

In this section, we will explain and reason our scientific approach, our implication of theories and the research design. We will provide contextual information to the recent campaigns by Gillette and Nike. Additionally, we will present our empirical data and describe our choice of data collection method and present data analysis.

### 4.1 Methodological implications of the theoretical framework

#### 4.1.1 Theory of Science

As mentioned in section 1.2, this study is written from a social constructivist viewpoint.

The foundation of social constructivism argues that a given phenomenon which is considered “naturally”, is instead man-made by human interest (Collin and Køppe 2015).

Phenomenons are historical in terms of not being eternal or natural, but instead temporary opinions based on historical actions (Collin and Køppe 2015). The construction of a phenomenon can both be made on a individual and on a collective level. However, through the 20th century, it has become clearer that it is collective and societal processes that construct a phenomenon (Collin and Køppe 2015). One of the main theorists that developed social constructivism was Lev Vygotsky, a proponent of the second wave of social constructivism (McLeod 2014). He changed the focus from comprehending the world from physical and individual sources, to a cultural and social aspect of learning. Vygotsky believed that behavior and knowledge was created by an individual's beliefs, culture and social interaction. He also believed that the behavior and knowledge, and thereby a construction of a phenomenon, would change over time by social interaction, and that it could vary between cultures (McLeod 2014).

An example of a phenomenon that has had great interest over time in social constructivism, is the distinction of gender. Traditionally, the gender difference of women being weaker and more emotional, and men being more rational and authoritarian, has been considered biological and physical factors.

From a social constructivist viewpoint, the gender roles are determined by society based on cultural factors and social inventions. In addition, a position towards something is often based on an implicit ideological element, which makes us either change the phenomenon, or critically consider if it deserves to continue. Thereby in social constructivism, it is possible to eliminate the differences that exist between the genders, since these differences are created by

discrimination and not vice versa. This is referred to as a deconstruction of a phenomenon in social constructivism (Collin and K ppe 2015).

Our project is aligned with this way of thinking. Social constructivism, especially Vygotsky beliefs, aligns with our chosen theory of *boundary objects*, which argues that humans' perception is based on their social worlds and contexts, and not something which is biological or physical determined. The need of critical thinking and the ability to deconstruct and challenge existing meanings and discourses links social constructivism to both of our theories, *agonistic pluralism* and *boundary objects*.

We are analysing a commercial made by humans and interpreted by humans. All data are based on their meanings and truth; hence, everything is socially constructed. As we already know, the commercial has received praise and a great amount of critique, which reinforces the idea of social constructivism's emphasis on critical viewpoints and individual meanings. As social constructivists, we have the possibility to deconstruct a phenomenon, if we do not believe it deserves to be continued, since everything is man-made. As mentioned earlier, Gillette has changed their brand direction by attempting to portray men differently than formerly. Hereby, we can argue that Gillette has sought to deconstruct a phenomenon by trying to diminish the distinction of gender and gender roles.

Lastly, everyone has subjective meanings of the objective world based on social contexts, namely their truth. It differs from person to person and thereby there is not "one truth" but infinite. This is in line with our study, since each receiver of the video will have their own individual perception of the commercial. Hereby, we will be adding meaning into this perception based on our own truth.

#### 4.1.2 Implication of theories

Laying CPA as the grounding element and reasoning for our study, we found it essential to investigate in other theories that could supplement further research within this field.

*Boundary objects* creates space for different interpretations, based on its composition of the *robust part* and *plastic dimension* (cf. section 3.2). The *boundary object* favors the importance of different opinions but avoids direct confrontation due to its vague character. A benefit which could be useful in terms of corporations engaging in controversial social issues, where it is necessary to have a voice (cf. section 2.1).

We found *agonistic pluralism* by Chantal Mouffe (2000) useful as a way of explaining the need and benefits of CPA, since the key conceptions of *agonistic pluralism* pinpoints the need for confrontation and conflict in order to maintain a healthy society where hegemony is ever changing due to this confrontation (cf. section 3.1). In spite of significant differences, *agonistic pluralism* share similarities with the theory of *boundary objects* by emphasizing the need for different interpretations and viewpoints through confrontation while avoiding enmity.

The two theories, *boundary objects* and *agonistic pluralism*, have similar goals to challenge existing hegemonies, which makes them compatible and useful as strategies of communication. However, their practice differs significantly due to their indirect versus direct form. By carrying out our analysis, we can map potential *boundary objects* and eventually their effectiveness in the Gillette and Nike commercials. Based on the constitution of *boundary objects* by Gillette and Nike, we will validate if the communicative approach is leaning more towards *boundary objects* or *agonistic pluralism*.

Our two chosen theories collaborate with social constructivism, since the study deals with perception and interpretation of content (cf. section 4.1.1). Whether the receiver's community is based on gender, political conviction, race, geography, religion etc. the interpretation is based on the social contexts that surrounds that individual which is essential for social constructivism (cf. section 4.1.1).

### 4.1.3 Research Design

In order to apply our theory of science and our theoretical implications onto our analysis, we will now elaborate on our analytical structure in the research design.

As a first step, we will reinterpret our old research results from the Nike "Dream Crazy" study through the lens of *boundary objects*. We will conduct a brief analysis based on our new theoretical foundation, to be able to compare Nike to Gillette in the discussion of our analysis results. We have decided to include an extra commercial from Nike from 1988 to compare the potential constitution of *boundary objects* to detect any differences from 1988 to 2018. It is important to stress the fact, that the Nike analysis will not be a part of our main analysis and will be conducted on a brief level.

Our main analysis will be separated into an encoding and a decoding of the Gillette commercials:

For the encoding section, we will analyse the 1989 commercial and the 2019 commercial to understand Gillette's encoded meaning of the commercials. As a part of this analysis, we will view the Gillette commercials through the lens of *boundary objects*, in order to identify their potential presence.

For the decoding section, we will analyse the decoded meanings of the commercials based on our samples gathered from YouTube, and four selected mass media articles. We will make a descriptive analysis to identify the most common themes mentioned in the YouTube comments from our selected sample frame. From this point, we will proceed by attempting to identify the previously mapped *boundary objects* from the encoding section in the decoded meanings. If these *boundary objects* in fact are present, we will inspect the YouTube receivers' interpretations of the *boundary objects*. In order to strengthen our analysis and legitimize the decoded meanings, we will look into how the four chosen media have portrayed the commercial based on the contrast between liberal/conservative and male/female perspective (cf. section 4.3.3). Additionally, we will analyse whether the media's *solidified* interpretations of *boundary objects*, are in accordance to the ones we identified in the encoding analysis.

The encoding/decoding framework allows us to separate the encoding analysis and the decoding analysis of the two commercials. It will provide us with results, which are compatible for a comparison to examine if Gillette's intended message and receivers' perception are in alignment viewed through the theoretical lense of *boundary objects*.

## 4.2 Case Description

In this section, we will provide the reader the necessary context connected to the two commercials, in order to grasp the scope of the commercials and to understand their outcome.

### Gillette Campaign

The 14th of January 2019, Gillette launched a new advertising campaign with the tagline "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be", which marks the 30th anniversary of their slogan "*The Best a Man Can Get*" introduced in their Super Bowl ad in 1989. The campaign started out with the following post on twitter:



Illustration 4a - Gillette "The Best Men Can Be" campaign screenshot (Twitter 2019)

The 18 seconds video has the following text:

*"Thirty years ago, we launched our The Best a Man Can Get Tagline. Since then it has been an aspirational statement. Reflecting standards that many men strive to achieve. But we still have more work to do. And it starts today. Join us at TheBestMenCanBe.org"* (Twitter 2019).

The post has, by March 2020, 481.000 views, 14.2000 likes, 3.100 comments and 2.000 retweets (Twitter 2019).

As a part of the advertising campaign, Gillette did also launch the website TheBestMenCanBe.org, which provides details about their new direction together with the fact that for the next three years, they will donate at least \$1 million annually to organizations which aim to help men in all ages "achieve their best" (Twitter 2019).

Later the same date, Gillette launched the "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" commercial, which we will use in our analysis (cf. section 4.3.1).

The commercial did immediately go viral with more than 4 million views on YouTube in 48 hours (Topping et al. 2019). Gillette has also received praise after launching the commercial, but the criticism was predominant. The negative feedback includes Gillette being accused for insulting men and creating a false image of masculinity, which is illustrated in comments like



*“pathetic global assault on masculinity”* and *“virtue-signaling by a company that doesn’t care about the issue”* and that *“the advertisement is emasculating”* (Topping et al. 2019). On the other hand, a smaller group of supporters of the campaign argues, that the commercial is simply trying to induce positive behavior by demonstrating that anyone can step up to change to the better (Taylor 2019).

The large amount of negative feedback is especially visible on YouTube, where the video is one of the most disliked video ever with a 2:1 dislike ratio and over 1.5 million dislikes (Taylor 2019). The negative feedback has also included threats to boycott both Gillette and the parent company, Procter & Gamble (Topping et al. 2019).

## Nike Campaign

Nike also began their campaign with a Twitter post as seen below.



Illustration 4b - Nike’s retweet of Kaepernick screenshot (Twitter 2018)

A photo of Colin Kaepernick in black/white format with the words *“Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything”*. The photo was published on Kaepernick’s Twitter account September 3, 2018 and retweeted by Nike the same day.

The post has, by December 2018, 888.600 likes, 43.7000 comments and 888.600 retweets (Twitter 2018).

Opposed to Gillette, Nike waited 2 days to publish their Dream Crazy anniversary commercial on the 5th of September.

Their campaign did also go viral and caused a stir amongst Americans due to Nike’s decision of picking Kaepernick. This was due to his controversial act, where he kneeled during the

national anthem at an NFL football game, which offended a lot of Americans. To them, it was considered deeply disrespectful towards the Stars and Stripes, the nation and the ancestors who have fought for the country. Nike's choice has been heavily debated in the media in the US, due to the political issue where Nike chooses to side with Kaepernick (Averhoff et al. 2019).

## After the campaigns

Looking at the financial outcome of the commercials, it seems like the "*We Believe: The Best Men Can Be*" campaign has been damaging for Gillette, in spite of Gillette claiming that this is not correct.

Procter & Gamble reported a net loss of about \$5.24 billion for the quarter ended June 30 2019, due to an \$8 billion non-cash write down of Gillette. The Chief Financial Officer Jon Moeller attributed much of the losses on new competitors offering prices below the category average. Despite these statements, many people seem to think, that this was just a cover up (Ernst 2019) (Naidu 2019).

Opposed to Gillette, Nike's stock raised, their sales raised, and *The Dream Crazy* video won an Emmy in 2019 in spite of them raising controversy and creating a national debate (Draper and Dreswell 2019).

## 4.3 Empirical data

In this section, we will explain and reason our choice of our empirical data which we will use in our analysis. Since our analysis includes three sub analyses and a reanalysis of former research results, we will use three sets of empirical data: the commercials, samples of YouTube comments and the mass media articles. They will now be elaborated.

### 4.3.1 Gillette commercials

Our first set of empirical data consist of the two videos by Gillette.

The first commercial is from 1989, introducing the tagline "*The Best a Man Can Get*". The second commercial is their 30-year anniversary commercial with the replacing tagline "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" from 2019. By analyzing the two commercials, we can map the development and the changes Gillette has made in their commercials from 1989 to 2019. Due to the different responses and reactions to the commercials, it will help us portray elements, that has had a crucial effect on the new perceptions of the 2019 commercial.

### Gillette “Best a Man Can Get” commercial 1989

In 1989, Gillette introduced their “The Best a Man Can Get” tagline in their Super Bowl commercial. The video is 60 seconds long showing different positive situations of a man’s everyday life.

During the video, we see men in the role of husbands, fathers, successful businessmen, sportsmen and succeeding alone and together with a sports team. All situations are induced with happiness and excitement.

During the entire commercial, a song is playing with the following lyrics:

*“You are looking sharp, you are looking good, you have come so far. And we know how to make the most of who you are. Father to son, it’s what we have always done. Gillette the best a man can get. On so many places, it is playing to see, we give you all we have to give, for all a man can be. Where the race is run you are the champion. Gillette The Best a Man Can Get” (Gillette 1989)*

The commercial ends with a clip of the razor that the commercial is advertising for, with a voiceover by a man saying *The Gillette Atra Plus System with a looper smooth strip for The Best a Man Can Get.*

The video can be assessed in primary sources (Gillette 1989)

### Gillette “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” commercial 2019

30 years later on the 14th of January 2019, Gillette launched their anniversary commercial with the tagline *“We Believe: The Best Men Can Be”*.

The commercial is a 1:49 minute long video called, “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be”. On YouTube the video was published with the the elaborating text under the video: *Bullying. Harassment. Is this the best a man can get? It’s only by challenging ourselves to do more, that we can get closer to our best. To say the right thing, to act the right way” (YouTube 2019).*

The first part of the video, we see boys fighting, boys bullying, and men initiating to harass women and discriminate based on genders (Gillette 2019, 0:25). The second part contains boys and men doing the opposite by trying to stop the fights, preventing the bullying and the sexual harassment (Gillette 2019, 0:55).

Through the video, there is a voice over telling the following:

*“Is this the best a man can get? Is it? We can’t hide from it, it’s been going on far too long. We can’t laugh it off, making the same old excuses. But something finally changed. And there will be no going back. Because we...We believe in the best in men. To say the right thing. To act the right way. Some already are, in ways big and small. But some is not enough. Because the boys watching today will be the men of tomorrow.”*

The voice over is fitted to the cause of actions in the commercial, and emphasizes each situation with elaboration (Gillette 2019, 0:12).

The video can be assessed in primary sources (YouTube 2019).

### 4.3.2 Samples

Our second set of empirical data consists of receivers’ responses to respectively the 1989 and 2019 commercials by Gillette.

Our sample consists of 200 comments, collected from the social platform, YouTube. 100 of the samples are collected from the comment field of the Gillette commercial, “The Best a Man can Get” from 1989, and the other 100 are collected from the comment field of the Gillette commercial, “We believe: The Best Men Can Be” from 2019. The samples are the receivers’ responses to and interpretations of the commercials, which make them crucial in order to comprehend why the two commercials have been decoded so differently. Our sampling method and further information about our sample frame will be elaborated in section 4.5.

The comments can be viewed in appendix 9.2.1.

### 4.3.3 Mass media articles

The third set of our empirical data consists of four different media articles. They will be used for our mass media analysis of Gillette's 2019 commercial. After getting a perspective of the perceptions of the 2019 commercial, on an individual level from the YouTube comments, we wanted to investigate how the commercial has been received and portrayed by public media. This will be based on different contextual factors, namely political convictions and gender perspectives. We will therefore investigate the media's *solidified* interpretation of the *robust*

*part* portrayed in the commercial by Gillette. Furthermore, we will investigate if the media's *solidified* interpretations align with Gillette's.

We have chosen to carry out this analysis to compare interpretations of the commercial, based on obvious community differences, which we are not able to identify in the samples. It will show us portrayals based on political counterparts and gender perspectives. The mass media analysis will also help to validate our results of the previous analysis of the comments. We will be using the following media, Fox News, The New York Times, Glamour and Esquire, which we will elaborate in the next sections.

### News media 1: The New York Times

The New York Times is an American liberal newspaper founded in 1851. They are covering worldwide news both in print and online within politics, business, sports, tech, health, education etc. (New York Times, 2020) (Allsides 2020). In 2019, the number of paid subscriptions reached 4,7 million where 3,8 of them were paying for the digital products.

This newspaper provides us a liberal perspective of the commercial, and with the amount of subscribers and history, we can argue that it is a big media company with high popularity and significant influence.

The article we will be using as our empirical data is titled, "Gillette Ad With a #MeToo Edge Attracts Support and Outrage" published the 15 of January 2019.

The article can be viewed in appendix 9.2.2.

### News media 2: Fox News

Fox News is an American news network with both a television channel and online news. They are covering worldwide news such as politics, opinion, business entertainment etc. Fox News was launched in 1996 and has nearly 90 million subscribers (Fox News 2020) (Allsides b 2020).

Fox News will provide a conservative perspective on the commercial, which is a contrast to the New York Times, which is liberal (Allsides 2020). This is providing us a starting point for a comparison on how medias from each political conviction have interpreted and portrayed the commercial in the respective articles.

We will be using Fox News' article "Well, America, Gillette's idiotic ad may have finally turned the tide on 'toxic masculinity'" from the 21 of January 2019 as our empirical data.

The article can be viewed in appendix 9.2.3

### News media 3: Glamour Magazine

Glamour is a global women's' magazine founded and published by Condé Nast Publications in the US in 1939 (Condé Nast 2020). The magazine covers topics such as fashion, lifestyle, culture and politics, which makes the content diverse for several interests and distinguishes it from traditional tabloids and fashion magazines. It is published in 14 countries total, however, we will focus on the American market and the associated data.

Since 2018, the magazine has only been published online in the US. It has 6,3M unique readers each month and 16,5M million followers on social media (Condé Nast 2020). On their webpage, the media describes themselves as, "*Glamour believes in the power of women being themselves and stands with women as they do their own thing: honestly, authentically and awesomely. Across every platform, Glamour is the ultimate authority for the next generation of changemakers.*" (Condé Nast 2020).

With its notable amount of readers, engagement and the angle of the brand expressed by the magazine itself, we consider Glamour as being a respectable media that represents a significant share of the American women, which provides us an almost nor-female perspective of the 2019 commercial.

The article can be viewed in appendix 9.2.4.

### News media 4: Esquire

Esquire is an American men's magazine founded in 1933. The magazine covers health, fashion, sport, business and politics etc. Esquire describe themselves as "*a magazine about the interests, the curiosity, the passions, of men*" (Esquire, 2020).

Esquire are publishing six print magazines a year, distributed in more than 20 international editions. Their webpage has more than 20 million visitors yearly, and *Esquire's* total print and digital circulation is more than 709,000 (Mondalek 2020).

By using Esquire, we will get a popular magazine that provides us a male perspective on the Gillette 2019 commercial. The article we will use as a part of our empirical data from Esquire is “Gillette’s New Ad Is a Big Step for Men’s Grooming. We Still Need a Giant Leap” from the 15 of January 2019.

The article can be viewed in appendix 9.2.5.

## 4.4 Sampling

In this section, we will explain our sampling method for collecting the samples on the social media, YouTube.

We have chosen YouTube as our media for our data collection based on its content, size and usage in the US. YouTube is the largest online video platform worldwide with 2 billion monthly visits and 500 hours of footage uploaded every minute as both user-generated and corporate videos (Stolkel-Walker 2020). In the US, 81% of 15–25-year-olds uses YouTube, and 68% of the 26-55-year-olds (Statista 2019).

Furthermore, both commercials are published on YouTube and have received a huge amount of reactions (cf. section 4.3.1). We are aware, that using YouTube will most likely give us responses from people who have actively been searching for the commercials and not randomly shown. That means, that they might have had a preunderstanding of the commercials before watching it from e.g., a discussion on the television or from news medias. This might result in more reflective responses, as opposed to impulse reactions, but that is not a matter of course in this analysis.

We do not have access to personal information about the receivers such as, background, social status, political stands or ethnicity, which all can influence how they interpret the two commercials. This would definitely have added another meaningful dimension to our study. However, their interpretation and their acceptance/rejection of the potential *boundary objects*, can still be revealed through the content of the comments.

We are aware that the worldwide platform YouTube will provide us data from all over the world. However, Gillette is an American global company and therefore we argue, that their political standpoint will mostly affect the American society.

Since YouTube has only existed for 15 years, Gillette did not have a channel back when their oldest commercial was published in 1989. Therefore, we are not able to use comments from a video uploaded by themselves but instead by others. When searching for “*Gillette The Best a Man Can Get 1989*” on YouTube, we have chosen to use the one with the most engagement as validation. One particular version is standing out, which is the same that the Super Bowl Ads website has linked to (Super Bowl Ads 2020).

Gillette’s anniversary commercial is published on their own YouTube Channel, and therefore our data from the 2019 video will be collected from there.

The following are the numbers of engagement on the day of collecting our data (measuring date March. 14, 2020):

- **Gillette The Best a Man Can Get 1989**

Posted by @bebo2906 Sep. 23, 2009.

608.000 views, 4.348 likes, 116 dislikes and 1.173 comments.

- **We Believe: Gillette The Best Men Can Be 2019**

Posted by @Gillette Jan. 14, 2019.

33.400.000 views, 811.000 likes, 1.500.000 dislikes and 458.000 comments.

Our sampling process for collecting the comments is based on Nicholas Wallimans theory on Social Research Methods (Walliman 2006). Since we are using YouTube, and due to the scope of data collection, we eliminate the opportunity to measure and collect representative data of the entire population<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, we will collect samples from our sample frame, which consist of YouTube users who have chosen to engage by commenting on one or both commercials.

By doing this, we can identify a pattern based on our findings from our sample frame. However, we are fully aware of that the outcome is not generalizable for the entire population, yet we are seeking a specific, not directly transferable, result as social constructivist researchers (cf. section 1.2).

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<sup>6</sup> Population: “a collective term used to describe the total quantity of things (or cases) of the type which is the subject of your study” (Walliman 2006, 77)



## Probability Sampling

In order to obtain the most representative data, and identify a non-biased pattern in the comments, we have chosen *probability sampling* which is based on random selection. The aim of *probability sampling* is to guarantee that each element<sup>7</sup> has equal chance of being selected (Walliman 2006). By this, we ensure a non-biased view on the sample frame's interpretation of the videos, since it is based on YouTube's own algorithm. Using *Probability Sampling* does also make the results more representative for the population, opposed to *non-probability sampling* which results in a biased view in the researcher's advantage (Walliman 2006).

To ensure that each element has equal chance of being selected, we will collect the first 100 highlighted comments shown on each comment field on YouTube on the respective commercials. YouTube's default algorithm is called "Best Comments", which highlights the comments with most engagement. The strength of YouTube's algorithm in our case, is that it most likely shows us comments with the most content, which might have led to further discussions in the comments. Even though, this might also eliminate some of the neutral comments in our data collection, we will get the comments that contains interpretations and meanings which have been met with several responses from other YouTubers, which validates the data as more meaningful.

We are aware that our amount of comments is incommensurable with the total number of comments made to the videos on YouTube. However, we need to set at limitation and validate our samples to be sufficient for identifying a pattern of the interpretations.

Since this study is examining why Gillette's commercial has been perceived so negatively, the decoded meanings of the 1989 commercial prior to the release of the 2019 commercial, are not relevant. Therefore, we will only sample comments which was made after the release of the 2019 commercial.

## 4.5 Data analysis

We will now explain our methodological tools that will be used to conduct our analyses.

### 4.5.1 Narrative method

In order to identify the encoded messages of the two Gillette commercials, we will use *storytelling* as a tool for conducting the analysis of the production of the commercial content

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<sup>7</sup> An element can be a person, group, class, type, etc. (Walliman 2006).

(Fog et al. 2005). *Storytelling* can break down the storyline of the videos as well as identifying the narratives. Having analysed the storyline, it will help to identify the potential implemented *boundary objects* of the commercials.

*Storytelling* requires the need of conflict in the storyline to create a story with potential. The “need for conflict”-element aligns with CPA theory and *agonism* which also favors confrontation in order to challenge or establish hegemony in society (cf. section 2.1.) (cf. section 3.1). However, in the case of *storytelling*, the conflict needs to be resolved.

*Storytelling* is an effective, creative tool for creating brand concepts that stays in the minds of the consumers, because the storylines affect their emotions. The framework is made to ensure all elements are implemented when developing a storyline in order to achieve the best outcome as possible (Fog et al. 2005). By using *storytelling*, we sectionalize the story and identify the elements that are employed based on the framework below.

### **The four elements**

There are four core elements of storytelling: *Message*, *conflict*, *characters* and *plot*. These elements can be mixed, matched and applied in a variety of ways all depending on the context and purpose of the story (Fog et al. 2005).

#### Message

The *message* in storytelling should be clear and meaningful so there is a reason for telling it. This message, the *premise* of the story, could be either an ideological or moral statement, which works as a central theme through the entire story and results in becoming a proof of the *premise* (Fog et al 2005).

#### The Conflict

Fog et al. argues that *conflict* is a driving force of a good story. That is due to humans actively look for harmony their lives. People do whatever they can to avoid unpleasant situations and feelings, and when a conflict happens, they instinctively try to restore it and find a solution to the *conflict*. In other words, *conflicts* force us to act. This gives life to the story and result in harmony when the *conflict* will be resolved. It is crucial, that *the message* and values get across between *the conflict* and its resolution in storytelling (Fog et. al 2005).

#### The Characters

The third core element of storytelling is *characters*. In order to tell a *message* and for a *conflict* to play out, there is a need for interacting and compelling characters. Storytelling should

consist of several characters who each play a different role in supplementing the main *character* in order to get a active story. The classic cast starts with a *hero* pursuing a goal. The hero gets help by *supporters* who help achieving the goal. However, it also includes an *adversary*, who is trying get against achieving the goal and thereby establishing the conflict of the story. Furthermore, it includes a *benefactor* that also wish for the goal to be achieved and lastly the *beneficiary*, those who will positively be affected when the goal is achieved.

For the receivers to get personally involved with the story, they must be able to identify themselves with the *characters*. When developing *characters*, it is therefore important to have the main target audience in mind. In addition, the receivers must not only be able to identify themselves with the hero but also the problem and action for the story to seem likely and credible (Fog et al. 2005).

### The Plot

The last core element in storytelling is the *plot*, the progress of the story. The *plot* is crucial to the receiver's experience. The story must have a precise structure to keep the receivers interested. The plot can be divided into three parts (Fog et al. 2005):

1. The beginning: The scene is set and catches the receiver's attention
2. The Middle: The progression of change creates conflict
3. The end: The conflict escalates and finally gets resolved

It is not all companies that succeed with storytelling. The *core story* must be closely tied into a company's corporate brand in order to have success with storytelling (Fog et al. 2005). All communication, both internally and externally, must have that one common theme, a driving passion.

Furthermore, there is most likely a certain gap between a company's self-perception and the public's perception of the company. However, if the gap between the identity and image of the company is too large, it will have a negative effect on the storytelling since the consumer will not understand the meaning of the message and identify themselves with the core story. Therefore, it is crucial having the long-term brand strategy in mind when doing storytelling (Fog et al. 2005).

## 4.5.2 Coding of data

We will use storytelling to conduct our encoding analysis and detect the strategic visual build up, and hereby the intended messages of both Gillette commercials. We will use this method to identify any potential *boundary objects* to subsequently proceed with the decoding analysis.

For the second part of our analysis, we have made a coding scheme consisting of the receivers' positioning, elaboration and relevant themes mentioned in the samples from YouTube. This coding scheme serves to code data from the samples, in order to conduct a descriptive analysis of the content.

Subsequently, we will look at the data from the samples through the lens of *boundary objects*. Hereby, the coding scheme will also be utilized to detect the identified possible *boundary objects* on the basis of the descriptive coding. We will code whether the comments are accepting, rejecting or not mentioning the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, and moreover if the *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part* by Gillette are rejected or accepted as well, since these two are not codependent. Simultaneously, we will seek to identify examples of the *plastic dimension* of the *boundary object*, based on the individual *solidified* interpretations made by the receivers, given the fact that the *robust part* is not rejected. We will execute this procedure on both Gillette commercials, 1989 and 2019.

## Coding scheme

Comment No.: (Sampled from video)	Codes about 1989										
	Position	Elaboration	Perception of masculinity	Gender stereotyping	Political / Societal	Economic dimension	Change of Brand direction	Brand authenticity	Boundary Object:		
									Robust part:	Gillettes's solidified intepretation:	Plastic dimension:
1 (1989)											
2 (1989)											
3 (1989)											
4 (1989)											
5 (1989)											
6 (1989)											
7 (1989)											
8 (1989)											
9 (1989)											
10 (1989)											
11 (1989)											
12 (1989)											
13 (1989)											
14 (1989)											
15 (1989)											

Illustration 4c - Excerpt from coding scheme (App. 9.7)

The first column from the left consists of our 200 samples, i.e. comments. It is followed by a section, showing the positioning of the samples and the degree of elaboration regarding the content of the 1989 commercial. The following columns contain a selection of notable themes, followed by a *boundary object* column with sub columns for interpreting the *robust part*, the *solidified* interpretation on the *robust part* made by Gillette and the *plastic dimension*, consisting of the *solidified* interpretations made by the receivers.

The next section on the horizontal level is identical in terms of coding procedure, but instead, it is referring to the content of the 2019 commercial.

Given the fact that the samples, connected to the 1989 commercial, contains meanings about both videos, it cannot be coded to one single commercial without disregarding the counter meaning. To solve this problem, we have chosen to split and double analyse the samples,

which refer to both commercials in the same sample. This procedure allows us to code both referrals to avoid any essential content gets lost.

Our coding will be illustrated by numbers, and we will code a number in the scheme, according to our description in the following coding manual.

## Coding manual

This coding manual shows the themes with the related elaborated meaning, and the respective numbers we will use to code the comments in the coding scheme.

### Position

- 1. Consensus:** The comment shows agreement with the content of the video.
- 2. Dissensus:** The comment shows disagreement with the content of the video
- 3. Ambivalency:** The comment is related to the topic but is not possible to code as agreeing or disagreeing with the content of the video.
- 4. Indifferent/ Off topic:** It is not possible to understand the meaning of the comment and/or the comment is about a topic unrelated to the video.

### Elaboration

- 1. Strong:** The comment explains in high degree its own positioning, there is differentiation and/or argumentation.
- 2. Poor:** The comment comprises only a short positive or negative statement about the video without further elaboration (such as “holy c\*\*p, from top to bottom in 30 years” or “this was a real ad”)

### Perception of masculinity

#### 1. Disagrees with portrayed masculinity

**a. Conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles:** Disagreement based on the old-fashioned gender roles and ideas of masculinity, and distances from new aspects and perceptions of masculinity and alternative ways to portray this (e.g. feminism activism and LGBT). This comment agrees with the existence of the male behavior portrayed in the video, but do not see it as a problem.

**b. Deliberated masculinity:** Disagreement based on the acknowledgement of the male behavior portrayed in the video is a problem, but do not/almost never see it happen in real life, and therefore they distance themselves from Gillette’s generalization of men in the video.

**2. Undefined disagreement:** Comment puts special emphasis on Gillette’s new portrayal of masculinity in the new commercial as an opponent, but with poor elaboration or explanation.

**3. Agrees with portrayed masculinity:** These comments agree with Gillette’s portraying of men in the commercial.

### **Gender stereotyping**

1. The comment focuses on Gillette's general continuing of gender stereotyping in different contexts.

### **Political/Societal**

1. The comment takes a stand on Gillette's commercial from a political/societal perspective.

### **Economic dimension**

1. The comment focus on the financial cost, gains etc. of the commercial and their business ethics.

### **Change of brand direction**

1. The comment contains a reaction towards Gillette's decision on changing brand direction as a supporter
2. The comment contains a reaction towards Gillette's decision on changing brand direction as an opponent.

**Boundary Object:** The identified potential boundary object of each commercial

### ***Robust part* of Boundary object**

1. **Accepted:** We will code a comment as accepted, if it contains a meaning about the content of the commercial, involving a reference to the *robust part*. It is important to note, that the comment does not need to agree with Gillette's *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*.
2. **Rejected:** We will code a comment as a rejection, if the comment expresses a position/opinion towards Gillette's content of the commercial but fails to involve a reference to the *robust part*. It is important to note, that a rejection should not be considered equate with a disagreement to Gillette's *solidified* interpretations of the robust part.
3. **Not mentioned:** We will code a comment as not mentioned, if the comment does not express any position/opinion about the content of the commercial, and hereby automatically deviates from mentioning the *robust part*. Expressions in this coding could e.g. be, the outcome of the commercial viewed financially, or emphasized attention to the amount of dislikes.

### **Gillette's *solidified* interpretation**

1. **Accepted:** We will code a comment as accepted if it expresses a agreement towards Gillette's *solidified* interpretation.
2. **Rejected:** We will code a comment as rejected if it expresses a disagreement towards Gillette's *solidified* interpretation.

### ***Plastic dimension***

- **\*Unique interpretation\***: If the receiver provides a *solidified* interpretation, we will note it in this column.

### Notable observations regarding the coding manual

We will now mention some notable observations regarding the decisions behind the coding for clarification.

All comments which are noted as “Position 4, Indifferent/Off topic”, will not be further interpreted. Referrals regarding the commercial of 2019, made within a comment attached to 1989, will be coded based on the commercial/commercials it concerns.

The coding determines if a comment is rejecting the *robust part* of the *boundary object*. This can eliminate meanings potentially acknowledging the *robust part*, but without indicating any reference to it, e.g. by saying, “This commercial is awful” or “This commercial is great”. With this in mind, we will pay attention to possible alternative readings during our analysis of the potential *boundary objects*.

If the *robust part* is rejected or not mentioned, we argue that the *plastic dimension* is lost due to the lack of interpretation, or the lack of explicit interpretation of the *robust part*. This also terminates our opportunity of analysing the receiver's meanings about the *solidified* interpretations by Gillette, hence a deviation of the *boundary object*.

An acceptance of the *robust part*, and possibly also the encoded *solidified* interpretation is capable of standing alone, and does not equate the presence of the *plastic dimension*, i.e. a new *solidified* interpretation made by the receiver.

Since the *plastic dimension* represents unique *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*, these will be interpreted individually when they occur. But we have tried to limit down the interpretations to fit into the most common categories for statistical purposes.

In the decoding of the mass media articles, we will utilize our knowledge about the potentially constituted *boundary objects* in the Gillette encoding and the decoding analysis of the receiver responses. From this knowledge, we will do a textual analysis of the articles with the theoretical implication of *boundary objects* to detect the media's' interpretation and exposition.

## 5 Analysis

We will now conduct our analysis which will consist of a reanalysis of Nike followed by an analysis of Gillette's encoded and decoded meanings with the implementation of the theory of *boundary objects*.

### 5.1 Recontextualization and reanalysis of the Nike case

In this section, we will conduct a brief analysis of our former research results of the 2018 "Dream Crazy" campaign by Nike, based on our new theoretical interpretation with special emphasis on *boundary objects*. We will conduct a similar analysis of Nike's commercial from 1988 "Just Do It", in order to gain a perspective of Nike's advertising in terms of brand direction, use of CPA and constitution of *boundary objects* from 1988 to 2018.

We will use our narrative method, storytelling, to conduct the analysis and to detect potential *boundary objects* in both commercials. This will be followed by a brief decoding analysis of our existing data from our previous study, to evaluate if Nike's constitution of *boundary objects* was successful, and if this could add meaning to their overall success with the campaign.

It is important to underline, that we are only able to reinterpret the responses to the Nike "Dream Crazy" commercial based on *boundary objects*, because of our former data and research results. Therefore, we will not be able to conduct a similar decoding analysis of the Nike "Just Do It" 1988 commercial. Despite this imbalance, we consider the Nike 2019 commercial decoding analysis more essential for our study, since we will utilize these results for comparison with the Gillette "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" commercial.

Our former data from the "Dream Crazy" study are collected from Twitter and not YouTube, which is also essential to take in to account in the analysis (Averhoff et al. 2019). The different social platforms can vary the data in terms of their positioning, knowledge about the commercial and their community. It does not make them incomparable, but it is an important distinction.

#### 5.1.1 Nike "Just Do It" 1988

Nike introduced their tagline *Just Do It* in a 30 seconds long commercial from 1988. In the video, we see an old man, Walt Stack, who is 80 years old, jogging on the iconic Golden Gate



Bridge in San Francisco wearing shorts and a set of Nike Air shoes and telling the following, while he is running (Nike 1989):

*"I run 17 miles every morning. People keep asking me how i keep my teeth from chattering at wintertime. I leave them in my locker"*

Afterwards, we see the slogan *Just Do it* and at the end, the Nike Air logo.

To break down the story and identify potential *boundary objects*, we will now apply storytelling to conduct our analysis of the commercial.

### The message

The message of the video is that age does not define you and should not prevent you from doing what you want to do. No matter your age, you can be fresh and healthy by being active. Walt Stack is a proof of message. Nike's slogan "Just do It" supports the message by empowering that everything is possible, if you work for it. Therefore, this message does also include an aspect of achievement. Achievement of staying healthy and active and being able to do anything, in spite of your age.

### The conflict

The story in the commercial does not include any conflict, since the achievement of being healthy and not letting age define you, is something you do for yourself and only depends on yourself (YouTube 1988). According to Fog et al., it is harmony and it can therefore be argued that there is missing a driving force for the commercial to become a good story (cf. section 4.5.1). However, even if there is no obvious physical conflict, it is possible to state that the society pressure and the concept of ageism is the real conflict, but Walt Stack overcomes it (Cherry 2019).

### The characters

The video does only include Walt Stack, who is the hero of the story. He is pursuing his goal by himself without any *supporters* or *adversaries*. As the story only is concerning him, he is also the *beneficiary*, the one who is positively getting affected by the achievement of the goal. He is doing this for himself (YouTube 1988).

As the message of the story is related to ageism, Nike is succeeding in developing a compelling character who is identifiable for the main target audience. This makes the story seem more likely and credible (cf. section 4.5.1).

## The Plot

The progress of the story is simple. In the beginning of the story, we identify that we are at the famous Golden Gate bridge, and there is an older man running (YouTube 1988, 0:00-0:06). There is no conflict, the progression of change does not create a conflict in the middle of the story. Instead we are getting told Walt Stack's story (YouTube 1988, 0:07-0:25). The end does not have a conflict that finally gets resolved, but we are getting provided with the information, that we should "Just Do It" with a pair of Nike Air shoes (YouTube 1988, 0:25-0:30).

## Identification of potential Boundary Objects

The analysis of the storyline shows us, that Nike is trying to prove that your age should not keep you from achieving or performing whatever you desire in life, by associating an old man, Walt Stack with a fitness activity that would most likely be associated with younger, and hereby fitter, people based on the notions of *ageism* (Cherry 2019). The message is indirect to a certain degree, since we do not hear or read the message: "your age does not define you, or keep you from doing what you want to do". Although, when Nike decides to put emphasis on Walter Stack's age (YouTube 1988, 0:09), they are explicit about the core message. This is also proved by Walter Stack's words, "*People keep asking me how i keep my teeth from chattering at wintertime. I leave them in my locker*" (YouTube 1988, 0:17).

The message of the commercial leads us to define "achievement" as a potential *boundary object* in this context with the *robust* elaboration of "achieving physical superiority". The reasoning for this, is the connection to the overall theme of the commercial, which is age and performance, which can be lead back to *ageism* and hereby discrimination in all aspects of society based on age (Cherry 2019). It is not just about running and being fit in the age of 80, it is about being able to achieve what you want regardless of your age, whether it is a new sport, a new career, a new way of dressing etc. Therefore we define Nike's *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part* as being, "Physical power in spite of age". The *solidified* interpretation is defined as implicit, since Nike does not emphasize the real conflict of ageism. The actual conflict, namely the societal discrimination on the basis of age, is kept implicit (cf. section 3.2).

### 5.1.2 Nike "Dream Crazy" 2018

As their 30-year anniversary of their "Just Do It" tagline, Nike introduced their "Dream Crazy" campaign.

The campaign consisted of both the photo of Kaepernick and the “Dream Crazy” commercial (cf. section 4.2). It is important to note that the photo and commercial are interconnected, in order to comprehend the full context of the campaign (Averhoff et al. 2019).

The “Dream Crazy” commercial is 2:06 minutes long and is narrated by Kaepernick. The voiceover is directed towards the receivers of the video, while it tells the stories told about the individual athletes who appears (YouTube 2018).

## Message

The message of the video is to pursue your goal no matter who you are and what you come from. Your dreams can be achieved if you really want to even if you are struggling with e.g. impairment, social heritage, race, gender etc. (Averhoff et al. 2019).

There is a reference to the other part of the campaign, namely the photo of Kaepernick, and the message of believing in something, even if it means sacrificing everything.

It connects the two storylines of social justice and achieving greatness.

## Conflict

As previously stated, Kaepernick is the front figure of Nike’s campaign, and thereby his attempt to fight against racism that is the main conflict.

At the end of the video you see Kaepernick walking outside in his ordinary clothes still narrating, he is seen looking at the big Stars and Stripes projected on a city wall, while saying the words “*Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything*” (YouTube 2019, 1:17). In our earlier findings, we analysed this to be a reference to Kaepernick’s action at the NFL (cf. section 4.2). In this case, he is standing, looking towards the flag which could be considered a subsequent respect towards the Stars and Stripes after the controversial act (Averhoff et al. 2020). The video ends with Kaepernick walking out of the frame saying, “*So don’t ask if your dreams are crazy, ask if they’re crazy enough*” (YouTube 2018, 1:49).

These actions puts emphasis on the actual conflict of racism (Averhoff et al. 2019).

During the commercial, the receivers are also presented with stories about individual athletes in terms of what they have struggled with on the basis of their race, their heritage or a third factor, and finally what they have pursued (YouTube 2018). The fact that each story ends with what they have achieved, makes the shift from conflict to harmony (cf. section 4.5.1). The stories support the message of always aiming for more and dreaming crazy in spite of obstacles. These notions of conflict are slightly similar with the ones associated with Kaepernick, namely racism and fighting for justice. The conflicts associated with the athletes

revolves around achieving goals and succeeding no matter who you are and where you come from (Averhoff et al. 2019).

## Characters

The *hero* of the commercial is Kaepernick, who has sacrificed his career to achieve his goal of fighting racism in the US (Averhoff et al. 2019). He is supported by all the athletes, appearing with their inspirational stories which each play a different role in supplementing the main character in order to get an active story (cf. section 4.5.1). A few high-profile athletes that we get presented to through the stories are tennis star Serena Williams and basketball player LeBron James (YouTube 2018, 1:40, 1:13), as well as great athletes with impairments, and athletes challenging the norms by e.g. wearing a Nike pro hijab in the boxing ring (YouTube 2018, 0:18). They are all proof to the message, that it is possible to dream crazy and achieve goals in spite of various obstacles and difficulties, namely your skin color, your background or your physical state. The *beneficiary* of the commercial is the minorities that Kaepernick is sacrificing for. Furthermore, the commercial does also invite for the athletes themselves to be the *beneficiary*, by celebrating what they have achieved and succeeding by pursuing the American Dream.<sup>8</sup>

By showing all the interacting and compelling characters, Nike makes the story more likely and credible. Receivers can identify themselves with the characters which makes the receivers getting personally involved with the story (cf. section 5.5.1).

## Plot

The beginning of the video consists until 0:28, where we see scenarios of athletes training and falling and we are getting told that dreaming big is not an assault, it is a compliment (YouTube 2018). The middle of the story is in progress from 0:28 until 1:16 where with get presented to all the inspirational stories of what athletes have achieved. The end is the mentioned moment where we see Kaepernick look at the American flag saying, “*Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything*”, “*So don’t ask if your dreams are crazy, ask if they’re crazy enough*” (YouTube 2018, 1:49).

The he commercial does include a structure but does not following the precise structure by Fog at al. in terms of the progression and missing escalation of a conflict (cf. section 4.5.1).

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<sup>8</sup> American Dream: Meaning the unique opportunities for individuals to create their own destinies (Samuel 2012).

## Identification of potential Boundary Objects

In Nike's Dream Crazy campaign, we have identified "Sacrifice" and "Achievement" as two potential *boundary objects*. In this case, the first *boundary object* is implemented in the commercial headline in the photo, "Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything" (cf. section 4.2), where the notion of "sacrifice" in context to this message would constitute the elaborated *robust part*, "sacrificing something of value" (YouTube 2018). This is also narrated by Kaepernick in the commercial (YouTube 2018, 1:17). Depending on the robustness/plasticity of "Sacrifice", the message can be interpreted in several ways, depending on what "sacrifice" means to the individual receiver. The *plastic dimension* opens up for different interpretations and attempts to establish the meaning of the *robust part* of "sacrifice". The overall meaning of "a sacrifice" is common to all, whether it is a sacrifice of your career, your arm, your integrity or your life. That meaning of "Sacrifice" in its own form, is considered *robust*, since all can agree on the general meaning of a sacrifice, but what determines the meaning of the *boundary object*, is what meaning the receivers assign to the *robust part*. Nike chooses to implicitly show their own *solidified interpretation* of the *robust part*, namely that Kaepernick sacrificed his career in football to fight racism in the US. This message is not directly translated by words or actions, but it lies implicit in the context of the video in relation to the photo (Averhoff et al. 2019).

Besides "Sacrifice", we find "Achievement" with the elaborated robust part, "Success", to be a *boundary object* in the "Dream Crazy" commercial, although, this appears mainly in the video commercial and not the photo. An ongoing theme for the commercial is goal setting, reaching for the stars and achieving your wildest dreams. The commercial is showing positive examples of people reaching their goals and achieving greatness, which inspires the receiver to consider their own dreams and aspirations, e.g. making their own *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*.

Nike's own *solidified* interpretation of "Achievement" is "Dreaming crazy", meaning that one of the best things you can accomplish in life is to dare to set crazy goals for yourself and believe in them (cf. section 3.2). That is an achievement of its own.

### 5.1.3 Decoding of Nike's "Dream Crazy" 2018

Nike is using two different *boundary objects* as a part of their two sectioned campaign. One focusing on the notion of sacrifice, another focusing on achievement and goal setting (cf. section 5.1.2).

Based on the comments made on Twitter by the receivers of the photo and the video, it was obvious that there were splitted opinions in terms of what defined a real sacrifice. However,

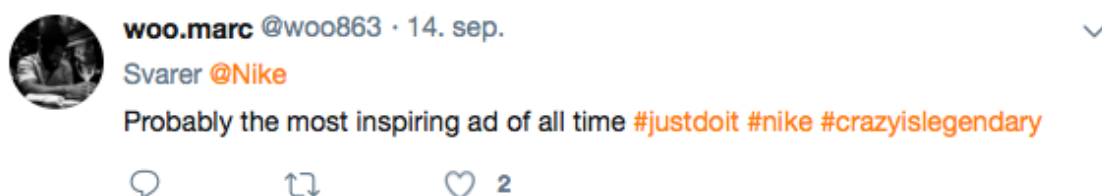
the receivers were presenting a lot of their own meanings, mainly regarding “sacrifice”, showing their own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part* and challenging Nike’s own interpretation, namely being the fight against racism, e.g. (Averhoff et al. 2019):



Twitter comment made in the commentary field of the photo of Kaepernick (Averhoff et al. 2019).

In the case above, we see the example of firefighters helping victims during the 9/11 terror attack (Averhoff et al. 2019). This is the receiver’s own *solidified* interpretation of what a real sacrifice is.

There was a higher degree of positive comments in consensus position made on the video (Averhoff et al. 2019). The positive images and successful stories were reconciling people after the clefting of opinions in regard to the photo of Kaepernick. Receivers indicated to feel inspired by the story of the commercial, which lead to people agreeing with and/or reconstructing their own *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*, “Success”. There were a high amount of acceptances of Nike’s inflected meanings of the *robust part*, e.g. (Averhoff et al. 2019):



Twitter comment made in the commentary field of the Dream Crazy video (Averhoff et al. 2019).

Nike was not explicitly portraying the conflict of Kaepernick's condemned action during NFL, nor any restrictions regarding what really constitutes as sacrifice, which opened up for the discussion of what a true sacrifice is.

#### 5.1.4 The successful constitution of Boundary Objects

Below we have outlined the *boundary objects* identified in Nike "Just Do It" 1988, and Nike "Dream Crazy" 2018.

Commercial	Potential <i>boundary object</i> and <i>robust part</i> elaboration	<i>Plastic dimension</i>
<b>Nike 1988</b>	"Achievement" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achieving physical superiority</li> </ul>	Nike's <i>solidified</i> interpretation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical power in spite of high age</li> </ul>
<b>Nike 2018</b>	"Sacrifice" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sacrificing something of value</li> </ul> "Achievement" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Success</li> </ul>	Nike's <i>solidified</i> interpretation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fighting against racism</li> </ul> Nike's <i>solidified</i> interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dreaming crazy</li> </ul>

Table 5a - Outline and elaboration of identified *boundary objects*.

Nike's use of *boundary objects* in the "Dream Crazy" commercial manages to create a certain consensus between the sender and the receiver, as they change the meaning of the message. This is dependent on how "Sacrifice" and "Achievement" is interpreted by the receiver. This interpretation is defined by how the receiver chooses to determine the meaning of the *robust parts*, "Sacrificing something of value" and "Success". Nike's ability of slightly concealing their own *solidified* interpretations allowed the receivers to make alternate perceptions. They were hereby capable of determining the meaning *boundary objects* in accordance to their own beliefs. This is also the case for Nike's 1988 commercial, meaning that they do not explicitly state a message in the commercial, besides "Just Do It". The fact, that a person should "just do it" in spite of aging is implicit. However, we would need a decoding analysis of responses to measure if this *boundary object* is effective.

In spite of differences in opinion towards the 2019 campaign, the conversation leads somewhere due to the different interpretations in Nike 2019, which created a hegemonic struggle of discourses (cf. section 3.2). The receivers were challenging Nike's meaning of the *robust part*, and they were able to substitute it with their own. There was room for individual interpretation, because Nike were passive with their message of "Sacrifice" being linked to Kaepernick's cause of fighting racism.

Even though the sampled responses did not all consent with the contents of Nike's campaign, the *boundary object* was successfully constituted.

### 5.1.5 Summary and comparison

Nike is a corporation which have had long time success with implementing CPA in their corporate communication. Since their first advertisements in the eighties, they have highlighted social and political controversy, and they have acted like a voice for the suppressed and vulnerable in society (Hoffmann et al. 2020). They have caused heated debates amongst supporters and opponents of the content, which has led to a segregation of customers, that agrees or disagrees with the political standpoint the company is portraying, e.g. the case of them choosing Colin Kaepernick as their frontline person of their 30 year anniversary "Just Do It" campaign (Hoffmann et. al 2020).

Due to Nike's persistence in regard to their brand direction and their continuation of creating commercials that often contained socio political controversies, it is safe to argue that their brand has stagnated and not developed (cf. section 5.1.1) (cf. section 5.1.2). Nike has come to learn the promotional and customer-related benefits of their political engagement, which you must assume has caused them to continue in the track of CPA. It is possible to link their successful constitution of *boundary objects* to having caused less resistance and more acceptance from their customers, due to its slightly vaguer form proportional to an *agonistic* approach. If Nike had chosen to explicitly show their political role in both cases, there would have been less space for interpretation, and the message would have been more determinant. Our theoretical knowledge leads us to assume, that this could have altered the receiver responses significantly (cf. section 3.2).

If we take the "Dream Crazy" commercial as an example, Nike is not stating what a sacrifice is or is not, e.g. by defining sacrifice as limited to military, money, illness etc. They leave it up to the receivers, on how they are interpreting the *plastic dimension* of a "sacrifice" (cf. section 5.1.2).



## 5.2 Gillette's encoding of commercials

In this section, we will begin our analysis by identifying the encoded messages of the two Gillette commercials. From this analysis, we will redeem the potential *boundary objects* and outline them.

### 5.2.1 Encoding of Gillette "Best a Man Can Get" 1989

#### Message

In the commercial we are shown different, successful life scenarios of men, both relating to their professional life, sport, marriage, fatherhood etc. In other words, Gillette is celebrating the manhood, shown through success in situations, which in the time of publishing, would be attributed to masculinity. This is also supported in the lyrics of -*"Where the race is run you are the champion"* simultaneously showing success in the commercial (Gillette 1989, 0:46). Gillette is continuing the old-fashioned stereotyping of masculinity, by portraying men in the given scenarios, which is more related to business, sport and authority positions. At the same time, they are also portraying men as being fathers, showing care for children which differentiate the traditional gender stereotyping slightly, by adopting the roles that used to be considered female (cf. section 2.2). This means that they are aligning with the old stereotyping, yet, simultaneously they are committing to the development progress of more equal perceptions of genders (cf. section 2.2).

The message of the commercial is for men to aim for achievement, achievement in the terms of the best a man can get. Achievement equals happiness and satisfaction, which all the scenarios in the commercial are examples of (YouTube 1989). Furthermore, a relevant part of the message is also the headline with "can get" oppose to "can be" in the 2019 commercial. There is a distinction between *having* and *being* (Molesworth et al. 2009). The study by Molesworth et al. is researching "the marketisation of having and being in higher education". It is based on Erich Fromm's earlier findings on "to have or to be" (Fromm 1976). Even though the study is researching marketisation in higher education, the concept of *having* and *being* can be transferred to our study. By the *having* mode, in this case "getting", we prefer the possession of objects and have the ideology that "*I am more, the more I have*", which is the dominant mode of existence in the consumer society (Fromm 1976, 5). We want to "have" a degree rather than "be learners" due to the possibilities it gives us, such as a well-paid job. We choose to do something, based on where the success rate for having something is the largest (Molesworth et al. 2009).

As a sum up, the *having* mode means that we do everything for ourselves and the beneficial outcomes hereof, opposed to the driving force of being better for others, and this is the mode Gillette is appealing to with this commercial.

The mode agrees with the contents shown in the commercial. We see men having success, and doing something for themselves in relation to sport, marriage, job etc.

## Conflict

The story does not include any explicit conflicts. However, the main message is to achieve the best in life for men. This form of achievement is linked to competition and achieving something competitively is only possible if someone is losing. Achievement is being better than someone else and thereby competition is an underlying conflict of the commercial. We see situations of men having success with job, family, marriage and sport but everyone can achieve these successes and thereby it is a competition of winners and losers. Looking into the lyrics "*Where the race is run you are the champion*" (YouTube 1989, 0:46), is also indicates there can only be one champion, which result in others losing.

## Characters

We are presented to different characters through the commercial however they are all representing the same type of a man. A man who is strong, tall, dark-haired and around 30-40 years old (YouTube 1989). Therefore, there is not one single *hero* in this story but instead several *heroes/supporters* to achieve the goal and make the story active (cf. section 4.6).

As there is no explicitly shown conflict in the story but instead an underlying competition. We are not introduced to any adversary complicating the achievement of the goal. This makes the video appear more harmonized (cf. section 4.6).

Gillette has made interacting and compelling characters for their target audience. All the receivers might not look as the men in the commercial, however they are someone Gillette believe/wants the receivers striving to be, strong and successful. This is again related to the old stereotyping of men and masculinity (cf. section 2.2).

## Plot

The progress of the story is not chronological and precise. From the beginning to 0:54, we are presented to all the success-situations of a man in no particular order, but instead the story is jumping back and forth from sport, job, marriage and fatherhood. From 0:55, we are introduced

to the razor the commercial is advertising for, which is the end of the story (YouTube 1989). Thereby, there is no division between the beginning, when the scene is set, and middle, the progression of the story/conflict. The non-consistent linear story can according to Fog et al. effect the receiver's experience and result in lack of interest in the story (cf. section 4.5.1).

### Identification of potential Boundary Objects

Based on the analysis of the commercial, we have found that Gillette presents a polished look of male achievement and success in situations, which according to the time of publishing, were considered masculine (cf. section 2.2). These situations involve primarily business, sport, relationships and family. All themes are interconnected by the notion of achievement and to a certain degree competition: to do good on Wall Street, getting a promotion, getting married and taking care of the family. The encoded message is that men can succeed in all of these scenarios, and that these scenarios are worth aspiring to. It agrees with the large having-consumer culture, where we are more the more we have, and we do something for ourselves based on the possibilities it gives us. It can also be related to the American Dream by succeeding on your own (Molesworth et al. 2009) (Fromm 1976).

This identifies "Achievement" as the potential *boundary object* in Gillette's 1989 commercial with the elaborated *robust part*, "Getting the best as a man". "Achievement" has a generalized meaning of pursuing something and succeeding, often accompanied by hard work or skill, which determines "Getting the best as a man" as the *robust part* of this *boundary object*. It stresses the need of being in ownership of these elements, of having achieved something you are now in possession of, whether it is a sport accomplishment or a successful love life.

"Achievement" can be served in many forms, and what might be a great achievement to one person might not be it to someone else, e.g. a normal person running 5 km versus a marathon runner doing the same. This dimension represents the *plastic dimension* of the *boundary object*, where individuals are capable of making their own *solidified* interpretations of the robust part, of what their greatest desires are consistent of and therefore what a great achievement is to them. Having "achievement" as the *boundary object* in the video, Gillette presents different scenarios of "achievement" associated with masculinity they find inspiring to men, whether it is at success at work, on the sports field or in the home. This strategy reconciles the receivers, and in most cases creates a common consensus of the content of the video, since there is space for their individual solidified interpretations of what "achievement" is to them (cf. section 3.2).

## 5.2.2 Encoding of Gillette "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" 2019

### Message

As the name of the commercial "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" and as the end of the commercial state "*It is only by challenging ourselves to do more that we can come closer to our best*", this commercial is focusing on men becoming better men (YouTube 2019, 1:34). As mentioned in our empirical section, we see men moving from "bad" behavior to "good" behavior according to Gillette, as the title indicates, "We Believe". The commercial puts responsibility on men to strive to be better in relation to topics as bullying, sexual harassment, toxic masculinity and social movements as "Me Too" Movement.

Gillette is highlighting the importance of good behavior by arguing that boys will act in accordance to what they see by the quote, "*Because the boys watching today, will be the men of tomorrow*" (YouTube 2019, 1:24). Behaving good is therefore something men should strive to achieve. The good behavior and "can be" headline it related to the study of *having/being* (Molesworth et al. 2009). As the 1989 commercial was appealing to the *having* culture, this commercial is appealing to the *being* culture. The *being* mode is about "*the 'will' to focus on achievement and be committed to 'one thing'*" (Molesworth et al. 2009, 2080).

The *being* culture emphasizes learning and understands practice of earning skills may be difficult. They have a more reflective and critical orientation to the world and rejects superficial pulls, as well as they have a driving force to be better (Molesworth et al. 2009). This *being-mode* is consistent with the content of the commercial, since it contains more aspects than just gaining something for yourself. It takes up a critical orientation to the notion of achievement and success and demands that you do more than expected. It demands that the characters are improving for the benefit of society and not just for themselves.

### Conflict

The conflict of the commercial is the male behavior in terms of sexual harassment, fighting and bullying, which Gillette state as not being the best version of a man (YouTube 2019, 0:06).

In the first part of the commercial, Gillette is portraying men in relation to the old-fashioned perception of masculinity which can be defined as stereotypical to male behavior (cf. section 2.2). This includes their view of women not being professional, male supremacy and the sexual objectification of women. Moreover, they show an acceptance of violence and excuse this behavior with "*boys will be boys*" (YouTube 2019, 0:34). This conceptualization of toxic

masculinity is explicitly portrayed by Gillette as a prime example of how not to behave as a man.

In the second part of the commercial, Gillette is showing how men should behave, and they are shifting the focus to men behaving as the *heroes*, who manage to stop these actions seen earlier in the story. These men are preventing sexual harassment, stopping fights and teaching girls to be strong and independent (YouTube 2019, 0:54, 1:06, 1:10). This indicates the kind of behavior Gillette determines as correct and “the best men can be”. It portrays two very clear distinctions of behavior associated with masculinity and how Gillette is telling their audience of what to do and what not to do.

The implemented conflict ensures the driving force for a good story (cf. section 4.5.1). Furthermore, Gillette shows a solution for the conflict to be resolved, and they are fulfilling the need for harmony in the end. Furthermore, by implementing a conflict and resolving it, Gillette is showing their values on how a man should behave (cf. section 4.5.1).

## Characters

The commercial presents us different characters. There is no specific *hero* in this commercial. Instead, all the men that are changing their behavior by stopping fights, bullying and sexual harassment, are *heroes* pursuing the goal (YouTube 2019, 0:54, 1:06, 1:10). On the other hand, the men who are portrayed with the bad behavior are the *adversaries*, and thereby the conflict for achieving the goal. Furthermore, the commercials do also consist of *beneficiaries*, those who will positively be affected when the goal is achieved, who are the boys and the women. As Gillette states “The boys of today will be the men of tomorrow” (YouTube 2019, 1:24). In terms of the women, they will be liberated from being treated poorly.

It is essential that the developed characters in a commercial are identifiable both in relation to their looks, actions and problems. The men and boys in the commercial are extremely different in their looks, both in terms of race and size, so there is no main character developed as their main target audience. Instead there is a lot of different characters, that the receiver can identify themselves with (cf. section 4.5.1).

## Plot

The progress of the story completely follows Fog et al.’s. structure of a good story (cf. section 4.5.1).

The commercial starts by setting the scene of men looking in the mirror with a overlapping news audio mentioning the words: “bullying, “Me Too” Movement, sexual harassment and

masculinity” (YouTube 2019, 0:2). Thereafter, there is a referral to the old commercial from 1989, by showing a old clip and playing the theme song, simultaneously asking “is the best at man can get?”( YouTube 2019, 0:7). This is happening while a group of boys jumps through the screen, chasing another boy aggressively.

Thereafter, the middle starts from 0:11 where Gillette is portraying men and boys as they believe they act today, which is where the conflict is created.

The end takes place from 0:37 starting with the words “*But something finally changed*” and we see the conflict escalating by the media's attention. Afterwards the conflict is getting resolved by the change in men's behavior where they are stopping the fights, bullying and sexual harassments (YouTube 2019, 0:37). As the story have a precise structure, it can increase the receivers experience and attention (cf. section 4.5.1).

## Identification of potential Boundary Objects

Gillette is sending out several messages throughout this commercial. It focuses on the bad behavior that, according to Gillette, mainly has happened and happens amongst men and they validate this assumption by linking it to actual social events which has been brought up in media worldwide (YouTube 2019, 0:37). It focuses on the social heritage of men and how their behavior is affected by many years of cultural impact. It focuses on how men should be a role model to young boys, since they will be the men of tomorrow. All these messages has one solid purpose: that men should do everything they can to change or/and develop into being the best a man can be, according to Gillette's interpretation. Gillette is appealing to the smaller consumer culture with the *being* mode, by their headline “The Best Men Can Be” (cf. section 4.3.1). The message is not about your own success, but about learning and changing together in solidarity (Molesworth et al. 2009).

Interpreting these messages lead us to determine the potential *boundary object*, “Achievement” with the *robust part*, “Being the best version of a man”. These two are interconnected as such, that you achieve something by bettering yourself, as opposed to achieving something of possession, e.g. in the 1989 commercial (cf. section 5.2.1).

Everybody has the opportunity to interpret what is the best version of a man in relation to their own persuasions and beliefs, based on their social worlds, whereas this attribute represents the *plastic dimension* and all the possible *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*.

Gillette's *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part* is shown in the context of the scenarios in the commercial. Gillette gives several examples of behavior they consider unacceptable for a

man, as well as behaviors they praise for men to follow. They determine these behaviors to illustrate “The best version of a man”, both in a negative way and a positive way. Therefore, they make a strong *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, which determines not only how a “better man” should behave, but also what he should try to emancipate himself from. The *solidified* interpretations made by Gillette is hereby explicitly defined, and clearly distinguishes two kinds of behavior, with associated portrayals of masculinity, as respectively acceptable and unacceptable.

There is a continuity in the development of the *boundary object* from the 1989 commercial to the 2019 commercial. Having mapped “Achievement” of elements you can mainly possess, as a potential *boundary object* for the old commercial, it is possible to draw associations to the attempt of the achievement of becoming a better man, hereby the “the best men can be” (cf. section 5.2.1). In the old commercial, “Achievement” refers to getting the best as a man on the basis of competition and drive (cf. section 5.2.1), whereas there is the important distinction of “getting” and “being” as mentioned in both headlines. In the case of 2019, being the “best version of a man” is also driven by the element of being better than other certain types of men, again an association to competition.

The authority and the power balance between men and women in the commercial is also a vital point to mention. The behavior of dominance and patriarchy seems to be the main issue Gillette attempts to distance themselves from. However, the basis of the commercial is that men themselves are the front figures, which should make the change to better the circumstances, which only just portrays them with even more authority. Authority, e.g. in terms of having the power prevent sexual harassment, instead of turning to gender equality, where you assume a modern woman would be able to defend herself, instead of relying of the rescuing of a man (cf. section 2.2). Therefore, the development on how genders are portrayed is not developing in accordance to modern gender equality, but rather stagnating in terms of the old, uneven power struggle between men and women that connects masculinity to authority (cf. section 2.2).

### 5.2.3 Identified potential Boundary Objects of commercials

In this table we have defined our identified potential *boundary objects* from the two Gillette commercials. We will now elaborate them for each video, and determine Gillette’s *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*, as well as interpretations within the *plastic dimension* in relation to the Gillette’s own encoding in their commercials.

Commercial	Potential <i>boundary object</i> and <i>robust part</i> elaboration	<i>Plastic dimension</i>
<b>Gillette 1989</b>	"Achievement" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting the best as a man</li> </ul>	Gillette's <i>solidified</i> interpretation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competition, success, family, professional life and sports</li> </ul>
<b>Gillette 2019</b>	"Achievement" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being the best version of a man</li> </ul>	Gillette's <i>solidified</i> interpretation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Toxic masculinity as a negative construction of masculinity, e.g. bullying, mansplaining and sexual harassment.</li> <li>- Authority, determination and heroism as a positive construction of masculinity</li> </ul>

Table 5b - Outline and elaboration of identified *boundary objects*.

#### 5.2.4 Summary and comparison

Gillette has shifted their advertising from engaging in mainstream topics that puts emphasis on the positive aspects of life and a non-problematic way of living, to a socio-political niche topic.

Gillette went from establishing the traditional thoughts on masculinity and relating strongly to their male audience. They have now shifted to engage in the social cause of "Me Too" Movement, and they have chosen to highlight toxic masculinity as a concept man must try to step away from.

In the 1989 commercial, we are getting introduced to achievement of what is considered masculine (cf. section 2.2). Achievements in relation to job, marriage, sport and family which is interconnected to a certain degree of competition. In the 2019 commercial, the men are given the power of authority, which is basically a maintenance of old gender roles and stereotyping. In the scenario of mansplaining, instead of empowering women and embracing the pursuit of equality, the woman is deprived of power and left helpless. This portrayal of genders is from a feminist point of view not evolving but rather the opposite. Men are "creating" the problem, but also solving the problem. This is aligned with Courtney and Lockeretz study



arguing the stereotype dimension of women depending on men as well as men being problem-solvers (cf. section 2.2).

Gillette has also had a change of their characters and the men they wish to portray. In the 1989 commercial, you see several men claiming the leading role of the commercial, yet they all represent the same type of man, 30-35 years old, groomed and fit. In the new commercial, several types of men of all ages and appearances are represented.

Both of Gillette's commercials contain the potential *boundary object* "Achievement", but with different *solidified* interpretations. Gillette went from approaching to the large "having" consumer culture by showing individual and showable successes of getting what you desire, in terms of owning products and being possessive of the elements on your life, whether it is work life, family, education, sport etc. In other words, this approach could be associated with greed. Gillette is now appealing to the smaller, opposing being culture, by changing behavior, encouraging others to learn and improve and being good for other people than themselves. This is an example of engaging in societal development, which lays the foundation of CPA (cf. section 2.1). Yet, even though this portrayal is concealed as unselfish, the linking to authority, competition and heroism is indisputable.

Their campaign slogans, "The Best a Man Can Get" and "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" is therefore a continuity of the *boundary object*, "Achievement" but with a slight modification in the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, namely *having* the best versus *being* the best.

## 5.3 Decoding of the Gillette commercials on YouTube

We will now analyse the receiver's responses of two commercials by Gillette. We will start with the analysis concerning Gillette 1989 followed by Gillette 2019. We will begin both analyses with a descriptive analysis, involving an outline and in-depth analysis of the mentioned comments and how they are interconnected, and subsequently moving on to analysing the possible presence of the potential *boundary objects* we identified in the encoding analysis.

By coding all the 200 collected samples to the two commercials, it became clear that there were more references between the two commercials on the 1989 commercial compared to the 2019 commercial. A huge part of the comments made on the 1989 commercial refers to the content of the 2019 commercial by Gillette. More precisely 49% of the comments (app. 9.3). Whereas none of the 100 comments made on the 2019 commercial is referring back the 1989 commercial.

This means that we have additionally 49 extra decoded meanings to the 2019 commercial. This is due to the splitting of the content of the samples made to the 1989 commercial, which we will add to the decoding analysis of the Gillette 2019 commercial.

### 5.3.1 Decoding of Gillette “Best a Man Can Get” 1989

We will start with a descriptive analysis of the themes mentioned in the samples, followed by a receiver decoding of potential *boundary objects*.

#### 5.3.1.1 Descriptive analysis

By looking into the 100 comments made on the 1989 commercial (app. 9.1.1), we discovered the following distribution between the decoding positions (app. 9.3)

<b>Commercial 1989</b>	
<b>Position</b>	<b>100 samples</b>
<b>Consensus</b>	60%
<b>Dissensus</b>	0%
<b>Ambivalent</b>	20%
<b>Off topic</b>	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6c - Positioning to “Best a Man Can Get” 1989

From the table you can tell, that the majority agrees with the content of the commercial, while no one is placed in dissensus.

Below is an overview of the distribution of the themes. It demonstrates the themes mentioned in the comments, and how often they were mentioned.

	Decoding of 100 samples
Themes	Frequency
<b>At least one of the themes mentioned</b>	<b>47</b>
Agreement with perception of masculinity	35
Disagreement with perception of masculinity	0
Gender stereotyping	0
Political / Societal	8
Economic dimension	3
Brand authenticity	0
Positive change of brand direction	0
Negative change of brand direction	28
<b>None of the themes mentioned</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5d - Distribution of themes.

\*The frequencies of the themes do not sum up to 100, because one comment can mention more than one theme.

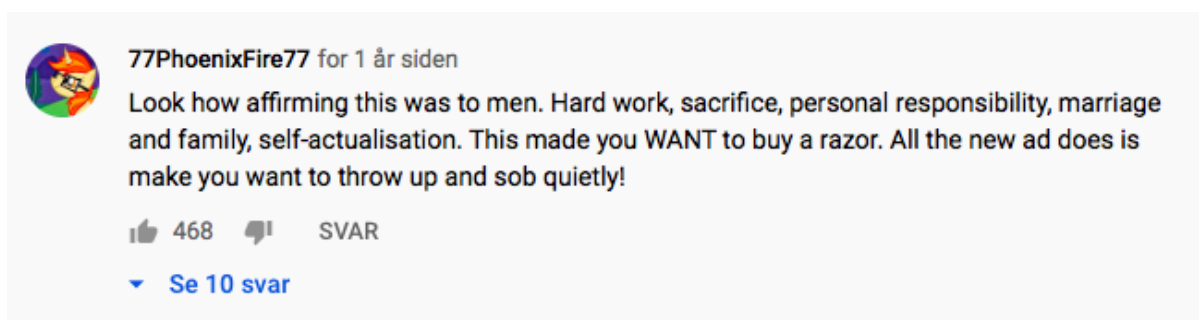
We will now look into the themes that are mentioned in the samples. Based on the scheme above, we can tell that “Perception of masculinity” and “Change of brand direction” are the themes that the receivers put most emphasis on. Therefore, we have chosen to analyse those in depth.

### Perception of masculinity

The most often mentioned theme is “Perception of masculinity”, which is mentioned 35 times out of 100. All are being in a consensus position, and all of them in the under category, “Agrees with portrayed masculinity”.

This shows, that positioning towards and conceptions of masculinity plays a significant part in the essence of the commercial and also how it is interpreted by its receivers.

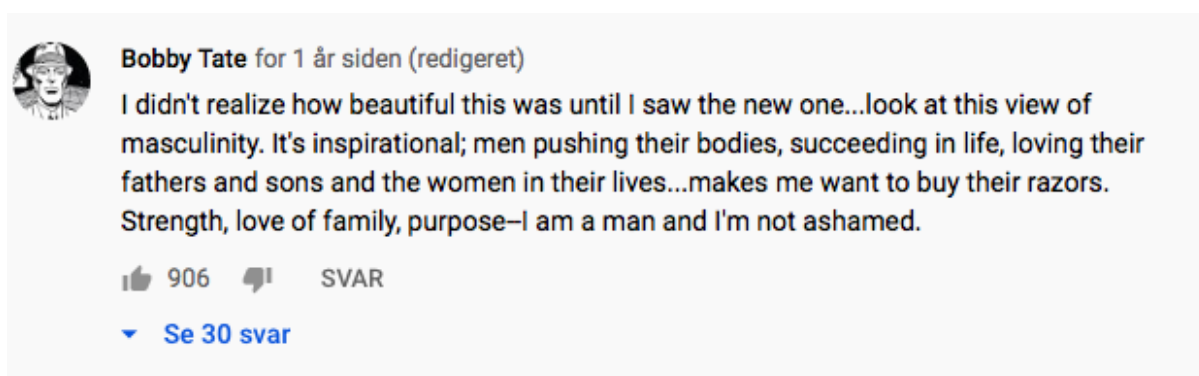
This is an example of a comment referring to the portrayal of masculinity in the commercial.



(app. 9.2.1, no. 7)

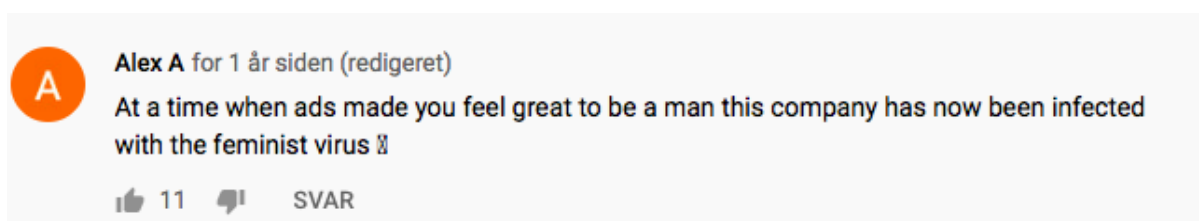
The comment takes a consensus position since it agrees with the content of the commercial and also state that this content makes you want to buy the razor. The comment shows agreement with the portrayed masculinity by Gillette, by indicating that all the named situations are specifically affirming to men, and it makes you want to strive to achieve the same.

This conception of the commercial and the agreement towards the portrayal of masculinity is seen several times, e.g.:



(app. 9.2.1, no. 2)

Another example of a comment referring to Gillette's portrayal of masculinity.



(app. 9.2.1, no. 31)

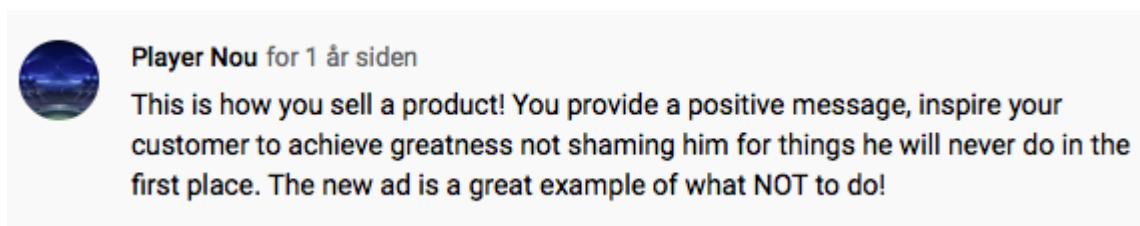
The comment shows agreement with the portrayed masculinity by stating the commercial makes you feel great to be a man. Furthermore, this comment does also refer to the political

theme, which we have described as “*taking a stand on Gillette’s commercial from a political/societal perspective*” (cf. section 4.5.2). The comment is blaming Gillette for not continuing their classic portrayal of men due to the recent years’ increased focus on feminism and equal rights. The “Political” theme is here combined with “Perception of masculinity”, which shows a clear linkage to actual political debates about feminism which is happening in society (cf. section 2.2).

Another aspect we have identified in comments referring to “Perception of masculinity” is the mentioned *having* mode (cf. section 5.2.1). These two comments, no. 2 and 82, shows an explicit and implicit way of getting appealed by Gillette’s commercial as *having* consumers.



(app. 9.2.1, no. 5)



(app. 9.2.1, no. 82)

The first comment shows agreement to the best a man can *get/have* which are all the individual achievements of a man in relation to job, sport, family etc. according to the commercial. It shows disagreement to the 2019 commercial, by stating what the receiver believes Gillette is saying about men. This clearly shows the distinction between *getting* and *being*, which is essential to the plots of the commercials.

The second comment agrees by arguing what Gillette is portraying in the 1989 commercial, is men achieving true greatness. He interprets greatness by achieving the goals in the commercial, which all are something you mainly do for yourself. Individual successes that you can get and show of, which is the essence of the *having* mode opposed to the *being* mode (cf. section 5.2).

## Change of Brand Direction

The second most mentioned theme is “Change of brand direction” which is mentioned 28 times. All the comments are positioned as negative towards their change in brand direction, like in this example:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 4)

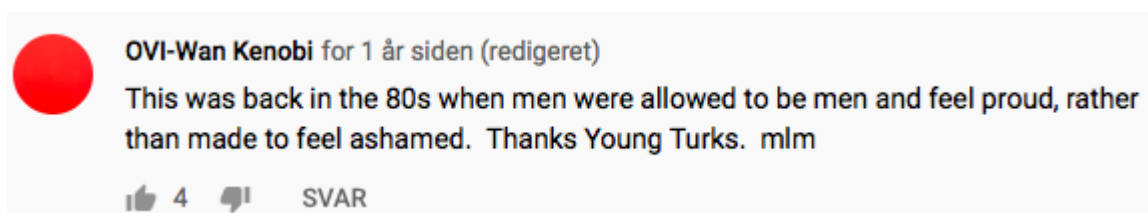
The comment refers to tradition and family as a token of affection to the old commercial, but clearly distances itself from the new one in a practically aggressive manner.



(app. 9.1.2, no. 58)

Referring to “Change of brand direction” is also seen with less elaboration as shown above, where the distinction is feeling proud versus feeling ashamed. The comment is negative towards Gillette's new way of branding described in two short statements, which emphasizes the significant change.

“Change of brand direction” is often seen in combination with the theme “Perception of masculinity” hereunder “Agrees with portrayed masculinity”, which is also shown in the example below.



(app. 9.1.2, no. 73)

Often these comments are constructed with a praise of Gillette's portrayal of masculinity in the 1989 commercial, followed by a critique of their shift of brand direction. More specific, the combination of "Change of brand direction" and "Perception of Masculinity" is occurring in 18 out of 28 times. This structure of praise and critique only highlights the receiver's message of being severely disappointed about Gillette's decision of changing their brand direction, and focuses on their affection of how the brand used to be.

### 5.3.1.2 Receiver decoding of potential Boundary Objects

We have analysed the receivers' decoding of the potential *boundary objects* by looking into their interpretation of the *robust part*, the *solidified* interpretation of Gillette and lastly the *plastic dimension* of the potential *boundary object*.

Boundary Objects	Decoding of 100 samples
Disposition	Frequency
<b>Robust Part</b>	<b>80</b>
Accepted	34
Rejected	4
Not mentioned	32
<b>Gillette's solidified interpretation</b>	<b>31</b>
Accepted	31
Rejected	0
<b>Plastic dimension</b>	<b>15</b>

Table 5e - Disposition of the receiver's interpretation of the *boundary object*.

\*The 20 irrelevant samples could not be interpreted in relation to *boundary objects*, which is why the *robust part* it does not sum up to 100.

As seen in the data above, the *robust part*, "Getting the best as a man", of the potential *boundary object*, "Achievement" is mostly either accepted or not mentioned, which shows a high degree of insight into the core message of the commercial, "The Best a Man Can get". Not alone is the *robust part* accepted in a high degree, but Gillette's own *solidified* interpretations of what real achievement is are also accepted in 31 cases out of the 34 accepted *robust parts*.

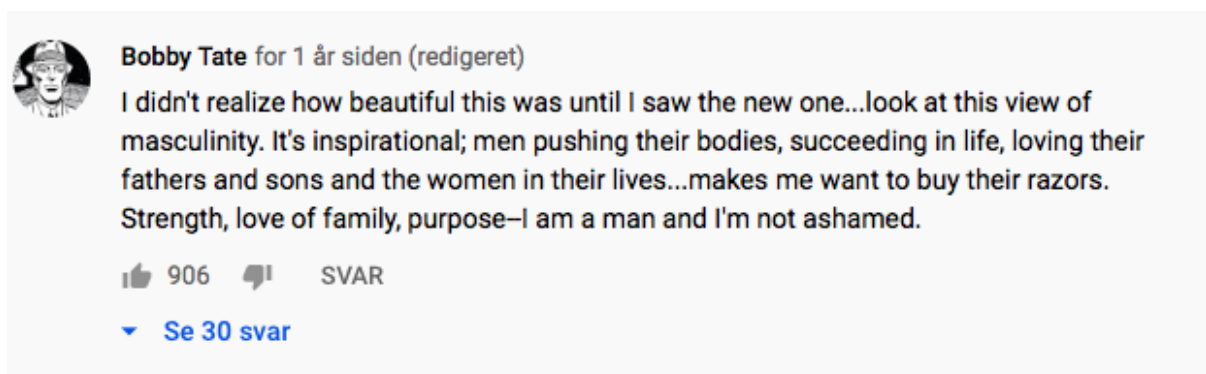
It shows a high degree of consensus, not alone to the commercial contents itself, but also of the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, “having/getting what you desire” and Gillette’s solidified *interpretations* of the *robust part*.

15 comments are interpreting their own *solidified* interpretations regarding these themes:

- Family/tradition: 10
- Pride: 7
- Power/authority: 5
- Professional life: 3
- Sport: 2

Most of these interpretations are in alignment with Gillette’s own interpretations, namely “Competition, success, family, professional life and sports” (cf. section 5.2.3).

It is clear to see a pattern of the comments putting special emphasis on the notion of “achieving”. Whether it is regarding their career, sport or family life. For the receivers, this is a healthy description of masculinity and something that inspires them, and something they can identify themselves with. “Achievement” serves the common knowledge of gaining something/reaching something successfully or with skill, namely being the robust part of “achievement”, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 2)

The receiver accepts the presence of the *boundary object* by reinforcing the concept of “Achievement”, and hereby acknowledging the presence of the *robust part*, “Getting the best as a man”. The comment centers around the concept of “getting/having” success incorporated in all these topics mentioned, e.g. physical peak, family and general success in life, which determines the *robust part*. In this case it is the receiver’s own solidified interpretation as well as an agreement to Gillette’s.



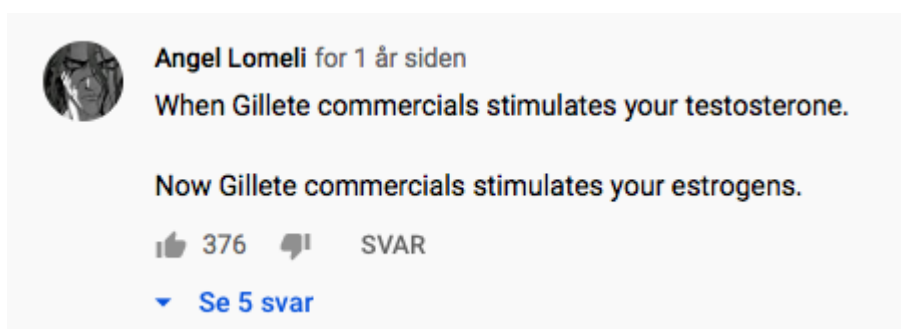


(app. 9.1.2, no. 67)



(app. 9.1.2, no. 36)

In the first example above (no. 67), the receiver states that an “embrace of masculinity” is shown by the portrayal of men in the commercial. This receiver equates masculinity and heterosexuality, and praises Gillette for visualizing “correct” masculinity. This is an example of the “Conservative idea of masculinity”, which identifies themselves a lot more with this form of masculinity instead of the one portrayed in the new commercial. The next example (no. 36) also reinforces the idea of Gillette’s interpretation of masculinity is correct.



(app. 9.1.2 no. 8)

This comment’s message (no. 8) is more implicit, however we have still coded it as accepting the *robust part*. The comment states that the commercial stimulates his testosterone, which means that he is agreeing with the *robust part* and as well Gillette’s *solidified* interpretation, since getting testosterone stimulated will most likely happen, if you identify yourself with that type of man portrayed. By initiating the new commercial stimulates the estrogens, it is showing a clear distinction of the old commercial showing masculinity, and the new commercial showing femininity to the receiver.

Four comments are coded as rejected since they do not refer to the *robust part* of the *boundary objects* and its surroundings.



(app. 9.1.2, no. 18)

This comment shows a affection to the commercial. Its capital letters of “this” shows a direct referring to the commercial. However, it does not comment on anything within the commercial relating to the actual contents. By not referring the *robust part*, we cannot code it as accepted, and the interpretation of the *boundary object* deviates.

This is the case in all four comments coded as rejected since they are not referring to the *robust part* of the *boundary objects*, although, it is possible that they might would have accepted the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, but just not mentioned or indicated it in this particular comment. That is impossible for us clarify, but it could be an alternative reading.

With that said, 34 comments have accepted the *robust part* and 31 of them is also accepting Gillette’s *solidified* interpretation. That fact that only four comments has rejected the commercial, and not due to disagreements, we can argue that Gillette’s constitution of *boundary objects* has been successful in the “The Best a Man Can Get” commercial. The way Gillette manages to constitute the *boundary object*, “Achievement”, is by celebrating aspects of masculinity, and they are highlighting positivity and capability. They are portraying different interpretations of “achievement”, which makes it possible for the receiver to interpret what real “achievement” to them.

### 5.3.2 Decoding of Gillette “Best Men Can Be” 2019

We will now analyse the receiver decoding of the 2019 commercial by Gillette, following the same analytical procedure as in section 5.3.1.

#### 5.3.2.1 Descriptive analysis

As mentioned in section 4.5.2, 49 of the comments made on the commercial from 1989, did also refer to the content of the 2019 commercial. Therefore, we have two sections in the table

below for our descriptive analysis of the 2019 video. Firstly, a section as the previous (cf. Table 6c), mapping the 100 samples collected on the 2019 commercial, followed by a section mapping the 49 samples collected on the 1989 commercial, but referring to the content of the 2019 commercial. We have chosen to separate them into two sections due to their different outcomes, which is a relevant factor in our analysis.

<b>Commercial 2019</b>		
<b>Position</b>	<b>100 samples</b>	<b>49 samples</b>
<b>Consensus</b>	0%	0%
<b>Dissensus</b>	60%	96%
<b>Ambivalent</b>	21%	4%
<b>Off topic</b>	19%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6f - Positioning to “Best a Man Can Get” 1989

Here, the dissensus position is dominant, with a zero outcome in the consensus position. That indicates that the majority of the receivers are not aligning with the content of the video.

The numbers of the two decodings of the 2019 commercial are quite similar regarding their positioning. The dissensus position is dominant, however quite more in the samples from 1989, and none of the comments are in consensus.

Where the two codings differ, are in themes mentioned in the comments which is illustrated in the table below. As the model 5d, it demonstrates the themes mentioned in the comments, and the frequency.

	Decoding of 100 Samples	Decoding of 49 Samples
Themes	Frequency	Frequency
<b>At least one of the themes mentioned</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32</b>
Agreement with perception of masculinity	0	0
Disagreement with perception of masculinity	10	27
<i>Conservative</i>	6	17
<i>Deliberated</i>	1	7
<i>Undefined</i>	3	3
Gender stereotyping	6	7
Political / Societal	1	9
Economic dimension	37	2
Brand authenticity	22	0
Positive change of brand direction	0	0
Negative change of brand direction	3	0
<b>None of the themes mentioned</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>49</b>

Table 5h - Distribution of themes.

\*The frequencies of the themes do not sum up to 100, because one comment can mention more than one theme.

Themes such as “Economic dimension” and “Perception of portrayed masculinity” differs significantly in frequency depending on which commercial the sample has been collected from. The differentiation is a really interesting point, since it is the same content they are referring to.

Due to the differentiation in themes, we have chosen to separate the analysis of the data, according the respective “locations”, hence the platform of the 2019 commercial and the 1989 commercial, in order to highlight and compare these prominent differences and why they might occur.

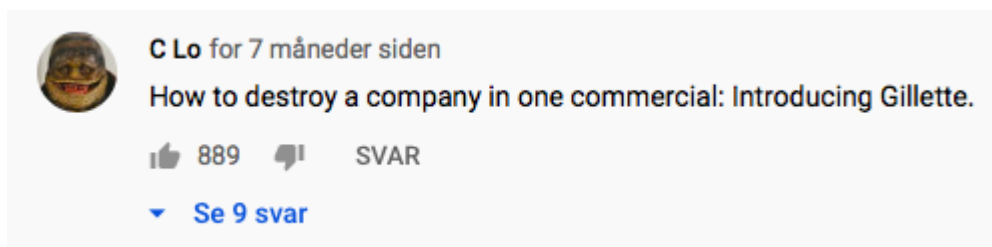
We will start with the samples made on the 2019 commercial where the most emphasized themes are “Economic dimension”, “Brand authenticity” and “Perception of masculinity”.

## Themes in comments made on the 2019 Commercial

### Economic Dimension

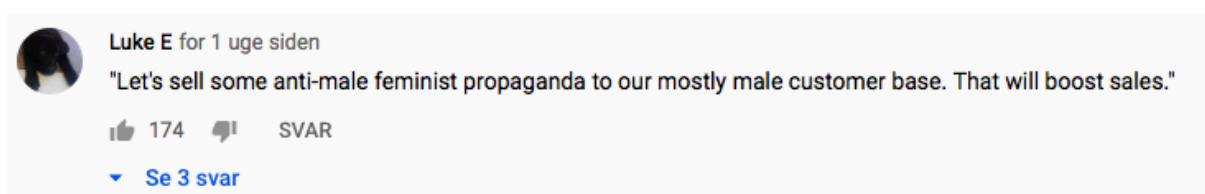
The theme “Economic dimension” is mentioned 37 times, which makes it the most frequent. It refers to *the financial cost, gains etc. of the commercial and their business ethics* (cf. section 4.5.2).

The comments referring to the “Economic dimension” are quite similar. They are commenting on Gillette destroying their business themselves because of the 2019 commercial, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, 103)

Or the following comment which indicates that Gillette has destroyed their business by going against their target customers. The comment is clearly marked by sarcasm, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, 111)

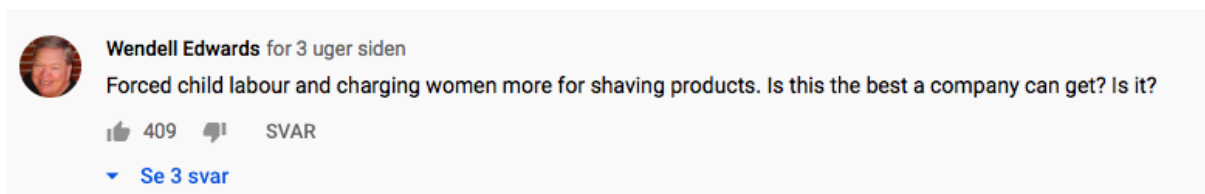
Both comment distances themselves from clear and constructive criticism by the use of sarcasm. There is a lot of focus on the fact, that Gillette has deselected their main customer base, due to their choice of showing this commercial and portraying new ideals.

Comments mentioning the “Economic dimension” are also often referring to the financial cost of their campaign and the well-known cause of the 8 billion write down (cf. section 4.2). These comments emphasize, between the lines and also by the use of humor and sarcasm, that the commercial was not worth the huge amount of money spend, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 75)

Lastly, several comments are also bringing up Gillette's business ethics in relation to the contents of the commercial, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 104)

Here, it is highlighted that Gillette is behaving unethical in regard to their corporate core activities in terms of child labor. They also focus on the fact, that Gillette is continuing gender discrimination based on their product pricing being more expensive for women than for men. Altogether, it is accentuated that Gillette is not aligning with their own value sets they portray in the video, and it is connected with an ironic use of the slogan, emphasizing the lack of interconnectivity between saying and doing.

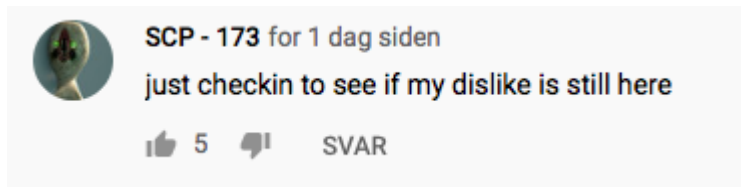
### **Brand Authenticity**

The second most mentioned theme is "Brand authenticity" and is seen in 22 comments. They are *claiming that Gillette is manipulating/hiding the feedback on the 2019 commercial* (cf. section 4.5.2).

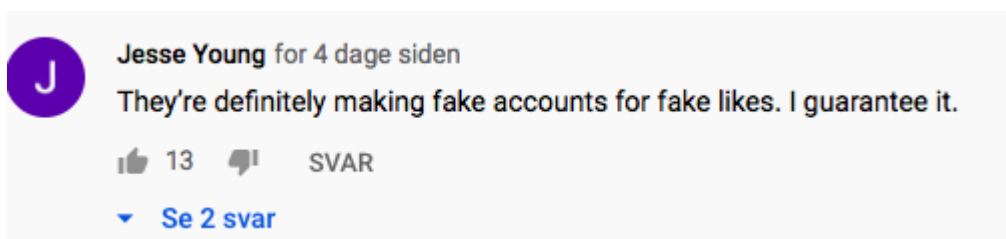
As shown in the following comments, many of the receivers are accusing Gillette for manipulating the feedback on the commercial by stating that they are removing dislikes, or creating false positive feedback, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 149)



(app. 9.1.2, no. 173)



(app. 9.1.2, no. 185)

These comments are showing a significant amount of distrust to Gillette as a brand, by stating that Gillette would manipulate the feedback of the commercial to protect their reputation. The thought of Gillette might having done this, creates an insecure atmosphere for the receivers, knowing that their voice might be shielded from the rest of the world by Gillette.



(app. 9.1.2. no 83)

The comment (no. 83) refers to Gillette's public statements about starting a conversation. Procter and Gamble Chief Brand Officer, Marc Pritchard, wrote *"Our team at Gillette sparked an important worldwide conversation with the new "We Believe" ad"* (Pritchard 2019) and Pankaj Bhalla, Gillette's North America brand director, told CNN Business *"We expected debate. Actually a discussion is necessary. If we don't discuss and don't talk about it, I don't think real change will happen"* (Heather 2019).

As the comment indicates, Gillette are contradicting themselves if they are manipulating the feedback, as many YouTube users accuse them for. They are not engaging in a conversation, if they are not willing to let people express their opinion. Since Gillette has chosen to engage

in CPA through their choice of making this commercial, this action is defined as very inconsistent. According to CPA and *agonistic pluralism*, a crucial factor is to avoid false consensus and to engage in a public conversation, in spite of controversy, and allow different opinions and criticism.

The main point is to challenge the hegemonic order as well as you allow your audience to do the same (cf. section 2.1). By adding fake likes and deleting comments, according to the receivers, they are eliminating the receivers' room for individual interpretation and hereby their voice and opportunity for challenging Gillette's portrayed ideology of healthy masculinity.

### Perception of masculinity

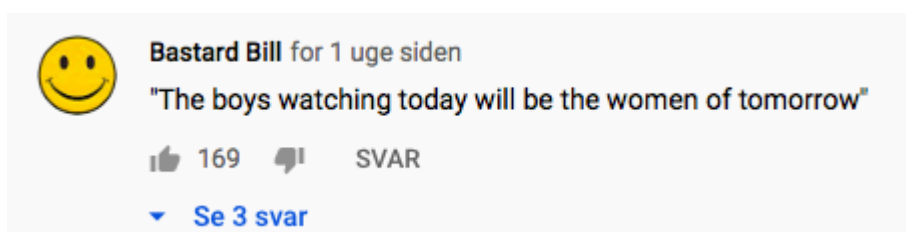
The third most mentioned theme is "Perception of masculinity". 10 of the comments are referring to this theme by disagreeing with Gillette's perception:

- Conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles: 6
- Deliberative masculinity 1
- Undefined masculinity: 3

Most of the comments referring to the portrayed masculinity is made from "*a conservative idea of masculinity*", where the disagreement to the commercial is based on the old-fashioned gender roles and ideas of masculinity (4.5.2). This type of comments does not tend to view the way men behave in the video as problematic or toxic.



(app. 9.2.1, no. 142)



(app. 9.2.1. no. 124)

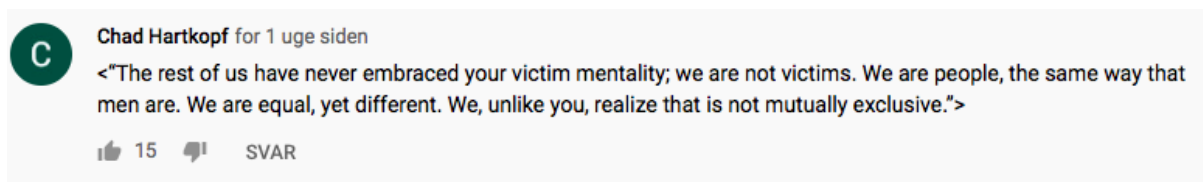
These comments are concerning the "*conservative idea of masculinity*" based on the distancing from new aspects and perceptions of masculinity which one of them refer to as



“ridiculous feminists propaganda” (no. 142). They dissociate themselves with any other kind of masculinity, and indirectly refer to these perceptions as acting like females. The reference of women and feminism almost functions like a term of abuse.

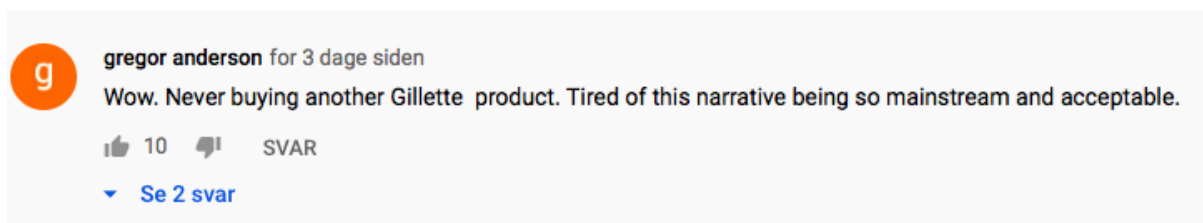
The first comment (142) is being offensive towards Gillette as a company, and do not understand how they have been influenced into changing their brand direction, i.e. believing in feminist propaganda. This conviction is being interpreted as an attack towards men, and hereby their main target group which is incomprehensible to this receiver.

Oppose to the “*conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles*”, the “*deliberated masculinity*” is based on acknowledgement of other perceptions of masculinity, and they admit the masculinity, defined as toxic by Gillette, to be an actual problem. However, they do not agree in Gillette’s solution to the problem, nor do they see this behavior as a standardized social norm in society. Only 1 comment was made based on that disagreement, where the receiver rejects the idea of women needing a man to stand up for them, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no 141)

The 4% of comments containing the theme, “*Undefined masculinity*”, disagrees with the content of the video due to the portrayed masculinity, but without giving any further explanation on why that perception of masculinity is unappealing to them, e.g.:



(app 9.1.2, no 199)

## Themes in comments made on 1989 video

We will now analyse the comments made on the 1989 video but commenting on the content of the 2019 video. The three most mentioned themes are “Perception of masculinity”, “Political” and “Gender stereotyping”.

## Perception of masculinity

With 27 of 49 comments referring to “Perception of masculinity”, it is largely the most frequent theme, with the following distribution disagreement within “Perception of masculinity”:

- Conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles: 17
- Deliberative masculinity 7
- Undefined masculinity: 3

It was possible to see a higher amount of elaborated comments concerning “Perceptions of masculinity” in the comments made on the 1989 video versus the comments made on the 2019 video.

The conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles is largely the most emphasized with it being mentioned 17 times.

These comments disagree with Gillette’s portrayal of masculinity, since they do not view the male behavior in the video as being toxic nor problematic or wrong, as mentioned in the previous analysis section. In this case, there is too a referral of Gillette’s perception of masculinity as being similar femininity, e.g.:

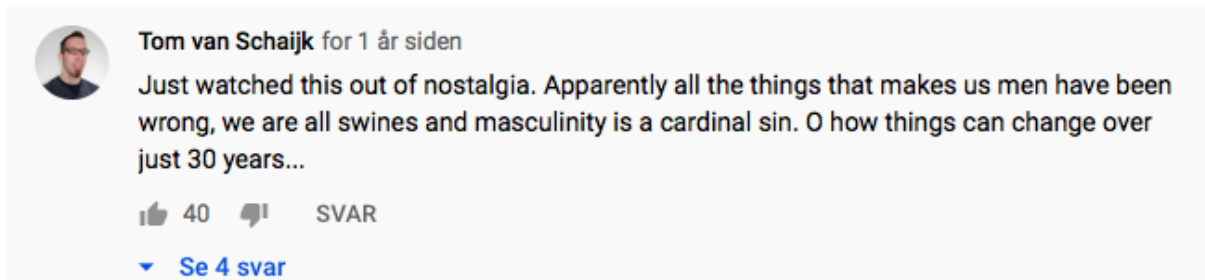


(app 9.1.1, no. 12)



(app. 9.1.1 no. 31)

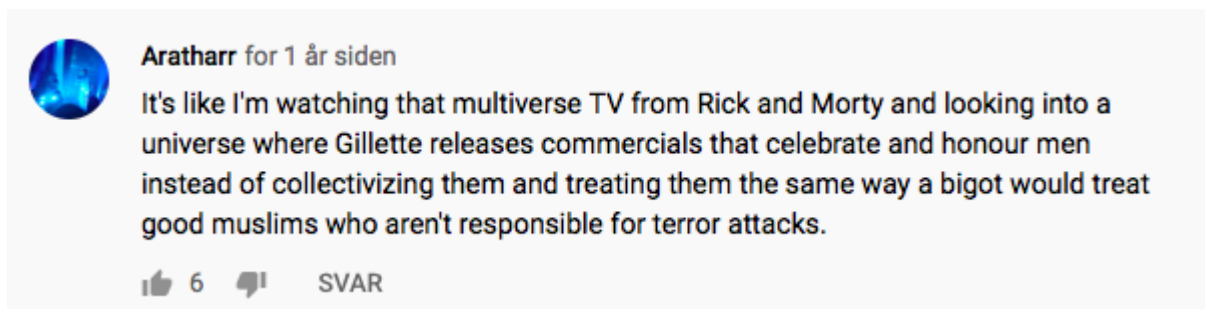
Here is another example, where the receiver expresses discontent with Gillette due to his beliefs that Gillette is condemning masculinity, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.1, no. 23)

The receiver does not see Gillette's attempt of showing a different view on masculinity as a guideline, but rather as a condemnation of masculinity and men in general. He eliminates the thought of other ways to view masculinity and interprets the request to change as an attack on current masculine tendencies and everything that has been. He refers to the "Change of brand direction" as he compares the shift from 30 years earlier until today. This example will also be elaborated under the theme, "Gender stereotyping".

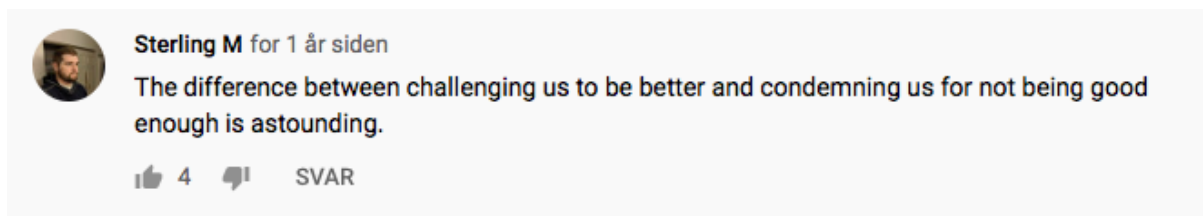
"*Deliberated masculinity*" is seen 7 times which is quite more than we could code from comments from the 2019 commercial. In the following comment, it is shown that the receiver feels unfairly treated by Gillette, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.1, no. 91)

He or she compares Gillette's view on men and masculinity as collectivized and generalized, since not all men behave this way, and specially not the majority of men. He or she compares it to racism, elaborated with an example of allegations that connects Islam to terrorism, and because someone makes mistakes or commits crime, it does not concern all.

The comments acknowledge that the portrayed male behavior is a problem but distances themselves from the behavior in the commercial, e.g.:



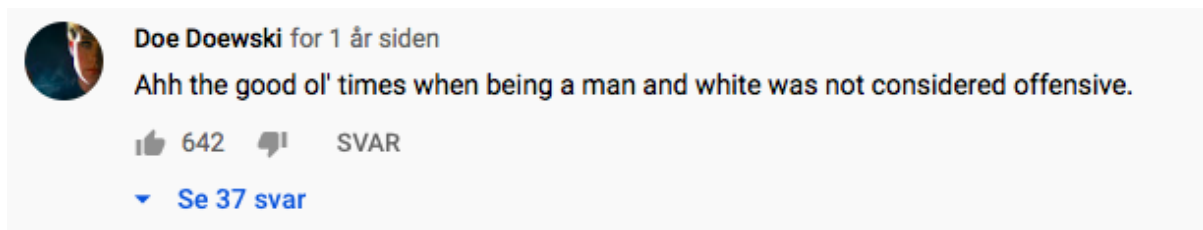
(app. 9.1.1, no. 70)

This comment is a great example of seeing the male behavior from two sides. He agrees with the *being* mode of committing to something and being challenged to be better but does not accept being explicitly condemned for not being good enough. There is a clear distance between motivation and judgement, which is what this receiver withdraws from.

### Political

The second most seen theme in the comments is “Political”, meaning *taking a stand on Gillette’s commercial from a political/societal perspective*” which is mentioned 9 times out of the 49 comments.

Receivers commenting on the political perspective often blames society for Gillette's choice of actions, e.g.:

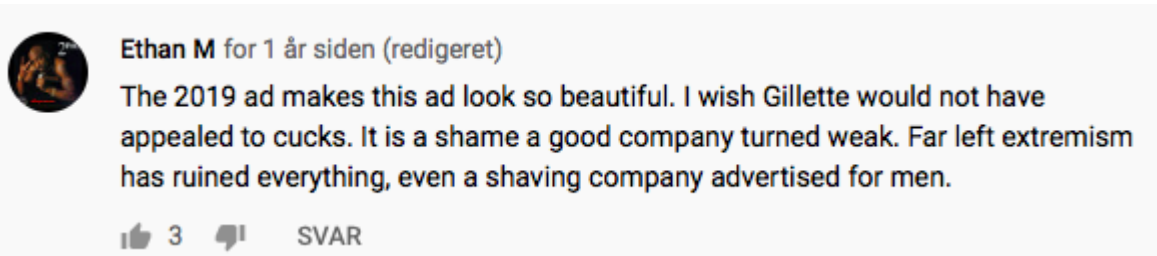


(app. 9.1.1, no. 3)

This comment is bringing the societal and political debate about racism and discrimination into the discussion, which for many years has been an ongoing topic in society, especially in the US (Averhoff et al. 2019).

The comment indicates that back when the 1989 commercial was produced, there was nothing wrong with being a white man, which he believes there is in their 2019 commercial. He draws connections to the criticism of male supremacy, however, he does not consider it an issue. Even though there is not a direct showing of race discrimination in the 2019 commercial, this viewer connects the issues of toxic masculinity and racism as one entity which seems to be interconnected.

The next comment is also blaming Gillette for their cause of actions due to political circumstances.



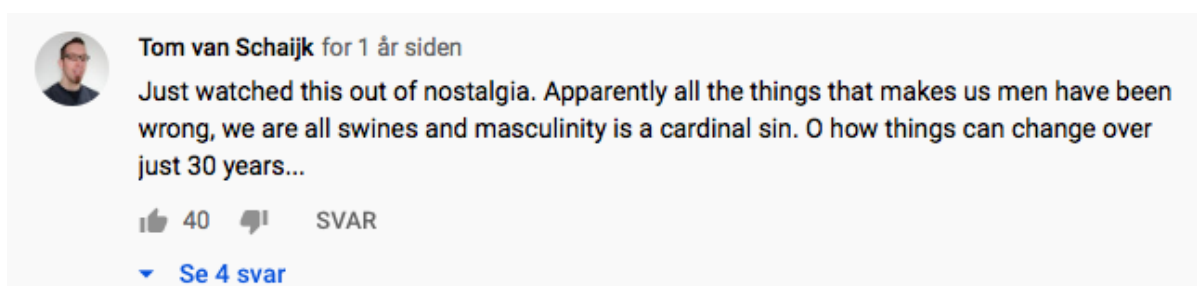
(app. 9.1.1, no. 88)

The comment indicates that is the Left-Wing Extremism<sup>9</sup> that affected Gillette's decision making and has turned them "weak". These comments are not only expressing their dissatisfaction with Gillette, but it does also turn into a mouthpiece for claiming their dissatisfaction with current politics in their society. In one way, it is possible to argue, that they are challenging societal ideologies by expressing themselves.

### Gender stereotyping

The last most mentioned theme is "Gender stereotyping" with it being mentioned 7 times. "Gender stereotyping" are comments referring to *Gillette's general continuing of gender stereotyping in different contexts* (cf. section 4.5.2).

As mentioned in the "Perception of masculinity" theme, this comment pays attention to the shift in Gillette's brand direction.



(app. 9.1.1, no. 23)

He indicates, that what is shown in the old commercial about masculinity and being a man is wrong, according to the new commercial. He accuses Gillette for gender stereotyping by lumping all men together and portraying them, to what he refers to as swines. To him, Gillette is stereotyping men as one particular character, which he feels distant from.

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<sup>9</sup> Left-Wing Extremism: "Violent leftist activism can be generally understood as striving to bring about political and social change" (Brannan 2006, 56)

The next comment also indicates that Gillette is categorizing men in a rigid manner, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.1, no. 5)

The comment uses the two commercial slogans to express Gillette's change. In the 1989 video, they showed the best a man can get, but in the 2019 commercial he understands Gillette as gender stereotyping, indicating that Gillette consider all men are toxic and rapists.

This comment does also bring up the *having/being* dimension. Gillette 1989 appeals to the *having* mode of getting what you desire, whereas Gillette 2019 are appealing to the *being* mode about being committed learning and developing into the better (cf. section 5.2.2).

### 5.3.2.2 Receiver decoding of potential Boundary Objects

The potential *boundary object* involves the *robust part*, the *solidified* interpretation made by Gillette and lastly the *plastic dimension*. The samples have been coded and disclosed in the table below. First section will show the 100 samples collected from the 2019 commercial, and the section section will show the 49 samples collected on the 1989 commercial.

Boundary Objects	Decoding of 100 samples	Decoding 49 samples
Disposition	Frequence	
<b>Robust Part</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>37</b>
Accepted	23	27
Rejected	7	6
Not mentioned	51	16
<b>Gillette's solidified interpretation</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>

Accepted	0	0
Rejected	23	27
<b>Plastic dimension</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 5i - Disposition of the receiver's interpretation of the *boundary object*.

\*The 19 irrelevant samples could not be interpreted in relation to *boundary objects*, which is why the *robust part* it does not sum up to 100.

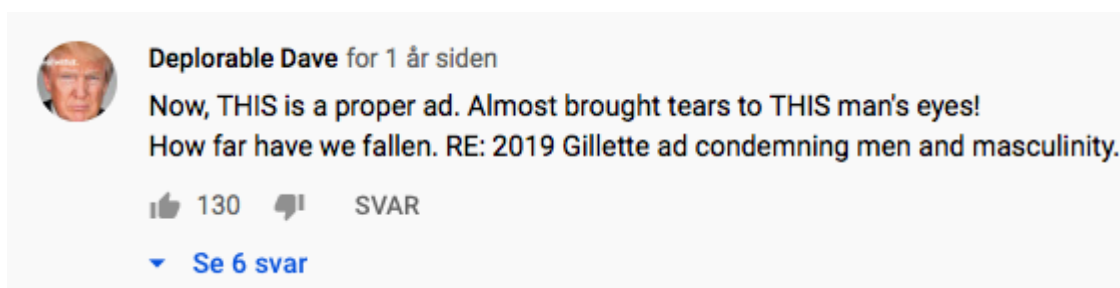
Having outlined "Achievement" with the elaborative robust part, "The best version of a man" as our potential *boundary object*, we sought to find meanings in the comments with a reference to this specific topic. The table shows, that the amount of acceptances of the *robust part* is dominating, meaning that more people are understanding the core message of the video, namely an encouragement to be "the best version of a man".

We find the numbers quite similar. A notable difference is the *plastic dimension*. Of the 100 samples, 3 have man their own *solidified* interpretation distributed as:

- Gender equality: 2
- Conservative masculinity: 1

Despite significant differences in themes, we found the two sets of samples comparable in terms of *boundary objects* which is way we have chosen to conduct one *boundary object* analysis based on both sample sets.

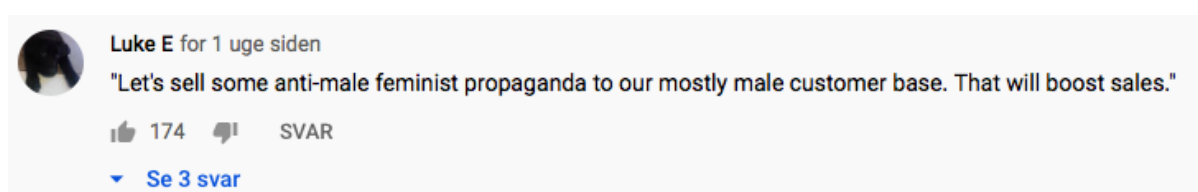
We identified the following comments, which accepts the *robust part*, meaning that they acknowledge the message Gillette is trying to embed in the video, about men should strive to be better. Yet, they disagree with Gillette's own *solidified* interpretation of how a man is actually better, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.1, no. 14)

By stating that Gillette is condemning men and masculinity by their portrayal in the commercial, he opposes their *solidified* interpretation. It is not possible to know, if it concerns both their interpretations, namely the positive projection of masculinity or their instructive deviance from what Gillette determine as toxic masculinity.

A topic frequently occurring in the comments, are referrals to women and feminism. Like it was mentioned in the descriptive analysis, the receivers utilizes women and feminism as a counter response to masculinity (cf. section 5.3.1.2), e.g.:



(app. 9.1.2, no 111).

In this comment, the receiver points out that Gillette's commercial contains "feminist propaganda". It is not possible to identify specifically what content he means to be "feminist propaganda", but in the light of the tagline of the commercial, we describe it to Gillette's portrayal of men and masculinity (cf. section 4.3.1). This receiver makes a clear distinction between feminist line of thought and masculinity, and that one excludes the other. By assigning Gillette's interpretation to be "feminist propaganda", he acknowledges the main question of what constitutes real and correct masculinity, which is a type of masculinity that does not acknowledge feminism as essential. By taking a stand of what he believes masculinity is not, he rejects Gillette's *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*, "The best version of a man". By that he challenges the meaning of the *robust part*, but he fails to suggest his own *solidified* interpretation to substitute Gillette's.

Here is another example of a receiver that accepts the *robust part*, but rejects Gillette's solidified interpretation:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 125)

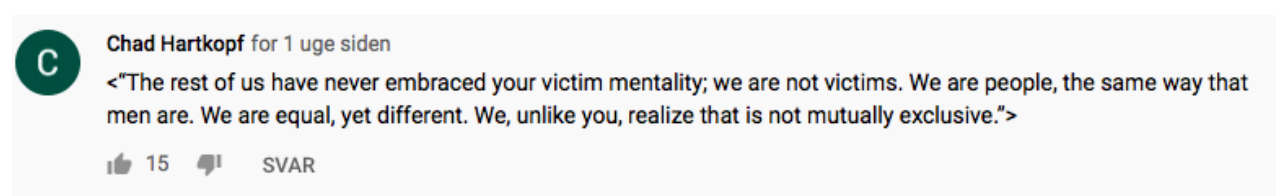


In this example, the receiver rejects Gillette's *solidified* interpretation about toxic masculinity, and how Gillette is connecting it to bad behavior and a negative image of masculinity. The comment is weighing the amount of masculinity versus femininity as a crucial factor. He or she claims, that toxic masculinity is not the problem, but the lack of masculinity is. This is not only a challenging of the meaning of the *robust part*, but also an attempt to replace the meaning. The receiver suggests a new plastic interpretation, namely that increased masculinity would constitute the best version of a man. This sort of masculinity we believe to be categorized as a "conservative idea of masculinity", since it eliminates the chance of toxic masculinity actually being a real problem. It constitutes that the big influence of women is degrading masculinity and prevents it from flourishing.

It is possible to argue that both interpretations (no. 111 and no. 125), aligns with one of Gillette's *solidified* interpretation of masculinity, namely the one linking healthy masculinity to authority and determination (c.f. section 5.3.2). This idea of traditional masculinity draws connections to the old-fashioned perception of gender roles, which Gillette seems to maintain (cf. section 2.2). It gives men a "hero" role in terms of being problem solvers.

Despite this indirect cohesion with one of Gillette's *solidified* interpretations (cf. section 5.2.3), the receivers highly dissociate one from Gillette's other determined meaning of instructing men, what not to do. Their definition of what determines toxic masculinity, is rejected by the receivers, and makes them disagree with the meaning of *robust part* all together.

The next two examples are also focusing on both genders, but with special emphasis on gender equality e.g.:

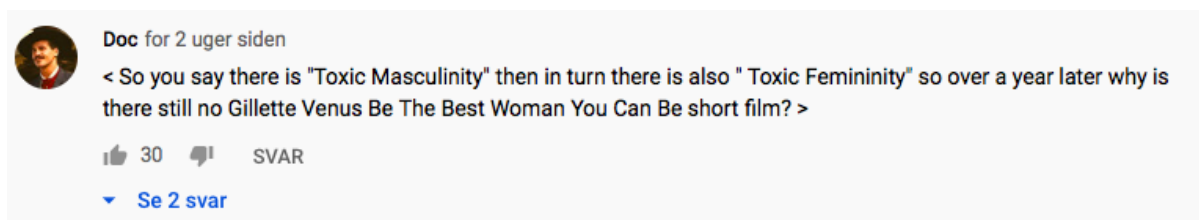


(app. 9.1.2, no. 141)

This comment focuses on the inequality between men and women and emphasizes the authority role Gillette claims to be masculine, or moreover owned by men. It is a strong disagreement to the way Gillette has chosen to portray men as the solution to the problem, due to their heroism and determination (cf. section 5.2.2) (cf. section 5.2.3). This comment offers its own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*, "The best version of a man", as a way of signaling that women do not need rescue from men in spite of differences in gender. They

should not be treated as victims, they should be considered equals. This is a strong contradiction to Gillette's own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*, that relies on authority and determination as primus motor for a positive and healthy masculinity (cf. section 5.2.3).

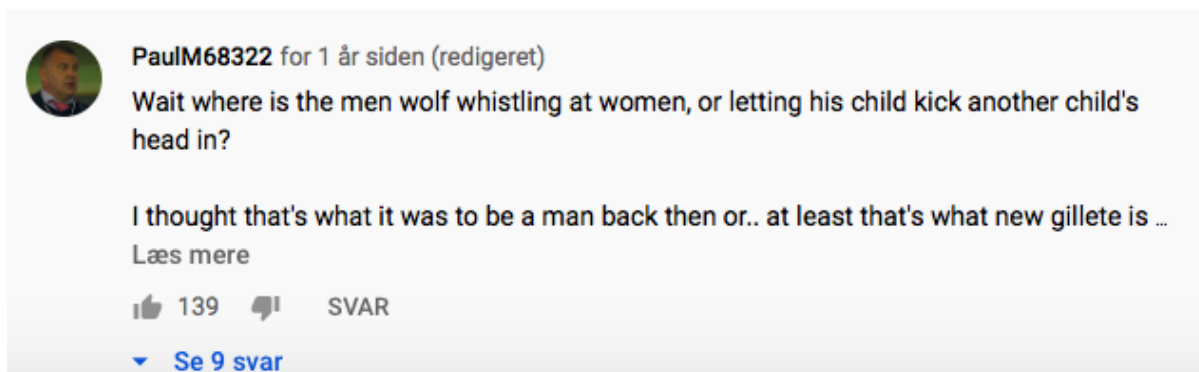
The emphasis on gender inequality is also underlined in the comment below, yet this comment proclaims the unrighteousness of displaying men and not women:



(app. 9.1.2, no. 157)

This comments stresses that if men should be corrected in terms of behavior, women should too. The themes of "Deliberated masculinity" and "Gender stereotyping" are present, because the receiver does not interpret the masculinity as being non-existent, but as incorrectly connected to a certain behavior. He argues that the toxic behavior is not linked to masculinity, like Gillette claims, despite their attempt of manifesting it as a negative construct of masculinity. In this case, this receiver is trying to challenge the *robust part* by stating, that the toxic behavior is gender free and does not only concern men. His own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part* is, "Gender equality", that men and women are equal in terms of trying to be their best selves.

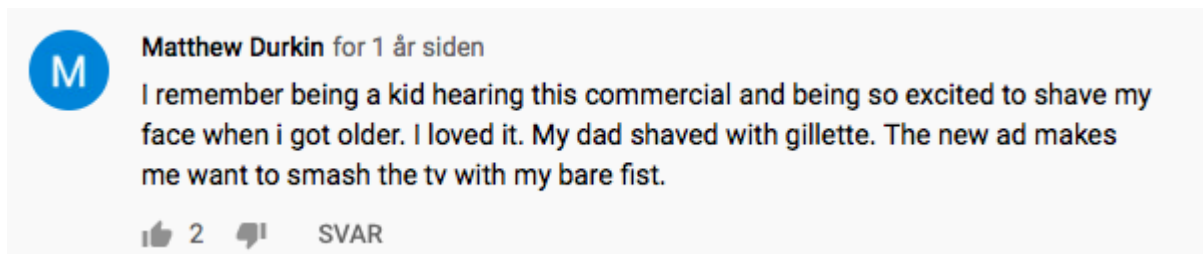
This comment contains the themes of "Deliberated masculinity" and "Gender stereotyping", which were often seen to be collaborative, e.g.:



(app. 9.1.1, no. 11)

This receiver states with sarcasm, that the scenarios of fighting and sexual harassment are not some standardized behavior amongst men. Like in the previous example, the receiver is trying to challenge Gillette's *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*, however, he lacks to offer a substitute interpretation.

An example of a rejection of the *robust part* is seen in the following example:



We identified the sentence, “*The new ad makes me want to smash the tv with my bare fist*” as being a rejection of the *boundary object* in the 2019 commercial. We interpret the rejection due to the missing emphasis of the *robust part*, in spite of the comment indicating an opinion towards the commercial content (cf. section 4.5.2). The receiver fails to explain why he dislikes the new commercial. He draws connections to the old commercial by showing affection towards it and hereby implicitly criticizing Gillette’s change of brand direction. However, the *robust part*, “The best version of a man”, and Gillette’s determined meaning of it, is not being referred to at any point as being reasoning for his criticism.

Even though this example is coded as a rejection, we recognize the opportunity for alternate readings. In spite that the comment does not indicate a written referral to the *robust part*, it cannot be settled that the receiver does not understand or consider it, however the *boundary object* deviates (cf. section 4.5.2).

The lack of *plastic interpretations* for both the comments made about the 2019 commercial implies that the receivers are not able to constructively challenge the ideology Gillette is manifesting. They are criticizing Gillette’s approach, however, the majority does not suggest another *solidified* interpretation of what constitutes the best version of a man, and therefore the hegemony is not changing. Gillette is receiving criticism, but the message is still the same and a new alternate message is not offered to replace it.

### 5.3.3 Summary and comparison

Our analysis of our sampled receiver responses showed widely different results, from the receiver decoding of Gillette “Best a Man Can Get” 1989 to Gillette “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” 2019. The receivers of the Gillette 1989 commercial did primarily position themselves in consensus and none were in dissensus, whereas the receivers of the 2019 commercial were mainly in the dissensus position and no one were in dissensus.

It became clear that the themes mentioned in the comments were quite different, depending on whether the comments were made on the 1989 commercial or the 2019 commercial.

The comments made on the 1989 commercial was more focused on the actual story and content of the commercial, whereas the comments made on the 2019 commercial were more often shorter, sarcastic and focused on other aspects, such as financial costs of the commercial or Gillette’s business ethics.

Almost half the comments made on the 1989 commercial did also make references to the 2019 commercial and questioning why Gillette would change something that was already working. That made “Perception of masculinity” and “Change of brand direction” the most emphasized themes in the comments made on the 1989 commercial.

34 of the 100 comments accepted the *robust part*, “Getting the best as a man” of the *boundary object*, “Achievement” in the 1989 commercial. 31 of them also accepted Gillette’s *solidified* interpretations, “Competition, success, family, professional life and sports” (cf. section 5.2.3). By not only did they agree with the *solidified* interpretations of Gillette, they also offered their own meanings to define the *robust part* such as, being a good father or having success in your job.

The comments made on the 2019 video was focusing on other aspects beside the actual content and storyline of the commercial. That meaning that the most mentioned themes were “Economic dimension” and “Brand authenticity”. The receivers stressed the fact, that the commercial was not worth the amount of money that was spent on creating it, as well as the suspicion and accusations that Gillette was manipulating the feedback of the commercial.

The comments which focused on the contents of the commercial emphasized, that Gillette was not portraying the “best version of a man”. The 49 comments from the 1989 commercial, commenting on the content of the 2019 commercial, provided us more interpretations of the actual contents of the commercial. In most comments, that concerned the contents of the commercial, the main theme was again “Perception of masculinity”. There were made several connections to women and feminism, which was used to show a contrast to masculinity. All comments concerning this theme disagreed with Gillette’s portrayal of men and masculinity.

These were all examples of rejections of Gillette's *solidified* interpretations of what constitutes healthy and unhealthy masculinity (cf. section 5.2.3). Despite the rejections, the receivers accepted the *robust part*, "Being the best version of a man" of the boundary object, "Achievement", but majority failed to present their own *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*. The few *solidified interpretations* concerned gender equality and conservative masculinity.

## 5.4 Decoding the Gillette commercials in Mass Media

As a part of our decoding analysis, we will now conduct our analysis of four news articles about the 2019 "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be" commercial, written by respectively, The New York Times, Fox News, Glamour and Esquire.

### 5.4.1 The New York Times

Our first article is from the liberal news media, The New York Times (Allsides 2020). It has the headline *Gillette Ad With a #MeToo Edge Attracts Support and Outrage* (app. 9.2.1). The headline indicates a objective position and portrayal of the commercial to its readers. They are concrete in terms of saying the commercial has a "Me too" perspective, and also emphasizing that the commercial has received both positive and negative feedback (app. 9.2.1). However, they are not indicating their own position towards the topic

This way of portraying the commercial is seen through most of the article. However, they have made more room for the explanation of the outrage rather than the support.

*"The ad, developed by Gillette's advertising agency, Grey, was defended and praised by the actress Rosanna Arquette, the comedian Pete Dominick, the screenwriter and director Jeffrey Reddick, Arianna Huffington and others"* (app. 9.2.1). This is what we get introduced to regarding the support, a few famous people who have defended the commercial, but it does not state how and why.

When it comes to the outrage, we are shown quotes and social media post from both famous and common people, stating their opinion towards Gillette and their commercial. The quotes and social media post are shedding light on themes, like Gillette going against their target audience, condemning men and continuing gender stereotyping (app. 9.2.1).

The New York Times are drawing attention to the huge amount of dislikes the commercial has received on YouTube by stating *"On YouTube, the ad has been liked more than 1,700 times."*

*But it received more than 10,000 thumbs down votes” (app. 9.2.1), and how their competitors have mocked commercial and its outcome. That is followed by how Procter and Gamble and other companies have been taking a position and inserted themselves into discussions about contentious issues, and lastly, how competitors recently are gaining market share whereas Gillette is losing (app. 9.2.1).*

It is therefore clear that The New York Times have brought more attention to the negative outcome of the commercial than the positive. However, they have done it an objective manner, where it seems more as a retell of the outcome, than their own opinion about the commercial, which is hiding their bias. An example hereof is:

*“The television personality Piers Morgan railed on Twitter about the ad, calling it “pathetic,” “virtue-signaling” and “a direct consequence of radical feminists” who are “driving a war against masculinity.” He said he had used Gillette razors for his entire adult life but, like the actor James Woods, was considering jumping ship” (app. 9.2.1)*

Hereby, The New York Times state that it is not their own opinion, however they are implicitly affecting their readers with a negative consideration about the commercial.

By analysing this article, we can identify that it has certain connections to our coding scheme category and the responses on YouTube. The New York Times are bringing up the themes “Perception of masculinity”, “Gender stereotyping”, “Economic dimension”, “Political”, “Change of brand direction” and “Brand authenticity”, which shows us that the media interpret the same themes as the receivers on YouTube (cf. section 5.3).

The article by The New York Times also support that Gillette have not succeeded with constituting a *boundary object* in their commercial. With the majority of the article mentioning the negative outcome, The New York Times has not accepted the *solidified* interpretation of Gillette, or at least they are not deciding to show it. By not expressing their own opinion and alternatives hereof, they are not making their own *solidified* interpretations either and thereby not challenging the ideology highlighted by Gillette. The negativity in the article supports that the *boundary object* “Achievement” and the *robust part* “the best version of a man” being too determined and negative, which does not leave room for individual interpretation. Instead, people are getting offended by their portrayal and that is overshadowing the good intended message of the commercial.

### 5.4.2 Fox News

Our second article is from the conservative media, Fox News (cf. section 4.3.3), who has named their article “*Well, America, Gillette's idiotic ad may have finally turned the tide on 'toxic masculinity'*”. As the headline already indicates, Fox News is explicit and subjective in there way of interpreting and portraying the commercial.

The article criticizes Gillette of belittling men, treating half of the population as monsters, going against their target audience and being double standard (app. 9.2.2.) Fox News are not only showing critique of the commercial through others by also by themselves.

It is very clear that Fox News is an opponent of the commercial by staying “*The worst part of the commercial is...*” and “*the bad behavior of corporate salesmen treating half of the population as monsters*” (app 9.2.2). Furthermore, they are arguing that men in general are being barraged with criticism, and that is in spite of them performing the most dangerous jobs and are getting killed by defending and fighting for the country (app. 9.2.2.).

Moreover, they are arguing that Gillette is wrong by saying men should be better, because the boys are watching. Their answer to that is “*Yes, kids are watching men portrayed as bumbling idiots in so many ads and as violent misogynists in this one*” (app. 9.2.2.).

Fox News are referring to many of same coding scheme categories, including “Perception of masculinity”, “Gender stereotyping” and “Change of brand direction”. From their article, it is clear they have a *conservative idea of masculinity and gender roles* (cf. section 4.5.2). They do not find anything wrong in the behavior Gillette criticizes, and distance themselves from new aspects and perceptions of masculinity and alternative ways to portray them (cf. section 4.6.2).

Fox News is accepting the *robust part* of the *boundary object* which is “The best version a man” but reject Gillette’s *solidified* interpretations. They acknowledge that the message is about men behaving their best, and that Gillette wanted to start a conversation about that, however they reject it, e.g. by the statement, “*No, what we need is to stop insulting men. We can’t elevate women by knocking men down.*” (app. 9.2.2). Fox News are in this statement also making their own *solidified* interpretation of what constitutes the best version of a man, and it it not done by correcting the actions Gillette are referring to as toxic masculinity. They do not reject the thought of inequality between men and women, or that women are sometimes being mistreated because of their gender. They are simply partially arguing what should be done instead, namely that men are not the problem, and the solution should be found elsewhere.

By Fox News' portrayal and construction of their article, is really explicit and they are determining a really strong meaning of the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, hence their own *solidified* interpretations. Their opinion towards the content is determined, e.g. by statements like, "*Gillette implores men to be better because kids are watching*"(app. 9.2.2.), followed by the almost insulting statement like, "*Yes, kids are watching men portrayed as bumbling idiots in so many ads and as violent misogynists in this one*"(app. 9.2.2.).

In the case of Fox News, Gillette's *boundary object* of the commercial was successfully constituted, due to the media's acknowledgement of the *robust part* and their belonging *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part*, namely being that traditional male behavior should not be criticized or judged.

### 5.4.3 Glamour

We have chosen the global American magazine, Glamour, to represent a female perspective on the Gillette commercial (cf. section 5.4.3).

The article introduces the commercial by briefly explaining the plot, with emphasis on the original intent of the message encoded by Gillette, "*The commercial depicts physical fighting, a quick but perfect demonstration of mansplaining, and catcalling—along with the usual excuses of "boys will be boys"—followed by human decency prevailing, whether it's men breaking up said fights or intervening in sexual harassment. The ultimate lesson: Teach the next generation of boys to be a little more decent.*" (app. 9.2.3). This is continued later in the text, "*Doesn't that sound nice—and sort of how you'd want to raise your kids, anyway? Not really, according to certain men of the Internet.*" (app. 9.2.3).

This section acknowledges the existence of the problems in society portrayed by Gillette, which has certain connections to our coding scheme theme, "Deliberated masculinity" (cf. section 4.5.2). Glamour sees toxic masculinity, mansplaining etc. as actual existing problems, which should be solved in the future. In "Deliberated masculinity", we identify the general acknowledgement of this behavior and that it should not be tolerated, however, the people falling into this category feels generalized and stigmatized due to the connection to overall masculinity (cf. section 4.5.2).

Glamour states, that the message of raising young boys to be responsible adults sounds appealing to them, and afterwards they target the individuals who disagree with the commercial but now also, according to Glamour, disagrees with their interpretation of the commercial (app. 9.2.3).



The article includes Twitter posts, representing both opponents and supporters of Gillette and their commercial, examples among these are Piers Morgan, TV personality and Chrissy Teigen, model. Before showing Piers Morgan's' opposing Twitter post, they refer to him as an misogynist<sup>10</sup>, who reveals a biased intake on his opinions and statements (app 9.2.3). It sheds light on him as an insensitive male, who was offended because Gillette decides to take a stand on relevant social issues, of which he distances from.

Besides from Piers Morgan, they show several other Twitter posts which criticizes the commercial, but they avoid commenting on them further. They shift afterwards to showing Twitter posts of people, who have decided to defend Gillette, which is the last impression you get to have before they wrap up the article with this quote:

*"The heart of this effort is a desire to see men at their best and highlight the positive examples they set for the next generation," says the brand via a spokesperson. "We believe in the best in men—and we want to show that. We believe in men as positive role models. We believe in men who lead with respect and inclusion. We believe in men who are doing everything they can to raise the next generation in the best way they can."* (app. 9.2.3).

The article leaves the following statement to this quote, which is also the final sentences of the article, *"We can't argue with that. And despite the backlash and inevitable boycott, it's nice to see a men's shaving brand taking a stance."* (app. 9.2.3)

The tone of the article states, that Glamour Magazine defends Gillette as a brand and their commercial's content and encoded message. They highlight the intended message of the commercial alongside with their own interpretation, and indirectly criticize opponents for not agreeing upon this interpretation (app. 9.2.3). By this and given that Glamour emphasizes the agreement upon men should listen and learn from this, we can conclude that Glamour is both accepting the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, but also Gillette's *solidified interpretation* which makes the *boundary object* successfully constituted.

#### 5.4.4 Esquire

Our last article is from the magazine, Esquire, which provides us a male perspective on the commercial (cf. section 5.4.4).

Esquire begin their article with the headline *"Gillette's New Ad Is a Big Step for Men's Grooming. We Still Need a Giant Leap"* and shortly after they start their article with the core

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<sup>10</sup> Misogynist: "Someone with an exaggerated aversion towards women" (Glosbe 2020)

question, *“It the best a man can get?”* with their answer *“not really. At least not yet”* (app. 9.2.4). Esquire continues with explaining the plot, with emphasis on the original intent by Gillette and acknowledge the problem (app. 9.2.4).

Esquires brings up Gillette’s earlier advertising and mentioned them as *“a major contributor to the pervasiveness of toxic masculinity in American culture”* (app. 9.2.4) by e.g. in their commercial from 2013 where they encourage men to use Gillette products *“because they will totally get you laid, bruh”* (app. 9.2.4). This has connections to our coding theme, “Change of brand direction” from a positive position (cf. section 4.5.2). Esquire admires Gillette for acknowledging their missteps in the past, however arguing that Gillette has to *“keep dismantling the pervasive, hyper-masculine tropes of grooming marketing”* to make it reliable and not receive another backfire (app. 9.2.4).

Here, it can be seen that Esquire express their own subjective opinion about the commercial. However, they are also including the famous twitter post by Piers Morgan, who they mention as a *“undercooked blob of bloviating doug”* (app. 9.2.4), and as well referring to the huge amount of dislikes on YouTube. They argue that these elements are showing that many are not ready for Gillette’s shift in brand direction. This is not only based on the individual consumer, but also because many companies are contributing to the problem of continuing the old-fashioned portrayal of masculinity and gender stereotyping (app. 9.2.4). Esquire’s perception of masculinity has connections to our coding theme of showing “Agrees with portrayed masculinity” (cf. section 4.5.2).

Esquire sums up their article with the following conclusion:

*“We, the guys who are watching these ads and buying these products and helping shape the world around us and the next generation of men, we need to do better too. And considering the massive negative reaction to an advertisement that essentially just asks us to be decent members of society, we’re not there yet”* (app. 9.2.4).

This quote supports the entire article of Esquire acknowledging the existence of the problems in society portrayed by Gillette. Their opinion is not expressed through others, but with their own explicit interpretation. It also supports that Esquire is accepting both the *robust part* and Gillette’s *solidified* interpretation of the *boundary object*. They are not highly praising Gillette for their commercial and its contents, but they are acknowledging their attempt of trying to make an example, and help moving the culture past *“a now outdated boys will be boys mentality”*, but with a critical point of view (app. 9.2.4). Esquire is very much aligned with the *being* culture, where you seek deeper learning, committed to one thing, and act from a critical perspective (cf. section 4.2.2).

In the case of Esquire, we can conclude that the constituted *boundary object* by Gillette was successful.

#### 5.4.4 Summary and comparison

In this section we will compare the analysis of the two political news media, New York Times and Fox News, and the two media representing a gender perspective, Glamour and Esquire.

##### Comparison of political perspectives

This analysis has provided us a perspective from each political conviction, conservative and liberal. Comparing the two interpretations and portrayal of the commercial in the respective articles, it is clear that the liberal New York Times and the conservative Fox News are different in terms of agreeing or disagreeing with Gillette's own determined meaning of the *robust part*, "The best version of a man".

The only way they are similar is by both leaving way more space for the negative feedback of the commercial than the positive. Except that, they are interpreting and portraying the commercial differently.

Fox News is way more subjective than The New York Times, who one might question for explicitly sharing their opinion though others to appear more objective. Fox News does not hide their opinion, but instead they very extrovert by their use dramatic wording and statements about how the commercial it is belittling men. They are taking up a discussion with Gillette and bringing in points of how men in particular are fighting for the country. They are definitely supporters of men and conservative masculinity. Whereas The New York Times are more passive with their own voice towards the issue and avoids implementing a discussion about masculinity and feminism like Fox News.

Fox News has definitely been more offended by the commercial, which can be due to their social world/political conviction (cf. section 4.3). They accept Gillette's *robust part* by acknowledging what the commercial is about but rejects Gillette's *solidified* interpretation. However they have made their own *solidified* interpretation of the commercial that is challenging Gillette's highlighted ideology.

The New York Times has portrayed the commercial more objectively, however still with a underlying negativity. It can be argued, that this negativity makes them reject the *solidified* interpretations by Gillette, however, it is not sure to state.

## Comparison of gender perspectives

This analysis has provided us a stance on the Gillette commercial from both a female and male perspective. Comparing the two interpretations and portrayals of the commercials, the two articles are quite similar.

They are both showing people's opinion about the commercial and as well as expressing their own. They are generally agreeing with Gillette and their portrayal of men in the commercial, but still with a few critical viewpoints in regard to the content of the commercial.

As the two medias agree in Gillette's meaning of how men should become better versions of themselves, we can conclude they are appealed by the *being* mode. The two media agree that we should be better, not only ourselves, but also for society.

The comparison of the two media, representing gender, has surprisingly showed us to be very similar. Esquire, the male media, was not been offended by Gillette's portrayal of men in the commercial. Instead they understood the message of men striving to better, both for themselves and others, and encouraged their readers to accept the message and listen. Glamour, our media representing a female perspective, praised Gillette for their stance and agreed with their message as well. Our media representing a perspective of each gender was highly comparable, opposing to our two media from each political conviction.

This is an interesting point for our discussion of our results, however, it is also important to remember that the outcome could have been different with a selection of other medias within each of the four categories.

## 6 Discussion

In this section, we will discuss our analysis results by making a comparison between Gillette and Nike's constitution of *boundary objects* in all four commercials. We will also discuss our results in relation to our theory and make suggestions on how the results of this study can be implicated in practical use.

### 6.1 Comparison of Gillette's and Nike's constitution of Boundary Objects 1988/1989 and today

Through our analysis, we found the constitution of boundary objects to be significantly different in the new commercials, and quite similar in the old commercials. This distinction will now be discussed through two overall comparisons of respectively the "Best a Man Can Get"

commercial and the “Just Do It” commercial, followed by a comparison of the “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” commercial and the “Dream Crazy” campaign.

### Constitution of Boundary Objects Nike 1988 and Gillette 1989

Gillette 1989 and Nike 1988 had overall similarities in terms of their implication of *boundary objects*. With the elaborated *robust parts*, “Achieving physical superiority” and “Getting the best as a man”, both commercials draw focus on the notion of *having* (cf. section 5.2.1).

Gillette's early commercial is not implicated by CPA, since it does not take a stand on any conflict or raises any controversial questions in relation to society or politics. Nike on the other hand, deals with ageism in their commercial, which makes them practitioners of CPA from the very beginning (cf. section 5.1.1) (cf. section 2.1).

We found that Nike's *solidified* interpretation, “Physical power in spite of high age” of the *robust part* was implicit, as it was not stated anywhere visually or auditorily in the commercial. Thereby, Nike leaves space for different interpretations of what physical superiority is to the receivers, whether it might be determination to run every day, how long you run or something completely different. The question of age, hereby Nike's *solidified* interpretation, lies implicit in the message, which we assume makes the *boundary object* successfully constituted (cf. section 5.2.1). To prove this success, we would have to carry out a decoding analysis of receiver responses, which we were not able to do in this study.

The receivers of Gillette 1989 were in general positioned in consensus towards the commercial, and almost half of our relevant samples showed an acceptance of the *robust part* of the *boundary object*, namely, “Getting the best as a man” (cf. section 5.3.1.2). Besides, accepting the *robust part*, almost all samples agreeing with the *robust part*, also agreed with Gillette's *solidified* interpretation, “Competition, success, family, professional life and sports”, as elements that defines what a real achievement is to men (cf. section 5.2.3)(cf. section 5.3.1.2). The receivers frequently demonstrated their own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*, by specifically highlighting, e.g. successful family life as a true achievement, being fit or performing well on the job (cf. section 5.3.1.2).

Gillette's commercial induced a successful constitution of the *boundary object*, “Achievement”. Our samples showed a high amount of acceptance of the *robust part* as well as a demonstration of their individual perceptions. Not alone was there a high acceptance of Gillette's *solidified* interpretations as well. In this case, the individual perceptions were not

challenging the *robust part*, but rather reinforcing it. The receivers agreed with Gillette's ideology, and did not attempt to reorganize the hegemonic order (cf. section 5.3.1.2).

### Gillette's constitution of Boundary Objects 2019

Our descriptive analysis and our analysis of mass media articles has shown us that Gillette's change in brand direction is a topic which is difficult to avoid (cf. section 5.3.1) (cf. section 5.4). The contrast is significant, since their 1989 commercial sticks to a generalized perception of masculinity, and what is associated with being a man. They favor sports and Wall Street business, as being accurate examples for a real man's success, leaving out the portrayal of other perceptions of manhood and masculinity. The shift from promoting "traditional" masculinity, to suddenly criticize a behavior that Gillette associates with toxic masculinity, is a drastic shift of how to portray men (cf. section 5.2.4)

The 1989 commercial has become a token for Gillette's previous image and identity. It underlines the large contrast, which we also assume to be the reason for the many receivers going back to the old commercial to state their opinion about the 2019 commercial. This was an interesting factor, since we could detect several more contemplated meanings towards the contents of the commercial, than in the samples we collected from the 2019 commercial.

The comments had high emphasis on the perception of masculinity and change of brand direction (cf. section 5.3.2.1). This, also including the comments which were made on the 2019 commercial, even though the frequency was not as high in terms of these topics. They showed different perceptions of masculinity, namely some being supporters of a traditional aspect of masculinity, while others embraced new notions, yet still they felt stigmatized by Gillette's meaning of what the best version of a man was (cf. section 5.3.2.2). Another aspect in the discussion of masculinity, were the reference to femininity and feminism as a counter response to what true masculinity is. This means that there is still a big gap in terms of gender roles and what behavior is considered male and female (cf. section 5.3.2.1) (cf. section 2.2). Finally, there was the topic of Gillette changing their brand direction. This became the soil for inducing anger and frustration at the consumers towards Gillette and their decision on changing their narrative.

This causes, that Gillette faces resistance in their battle of trying to empower equality and promoting anti gender stereotypical behavior. This attempt is obvious in their way of explicitly distancing themselves from sexual harassment and objectification of women. However, the paradox appears in their way of making men the problem of the story, whilst also making them the problem solver. It is the men's task to solve these problems regarding toxic masculinity and sexist behavior, resulting in an indirect degrading of women and their ability to stand up

for themselves. Gillette is linking healthy masculinity with authority determination and heroism. This is basically a stagnation of the old-fashioned gender roles they have portrayed in their old commercial, in spite of their attempt of proving otherwise (cf. section 2.2) (cf. section 5.2.1).

In their portrayal of right and wrong masculinity, Gillette is showing two sides of the same coin. They are filling the gap with double interpretations of how a man should walk and talk to be the best a man can be (cf. section 5.2.2). By showing both sides to this urging, they are leaving no open space for interpretation, instead they are strongly adding meaning to the *robust part*. Gillette is showing their own *solidified* interpretations so explicitly, that it decreases the receiver's opportunities for making their own *solidified* interpretations, and hereby it decreases their opportunity to challenge their ideology. It is an approach that is closer to *agonistic pluralism* and CPA, and further away from *boundary objects*.

However, by criticizing Gillette's determined meaning, they are still managing to challenge the meaning of the *robust part*, e.g. by saying their portrayal of men is feministic. By doing so, they still attempt to challenge the hegemony, but their attempt is vaguer due to the missing counter interpretation. This lack of *solidified* interpretations from the receivers, and strong rejections of the interpretations offered by Gillette, leads us to conclude that the constituted *boundary object* of Gillette has failed (cf. section 3.2).

Gillette 1989 is appealing to the *having* consumer culture, whereas the 2019 commercial is more focusing on the *being* (cf. section 5.2.4). The problems shown in the 2019 commercial are very explicit by getting visually shown and told how to behave and how not to behave. This is not aligned with the *being* mode of seeking deep learning and critical thinking. This can be an reason to many receivers in dissensus and not accepting the *boundary object* (cf. section 3.2).

### Nike's constitution of Boundary Objects 2018

An important distinction between the responses to Gillette 2019 and Nike 2018, is the focus on the *solidified* interpretations being significantly different.

What makes the difference in Nike's use of *boundary objects* contrary to Gillette, is Nike's disparity in terms of robustness and plasticity. Nike chose to keep their own *solidified* interpretations of "Achievement" and "Sacrifice" implicit. That resulted in the receivers increased focus on their own *solidified* interpretation, rather than spending their focus devaluating Nike's *solidified* interpretations (cf. section 5.4.1). The comments stated their disagreement to the notion of what a sacrifice is, although, it was not taking up focus in the comment. The *boundary object* does not only offer the opportunity of consensus, it does also offer the opportunity of challenging the hegemonic order, by questioning the ideologies

portrayed by the sender (cf. section 3.2). So, in Nike's case, opposing receivers were questioning if Nike's ideology of giving up a carrier in the name justice, is really a sacrifice? Nike is showing prime examples of sport, encouragement and the idea of the American Dream (cf. section 5.1.2). Elements which lead to inspire and being open for different perceptions, and not to mention positive reflections. They were being implicit about their own *solidified* interpretation, that it was worth the sacrifice of Kaepernick's career for him to fight racism amongst American police forces. The overall acceptance of the *robust part* of Nike aligned with the *solidified* interpretations both in favor and against Nike's own meanings, lead us to conclude the *boundary objects* of Nike as successfully constituted.

Nike are not using this *having/being* dimension explicitly as Gillette, where it is an implemented part of the two commercial headlines (cf. section 4.3.1).

Nike is showing individual successes of becoming the best. This appeals to the *having* consumer culture. Oppose to the *having* mode where you are not doing more than absolutely necessary to pass, the *being* culture are doing more than expected and being are aware of the hard gains (cf. section 5.2.2). This is also aligned with the commercial when showing the athletes getting up every time they fail. Gillette appealing only to the *being* culture and Nike to both the *being* and *having* culture, can be connected to Nike offering the common ground and unifying people, which has resulted up being as essential part of the successful constitution of boundary object.

## 6.2 Theoretical implications

We will now discuss our analysis results in relation to our theories.

Gillette did not manage to constitute a successful *boundary object* in their 2019 commercial due to their own *solidified* interpretation influencing and determining the *robust part* and made no room for individual interpretation. They made a commercial with distinct meaning, and did not offer any common ground to reconcile, which is very much in alignment with the theory of CPA as well as *agonistic pluralism* (cf. section 2.1). Talking a stand and performing CPA, should not have the goal to please everybody, as our analysis has also have shown.

Their change in brand direction, due to the implementation of CPA in their strategy, is challenging their reputation. The key points of CPA is about portraying your corporate values. The sudden change of Gillette's' values, created difficulties for the receivers in order to accept them and find them reliable. This is shown in both our samples from YouTube and our mass



media where receivers argue, Gillette are contradicting themselves. Both regarding their change in brand identity, but also in their shown values. Gillette publicly tells men how to behave and how not to behave, bases on their view of correct masculinity. Their change in values due to their performance of CPA, might have been easier accepted by their consumers, if they had a clear consistency of CPA throughout the years.

Gillette raising controversy is really aligning with the theory of *agonistic pluralism*, since the directness of Gillette's message encourages conflict and confrontation which not is the aim for an *boundary object* (cf. section 3.1). However, where the problem occurs with *agonistic pluralism* in relation to Gillette, is in the discontinuation of conversation with the receivers, as we could see in the category "Brand authenticity". Gillette is accused of manipulating data, and also deleting responses to the commercial, which is an intense contradiction to the *agonistic* approach (cf. section 3.1). This is as well contradicting their statement, of wanting to start a conversation with their consumers.

In spite of this notion, of Gillette manipulating consumer feedback, it is possible to define their approach as consisting of CPA with an *agonistic* point of departure. This approach might lead to more conflict, and perhaps antagonism, but it is considered in alignment with CPA.

Nike has been implementing CPA in their advertising for many years, by highlighting social and political controversy to support minorities of society and supporting Kaepernick. By that it is possible to state that Nike is stagnating in terms of development, whereas Gillette is improving. Even though Kaepernick is the front figure of the 2019 campaign, his story was not the focus in the video. Instead we are introduced to only positive and outstanding examples of athletes achieving their goal in spirit of the American Dream. Nike made a successful constitution of *boundary objects* with less *solidified* interpretations of the *robust part* and offering a common ground in terms of a *robust part* that is open for interpretation, which agrees with the theory of *boundary objects*. By these means, it is possible to conclude that Nike is using the ground notions of CPA, yet they are softening the confrontation by the constitution of *boundary objects*. Nike is taking a stance by supporting Kaepernick and thereby supporting the fight against racism, however they are reconciling and suggesting a solution to the conflict of racism, by stating in their commercial, that you should be able to achieve anything in spite of any obstacles.

## 6.3 Practical implication

From a business perspective, it can be discussed what is the most effective approach to execute. Based on our data and the public outcome of respectively, Nike and Gillette, the commercial by Nike has had the most success (cf. section 6.1).

We have identified that an essential element of succeeding with the constitution of *boundary objects*, is the brand's own *solidified* interpretation of the *robust part*. It is crucial that the *solidified* interpretation is rather implicit than explicit, to succeed in constituting a successful *boundary object*. If the interpretation is too distinctive, it will eliminate the room for individual interpretations. Depending on the position towards the overall message, such an elimination will make the receivers devalue the brand's *solidified* interpretation rather than making their own *solidified* interpretations (cf. section 5.3.3)

Due to our results, we suggest that inflicting *boundary objects* to the communicative strategy and hereby having a softer approach to the performance CPA, might be more effective than performing CPA with the approach *agonistic pluralism* (cf. section 6.2).

When it comes to making an actual political stance, we conclude that Gillette is successful. Gillette is not unifying people by letting other topics overshadowing the actual conflict. Instead, they show a clear position towards what they believe should be done and not be done (cf. section 5.2.2). However, their previous brand identity confuses the consumers.

It is not all companies that succeed in telling a story in a commercial. If a core story is not closely tied into a company's brand, it is very difficult to achieve success with the commercial (cf. section 4.5.1). With Gillette's change, their core story might not be completely implemented yet. There might be a large gap of Gillette's self-perception and the public's perception of them. This will have a negative effect on the commercial since it will be difficult to understand the meaning and identify with the core story (cf. section 4.5.1).

## 7 Conclusion

Gillette's CPA oriented commercial, "The Best Men Can Be" from 2019, sheds light on the controversies of toxic masculinity and the "Me Too" movement, in a storyline that encourages men to do better. By the practical implication of *boundary objects*, we came to discover a possible reason behind Gillette's immensely amount of negative feedback, in spite of the good intentions of taking a stance on a social cause and trying to make a change.

Gillette was being explicit in terms of stating in the commercial, what they believe constitutes healthy masculinity and wrong masculinity. From their storyline we identified the potential *boundary object*, “Achievement”, with the elaborated *robust part*, “The best version of a man”. Gillette’s own *solidified* interpretations contained the distinction between the two types of masculinity in the commercial. One being marked as toxic masculinity, the other was linked to the notions of men being authorians and heroes.

The *solidified* interpretations of Gillette lead to a disregard of individual perceptions of the receivers. The lack of space for individual interpretation, caused an aggression from the receivers towards Gillette’s determined meaning. This led to increased confrontation instead of a common ground.

Having analysed Nike’s constitution of *boundary objects* in their “Dream Crazy” campaign from 2018, we identified the potential *boundary objects*, “Sacrifice” and “Achievement”. Nike’s implicitness of their own *solidified* interpretations, mainly regarding what the meaning of a sacrifice is, allowed their receivers to perceive the *boundary object* different. Nike was not dominant in terms of establishing their meaning.

Gillette’s constitution of *boundary objects* was predominantly failed, whereas Nike’s constitution was successful. In terms of CPA, this would be one reason to explain the different outcomes, in spite of approaching the same strategy of engaging in socio political issues.

Applying *boundary objects* to theory of CPA, it might seem contradicting, since CPA is leaning towards an *agonistic* approach, that emphasizes conflict and publicity in accordance to *agonistic pluralism*. We want to suggest the possibility, that by using the ground notions of CPA, in collaboration with the practical implications of *boundary objects*, it is possible for a corporation to soften the confrontation of CPA and get their message across more effectively.

## 7.1 Limitations and further research

In the process of outlining our thesis, our first approach was to conduct and compare Gillette and Nike as equals, which means we would not have differentiated in the quantity of the analyses. We would have sampled 100 comments from each of the 4 commercials on YouTube and conducted a comparative analysis on the basis of decoding similar to our current study. However, we identified that Nike had deleted their Dream Crazy commercial on YouTube, and thereby we were unable to collect the data from Nike’s own channel. We did not find the comments comparable with using comments made on “We Believe: The Best Men Can Be” published on Gillette’ own channel. We did also shortly consider using our earlier comments from the previously study. However, did not find them comparable due to the age of the data, and the fact that they were published on another media, Twitter.

When researching about the Gillette campaign, we came across different types of data, such as online articles and Twitter posts, which showed positive conceptions of the commercial and different perspectives on the encoded message. Since our sample frame mainly showed negative conceptions of the commercial, we were not able to decode these alternative data, which could have expanded the *plastic dimension* with several interesting *solidified* interpretations.

Our results showed us, that in both decodings of the Gillette's commercials, many did not mention the *robust* part of the *boundary object*. That was due to short, unspecified comments, such as "this commercial is great" or "where is my dislike?". These comments made it impossible for us to determine if they acknowledged the *robust part*, but just did not mention it. In our former study regarding Nike, we sampled the responses from Twitter. On Twitter it is possible to add a picture to the comment, which is not possible on YouTube. That feature was often used in our sampling from the Nike study, which supported the message and made it more distinctive, in terms of illustrations and references which could not be put in writing. Therefore, it could be interesting to look at the comments from Twitter regarding the commercial of Gillette, to analyse the interpretation of the *boundary object*, since we possibly would be able to code more themes and *solidified* interpretations. However, that would only be possible on Gillette's 2019 commercial since the 1989 commercial is not published twitter. Furthermore, the dislike feature is not available on YouTube, so it would be interesting to look into what else would have been mentioned in our samples since several comments emphasized the "Brand authority" theme (cf. section 5.3.2.1).

## 7.2 Ethical reflection

Several has praised companies like Nike and Gillette for taking a stance on something they are not obligated to and using their influence to create attention to societal issues of importance. However, it also raises the question if corporations, from an ethical perspective, should even perform CPA. Corporations' core purpose is selling what they are providing. Political or societal issues are not related to the corporate core activities, and certainly not to their bottom line (cf. section 2.1). The question is, how much should companies interfere with social causes, if their main driver is selling a product?

In relation to Gillette, the discussion goes beyond mainly just them as a corporation, taking a political stance. There is also the discussion, of what is right and wrong in relation to determining how people should behave and not behave, and should Gillette be the mouthpiece

to inaugurate this conversation? It can be argued that a grooming brand should not interfere in men's behavior by publicly stating what is wrong, what is right and what should be changed. But are they making a difference, or is it just marketing?

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## 9 Appendixes



### 9.1 Samples


#### 9.1.1 100 samples from Gillette 1989

1




**fujiismydog** for 1 år siden  
When Gillette was a man's brand



 1.076  SVAR


 [Se 13 svar](#)

2




**Bobby Tate** for 1 år siden (redigeret)  
I didn't realize how beautiful this was until I saw the new one...look at this view of masculinity. It's inspirational; men pushing their bodies, succeeding in life, loving their fathers and sons and the women in their lives...makes me want to buy their razors. Strength, love of family, purpose—I am a man and I'm not ashamed.



 906  SVAR


 [Se 30 svar](#)

3



**Doe Doewski** for 1 år siden  
Ahh the good ol' times when being a man and white was not considered offensive.


 642  SVAR

 [Se 37 svar](#)

4



**Matthew Durkin** for 1 år siden  
I remember being a kid hearing this commercial and being so excited to shave my face when i got older. I loved it. My dad shaved with gillette. The new ad makes me want to smash the tv with my bare fist.

 2  SVAR

5



**Mexican Funposting** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

Gillette 1989: "the best a man can get"

Gillette 2019: "men are toxic and rapists"

👍 480    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 10 svar](#)

6



**Valen Sinclair** for 1 år siden

Back when ad writers had balls.

👍 132    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 6 svar](#)

7



**77PhoenixFire77** for 1 år siden

Look how affirming this was to men. Hard work, sacrifice, personal responsibility, marriage and family, self-actualisation. This made you WANT to buy a razor. All the new ad does is make you want to throw up and sob quietly!

👍 468    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 10 svar](#)

8



**Angel Lomeli** for 1 år siden

When Gillete commercials stimulates your testosterone.

Now Gillete commercials stimulates your estrogens.

👍 376    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

9



**Szarik1989** for 1 år siden

holy crap, from top to bottom in 30 years.

👍 118    🗨    SVAR

10



**pathfinder** for 1 år siden

Back then: "Haha what a silly overly dramatic commercial"  
after watching the new gillette ad:  
"What a beautiful piece of art! \*sobs

👍 216 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

11



**PaulM68322** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

Wait where is the men wolf whistling at women, or letting his child kick another child's head in?

I thought that's what it was to be a man back then or.. at least that's what new gillete is ...  
Læs mere

👍 139 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 9 svar](#)

12



**OG IT** for 1 år siden

When men were men. Now men is turning into females. What happen to the real men?

👍 56 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

13



**amsterdream** for 1 år siden

Good old times. Not SJW and NWO cancer.

👍 197 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

14



**Deplorable Dave** for 1 år siden

Now, THIS is a proper ad. Almost brought tears to THIS man's eyes!  
How far have we fallen. RE: 2019 Gillette ad condemning men and masculinity.

👍 130 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 6 svar](#)

15





Rodycarz for 1 år siden

Oh look, when masculinity was celebrated rather than be deemed as "toxic".

👍 56 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

16



Wysper for 1 år siden (redigeret)

This. This is it chief. This is what Gillette should have done, celebrating the good men while subtly teaching what young boys should strive to do.

👍 258 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se 15 svar](#)

17



lu na for 1 år siden

"Father to son, it's what we've always done"  
Now with the current context, this is just sad.

👍 27 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

18



Dalila Boëchat for 1 år siden

THIS was a real ad.

👍 34 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

19



Sergio Gonzales for 1 år siden

When men were men and society was still sane.

👍 40 🗨 SVAR

20



lymaeQ for 1 år siden

Am I the only one who came here for some sanity after watching the Jan 2019 ad?

👍 367 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se 13 svar](#)

21



S L for 1 år siden


A MILLION times better than the 2019 commercial!!!  
Social justice has ruined everything.

 157 

SVAR



 [Se 7 svar](#)

22




Meade Music for 1 år siden (redigeret)


I was 10 years old when this came out. Can't imagine being a 10 year old boy having to see this new ad we have now.

 27 

SVAR



 [Se 3 svar](#)

23




Tom van Schaijk for 1 år siden


Just watched this out of nostalgia. Apparently all the things that makes us men have been wrong, we are all swines and masculinity is a cardinal sin. O how things can change over just 30 years...

 40 

SVAR



 [Se 4 svar](#)

24




Drew Yetti for 1 år siden

This makes me want to buy those products and use them with pride....well back in pre-social justice era.

 15 



SVAR

25




Huns With Guns for 1 år siden

Wish we could turn back time to the good old days.

 70 

SVAR

 [Se 4 svar](#)

26



Dylan Cooney for 1 år siden

My favourite Gillette advert. Men, ignore the feminists, embrace your manliness and to hell with those trying to emasculate you.

👍 80 🗨️ SVAR

▼ Se 7 svar

27



wet hole for 1 år siden

Wow, a Gillette ad that respects its consumers

👍 18 🗨️ SVAR

28



darren Pirie for 1 år siden

"THE BEST A MAN CAN GET" brings a tear to the eye everytime

👍 11 🗨️ SVAR

29



Reid Berry for 1 år siden

God, please give me a time machine

👍 87 🗨️ SVAR

▼ Se svar

30



AntiCommunist for 1 år siden

Wow, what an inversion of everything normal and decent. Good work Gillette...you done got woke. Get ready to go broke.

👍 51 🗨️ SVAR

31



Alex A for 1 år siden (redigeret)

At a time when ads made you feel great to be a man this company has now been infected with the feminist virus 🦠

👍 11 🗨️ SVAR

32



**Alithea** for 1 år siden

Ahh.. the good ol days! When men were men, and women were ladies.

👍 28 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

33



**Pussy Slayer** for 1 år siden

Back when feminism was just a myth

👍 23 🗨 SVAR

34



**Cameron Bell** for 1 år siden

THIS is how you make a good razor commercial. Take note 2019 gillette marketing team.

👍 28 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

35



**Tony Koter** for 1 år siden

Gillette 1989 vs 2019...

30 years later...what happened to masculinity...

👍 9 🗨 SVAR

36



**cfgvd** for 1 år siden

This is real masculinity

👍 11 🗨 SVAR

37



**Viper** for 1 år siden

Wow:( now political correctness has taken over:(

👍 9 🗨 SVAR

38



**spurge83** for 1 år siden

The first time I saw this. Magnificent. Oh Gillette, what happened?

I know. Social Justice happened. You got woke.

👍 24    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

39



**Brian Cruz** for 1 år siden

This makes me want to buy from them but I realize it's 2019 hahahaha

👍 35    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

40



**Marc Baker** for 1 år siden

Gillette's 'toxic masculinity' commercial brought me here.

👍 16    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

41



**Maxwell Smallwood** for 1 år siden

A world before the third wave

👍 19    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

42



**EVROPA RESURGENT** for 1 år siden

NEVER FORGET WHAT THEY TOOK FROM YOU

👍 22    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

43



Kosmx Rankin for 1 år siden (redigeret)

Why has society fallen so far...this was the norm 20 years ago. What changed?

👍 17 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

44



Hamzah Zaidi for 1 år siden

Ah, the 80s. Wailing guitars, ridiculous hair, and a conspicuous lack of hamfisted cultural marxist bullshit. You will be missed 😭

👍 6 🗨️ SVAR

45



S L for 1 år siden (redigeret)

This ad, very cool. Great music too!  
New 2019 ad? not cool man, not cool

👍 9 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

46



Saryx Cuenzal for 1 år siden

It's amazing how much times have changed.

2019 is gonna be a rough one already.

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

47



bob barker for 1 år siden

Boycott all proctor and gamble products

👍 9 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

48



**Cap285** for 1 år siden

Right around when I started shaving.

No more.



SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

49



**Phil NMDG** for 1 år siden

I'd buy that product...then.



SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

50



**Philadelphia Fan 789** for 1 år siden

This ad makes men happy  
But the 2019 ad just makes men emo



SVAR

51



**S Nuuu** for 1 år siden

Remember when Gillette ads were awesome? I membah.



SVAR

52



**V-ROCK GAMES** for 1 år siden

Gillette Did everything right with this ad the new ad for 2019 is nothing but MeToo! Man shaming



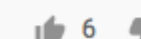
SVAR

53




**Councilman Les Wynan** for 1 år siden



Now this is how you make a commercial to turn people on to your product.




SVAR



54



**fetish 4whiteshirts** for 1 år siden  
This song really takes me back to those times when things were simple and beautiful  
 6  SVAR

55



**Cshift** for 1 år siden  
I so remember commercials like this and I miss them.  
 3  SVAR

56



**Ivan Kazarchov** for 1 år siden  
Trump should do more against feminazism or you will be soon like us in Spain, with institutional discrimination against men.  
 15  SVAR  
[▼ Se svar](#)


57



**kenny kennysson** for 1 år siden  
True Alpha male times and heroes!  
 5  SVAR

58



**RooiGevaar19** for 1 år siden (redigeret)  
1989: This makes me feel proud of being a man  
2019: This makes me feel ashamed of being a man  
 5  SVAR

59



**Jake** for 1 år siden  
This would be called "toxic masculinity" today  
 10  SVAR  
[▼ Se 5 svar](#)

60





**elliot ness** for 1 år siden

Thank you for this, it helps remove the foul taste left over from seeing the newest krapmercial.

👍 7 🗨️ SVAR

61



**Nicolas Lavergne** for 1 år siden

See? Even though back then we saw this add as overly dramatic nonsense, compared to their latest effort it seems like a burst of genius! They used to encourage men to be the best they can be, now they try to shame them by assuming masculinity is toxic, except for a few chosen ones that should show all of us the way....

Læs mere

👍 5 🗨️ SVAR

62



**Jose Gómez Torres** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

I compare it with the 2019's anti-man ad and only one question arises: at what point did society become stupid?

👍 7 🗨️ SVAR

63



**Durethia** for 1 år siden

Back when they hired humans to work at their company.

Today, they hire creatures like green haired liberals, pink haired feminists, blue haired globalists. They get these creatures from American Diploma Mills, with purchased liberal ...

Læs mere

👍 7 🗨️ SVAR

64



**The Truth** for 1 år siden

Who's here reminiscing about the times when Gillette actually was a good manly company after what they have become now?

👍 5 🗨️ SVAR

65



**mddan** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

I can't believe it...but I actually cried during in this ad.....I've been used to so much toxic messaging against men for so long I forgot what it felt like to be put in a good light - We should make spread this around

👍 7 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

66



**Joe Michaels** for 10 måneder siden

The good times,before the new world order...aka Soros / Globalist funded nightmare we live in now that constantly divides us.

👍 7 🗨 SVAR

67



**Vahan Nisanian** for 1 år siden

The days when Gillette embraced masculinity and heterosexuals, and weren't heterophobes like they are now.

👍 5 🗨 SVAR

68



**Chili Texas** for 1 år siden

My, my how times change.

👍 6 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

69



**Jim Watson** for 9 måneder siden

This Commercial still brings Tears to my eyes, especially after losing my Father in 2007. All Procter and Gamble needed to do was Re-Run this commercial and this 1989 ad would have boosted sales exponentially. Instead P&G hires some Damn Carpet Munching Feminist who aleinates 80% of the Gillette Brand Customer Base. I bought Schick Razors ...  
Læs mere

👍 3 🗨 SVAR

70



**Sterling M** for 1 år siden

The difference between challenging us to be better and condemning us for not being good enough is astounding.

👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

71



**Mitch** for 2 uger siden (redigeret)

Where did it go wrong, this would of made me buy there products.

This as a man is one of the most best things I have seen for men after all the feminist dribble shoved down our throats these last few years. ...

Læs mere

👍 2 🗨️ SVAR

72



**Staz Matt** for 1 år siden

Remember how good the 80s were? So much celebration about the awesomeness of man. Remember TOPGUNS volleyball scene?

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

73



**OVI-Wan Kenobi** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

This was back in the 80s when men were allowed to be men and feel proud, rather than made to feel ashamed. Thanks Young Turks. mlm

👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

74




**Parker P** for 1 år siden



The part that I hated the most in the new ad was a pretty girl walks by and this guy smiles and goes to talk to her and this other dude swoops in and goes "whoa not cool not cool". Oh so approaching a woman is now just "not cool"? Got it. There are entire relationships I wouldn't have had if I had known approaching a woman and speaking to her wasn't "cool"

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR


▼ [Se svar](#)



75

 **Cary B** for 1 år siden  
That made me feel good and I'm a woman! Gillette and everyone who subscribes to the myth of toxic masculinity have lost their way. Get woke go broke Gillette!


 7  SVAR



76

 **Albert Nada** for 7 måneder siden  
Those idiots, all they had to do was remake this with a more diverse group of guys.


 5  SVAR



77

 **Rohan Bansal** for 1 år siden  
"Father to son, it's what we've always done". man tears


 6  SVAR



78

 **Dave Lloyd** for 1 år siden  
This ad takes me back....really taps into all the male archetypes. Great advertising campaign


 6  SVAR



79

 **N S** for 1 år siden  
R.I.P. America

 7  SVAR

80

 **Duckface Chodenhauser** for 1 år siden (redigeret)  
Amazing and a glimpse of what we can learn from the past. Peak physical fitness, father and son bonding, family, tradition. I almost want to sob when I watch that uninspiring trash heap that is that cursed Gillette ad.

 5  SVAR

81



**zemstafreda** for 1 år siden

When the world was still normal...



4



SVAR

82



**Player Nou** for 1 år siden

This is how you sell a product! You provide a positive message, inspire your customer to achieve greatness not shaming him for things he will never do in the first place. The new ad is a great example of what NOT to do!

83



**BarkusMuhl** for 1 år siden

0:38 not cool man, not cool.



4



SVAR

84



**yourface** for 1 år siden

This actually made me pumped



6



SVAR

85



**Apex Competitions** for 1 år siden

God bless the the 80's



9



SVAR

86



**x marks the spot** for 1 år siden

Gillette could have reaired this heartwarming ad as a way celebrating 30 years of the slogan that Gillette famous. But no, they had to tell us that telling a girl to smile is no different from brutal rape.



6



SVAR

87



**Joaquin León Velásquez** for 1 år siden

I really wish I had lived those times. I can say this world has become into a dump.



10



SVAR

88



**Ethan M** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

The 2019 ad makes this ad look so beautiful. I wish Gillette would not have appealed to cucks. It is a shame a good company turned weak. Far left extremism has ruined everything, even a shaving company advertised for men.

👍 3 🗨️ SVAR

89



**Vilmer Carlsson** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

So this is what ads without cultural marxism injected look like.

👍 5 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

90



**Geth270** for 1 år siden

I was here.

Just wanted to leave a mark of my self after seeing the 2019 commercial, don't mind me....

👍 6 🗨️ SVAR

91



**Aratharr** for 1 år siden

It's like I'm watching that multiverse TV from Rick and Morty and looking into a universe where Gillette releases commercials that celebrate and honour men instead of collectivizing them and treating them the same way a bigot would treat good muslims who aren't responsible for terror attacks.

👍 6 🗨️ SVAR

92



**8484terry** for 1 år siden

ah yes, when the world was more or less normal...then came the beginning of pc culture, then 911, now look at the state of everything, it has become bizarro world.

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 4 svar](#)

93



**EndlessFunctionality** for 1 år siden

I was born the year this advert came out.

Take Me Back.

👍 5 🗨 SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

94



**Preston Chancellor** for 1 år siden

You just lost my and most of my friends.

👍 5 🗨 SVAR

95



**Adam Little** for 1 år siden (redigeret)

"You were the chosen one, Gillette, it was said you would destroy the feminists, not join them"

👍 5 🗨 SVAR

96



**Pike Robertson** for 1 år siden

When Gillette liked men and wasn't taken over by SJW fascists.

👍 5 🗨 SVAR

97



**Vipera01** for 1 måned siden

Back when mainstream media was not infected by cultural marxism...

👍 4 🗨 SVAR

98



**Marzan Worldwide** for 1 år siden

Look at what these images promote ...Working hard , striving, loving our children, women and families..even dear old dad gets a hug !


And look how the woman love their men! Bravo!

It wasn't broken, smh

👍 7 🗨 SVAR

99




 **Jules Huxley** for 1 år siden  
"We used to look up at the sky and wonder at our place in the stars, Now we just look down and worry about our place in the dirt."  
👍 6 🗨️ SVAR

100


 **Gregorio del Pilar III** for 1 år siden  
Gillette now: Being a man is wrong  
👍 3 🗨️ SVAR

### 9.1. 2 100 samples from Gillette 2019


101

 **Blank Space Provided** for 2 uger siden  
I heard Gillette employees get preferred pricing on Nissan Sentras.  
👍 447 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

102

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 2 uger siden  
Gillette is still adding fake likes and removing real dislikes.  
👍 732 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 7 svar](#)

103

 **C Lo** for 7 måneder siden  
How to destroy a company in one commercial: Introducing Gillette.  
👍 889 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 9 svar](#)

104





Wendell Edwards for 3 uger siden

Forced child labour and charging women more for shaving products. Is this the best a company can get? Is it?

👍 409    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se 3 svar

105



Joseph D for 2 uger siden

1 year on, still haven't bought a Gillette product.

👍 193    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se 9 svar

106



Anirban Saha for 2 uger siden

Proudly not using Gillette for over a year...Worst a man can get

👍 557    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se 15 svar

107



RadioactiveSand for 2 uger siden

Just checking my dislike is still here, cheers.

👍 739    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se 17 svar

108



Aristotle for 1 uge siden

Fake upvotes. Lol. That's almost as pathetic as losing billions.

👍 156    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se 5 svar

109



Rokkuman'ekkusu for 1 uge siden

YouTube can and will always manipulate the like/dislike ratio. Suckers!

👍 96    🗨    SVAR

▼ Se svar

110



**Sery Illich Ulianov** for 7 måneder siden

one of the most expensive commercials in human history, never forget that this costed you 8 billion dollars

👍 2.860 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 32 svar](#)

111



**Luke E** for 1 uge siden

"Let's sell some anti-male feminist propaganda to our mostly male customer base. That will boost sales."

👍 174 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

112



**Yuet Lee** for 2 uger siden

<Nissan deleted the highest rated comment that said "Nissan went full Gillette, You never go full Gillette" >

👍 211 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

113



**Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden

gillette: the worst humanity can get

👍 129 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

114



**Wendell Edwards** for 1 uge siden

<Imagine the horror of being a child slave in a Gillette Factory.>

👍 24 🗨️ SVAR

115



**Robledillo** for 1 år siden

I feel bad for the guy working overtime having to delete all these comments

👍 6.449 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 64 svar](#)

116



**Wendell Edwards** for 1 uge siden

Gillette is still adding fake likes and removing real dislikes.

👍 55    🗨    SVAR

117



**Christian Lingurar** for 2 uger siden

I'm deeply impressed. this is noxious stupidity in historical dimension. this is a culture historical icon that will be talked about in thousands of years still.

👍 129    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

118



**ExodusCore** for 1 uge siden

Buying upvotes. Gillette really is pathetic.

👍 45    🗨    SVAR

119



**indierockhead** for 2 uger siden

10 years of being on YouTube and I've never seen a video with so many dislikes. What an embarrassment

👍 110    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

120



**Andy Franklin** for 1 år siden

WHITE MAN BAD

👍 205    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

121




**Donatas Simkus** for 1 uge siden

I'm proud of deciding not to buy Gillette ever again. Advertisements should influence how we spend money, and this one certainly did!

👍 181    🗨    SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)


122

 **Bethany Henderson** for 1 uge siden  
How horrible. Imagine the backlash if they flipped the genders & did one about women... Hypocritical. Btw Proctor & Gamble is the same company that caused the adpocalypse on YouTube.

👍 38 🗨️ SVAR


▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

123

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
<gillette is adding more fake likes, everything they do is a lie>

👍 45 🗨️ SVAR


124

 **Bastard Bill** for 1 uge siden  
"The boys watching today will be the women of tomorrow"

👍 169 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)


125

 **Back Off** for 1 år siden  
"Toxic masculinity? 43% boys are raised by single women. 78% of teachers are female. So almost half of the boys have 100% female influence at home, and 80% influence at school. Toxic masculinity is not the problem. Lack of masculinity is."

👍 257 🗨️ SVAR


▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

126

 **englishjames007** **englishjames007** for 5 dage siden  
Stopped buying their overpriced razors , over a year ago.....NEVER FORGET THIS GUYS!

👍 11 🗨️ SVAR

127

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 5 dage siden  
<The only thing in stock at stores are GILLETTE PRODUCTS.... BECAUSE NOBODY WANTS THOSE!>

👍 11 🗨️ SVAR

128

 **eualadindeal** for 3 dage siden  
Discarding the obvious corporate payed shills, Gillette just lost about 25% market share in a single day.

👍 13 🗨️ SVAR

129



**Chad Hartkopf** for 2 uger siden  
gillette: the worst humanity can get

👍 46 🗨️ SVAR

130



**Richard Blocker** for 1 år siden (redigeret)  
If EA sold razors...

BETHESDA YOU GOT COMPETITION ALERT!

👍 174 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

131



**Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 måned siden  
You have founded the "Me Neither" movement. "I don't use Gillette products anymore." "Me neither!"

👍 152 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

132



**Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 2 uger siden  
<Gillette: We're glad we started a conversation. Also Gillette: delete literally Millions of critical comments. Nah Gillette, I don't think what you are looking for is a conversation.>

👍 17 🗨️ SVAR

133



**Megan Xo** for 3 dage siden  
This is horrible-yes I'm late

👍 12 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

134



**Wendell Edwards** for 1 uge siden  
<gillette insults the entire world, now everybody has coronavirus. Coincidence???>

👍 18 🗨️ SVAR


135

 **Mario Neto** for 8 måneder siden  
Congratulations on the 1.5 million dislikes, Gillette.

👍 3.538    🗨️    SVAR

▼ [Se 38 svar](#)

136


 **Erium** for 5 dage siden  
Forced child labor and charging women more for pink razors. Okay.

Just found out about this and needed to dislike

👍 14    🗨️    SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

137

 **Connor Gibson** for 3 dage siden  
Just checking to make sure I disliked this bs.

👍 12    🗨️    SVAR

138

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
<gillette: the worst humanity can get>


👍 16    🗨️    SVAR

139

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 3 dage siden  
<P&G: the worst humanity can get>

👍 9    🗨️    SVAR


140

 **GurlHackerClub Carol Webb** for 7 måneder siden  
8 Billion dollar write down. Most expensive commercial in history.


👍 3.024    🗨️    SVAR

▼ [Se 33 svar](#)


141

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
 <"The rest of us have never embraced your victim mentality; we are not victims. We are people, the same way that men are. We are equal, yet different. We, unlike you, realize that is not mutually exclusive.">  
 👍 15 🗨️ SVAR


142

 **GrassFedMeats** for 1 uge siden (redigeret)  
 Here is my latest comment but where is my original? This company hates it's target customers and believes the most ridiculous feminist propaganda.  
 👍 17 🗨️ SVAR


143

 **Terri D** for 1 uge siden  
 Just switched on to dislike. Stopped buying Gillette.  
 👍 68 🗨️ SVAR  
 ▼ [Se svar](#)

144

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
 <"The feminism of equality, of toughness, of anti-discrimination, has been overwhelmed by one of victimhood and demands for special treatment....At a certain point, when we demand an equal ratio of men to women in certain fields, what we're criticizing is not "the system," but the choices that women themselves are making.....let's keep our eye on the question of equal opportunity and stop obsessing about equal outcomes, lest we find ourselves trying to cure ...  
 Læs mere  
 👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

145

 **Hugh** for 1 år siden  
 As a bully, I find this highly offensive.  
 👍 581 🗨️ SVAR  
 ▼ [Se 14 svar](#)

146

 **Wendell Edwards** for 5 dage siden  
 <Imagine the horror of being a child slave in a Gillette Factory.>  
 👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

147



SurfAlien2 for 1 uge siden

1.5 million dislikes can't be wrong.



24



SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

148



TheRedBlue 02 for 2 uger siden

What's the point of adding a "Dislike" button if you won't allow people to use it...



26



SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

149



splashpit for 1 uge siden

Stop removing my dislike !



19



SVAR

150



berd boi for 7 måneder siden

Keep commenting people. Let them lose another 8 billion paying the moderation staff



3.626



SVAR

▼ [Se 22 svar](#)

151



Dermot O'Sullivan for 13 timer siden

Commentators online claimed that the halt to Gillette's downward spiralling of sales at the last quarterly report was due to the introduction of more expensive premium products such as its \$200 heated shaver. This means whilst the number of buyers didn't grow Gillette was able to squeeze more cash out of its existing feckless, customer base.



5



SVAR

152



Chad Hartkopf for 1 uge siden

<"A bunch of Latinas at Pitzer College decided to let white girls know that they shouldn't wear hoops anymore, because that's appropriating a style.... I've never worn hoop earrings for the purpose of "feeling ethnic," nor have I ever associated hoop earrings with a certain culture. They've always been an accessory I like. It's really as simple as that....I can't wear hoops because I didn't "create the culture as a coping mechanism for marginalization"? I can't wea...  
Læs mere



5



SVAR

153





**Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden

<"Trigger warnings are the most ridiculous, patronizing and infantilizing creations ever to come out of feminism....But feminists adore trigger warnings because it reinforces the idea that women are ruled by their emotions, are incapable of recovering from trauma and are just generally hysterical nitwits unprepared to confront adulthood and reality.">

👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

154



**Chad Hartkopf** for 2 dage siden

<gillette: we want to be the problem>

👍 5 🗨️ SVAR

155



**CV** for 1 år siden

Came here from The Quartering, and I have to say i'm not dissapointed. Way to alienate your customer base--and all for that sweet, sweet vocal minority lol

👍 154 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 12 svar](#)

156



**Smu The DJ** for 1 år siden

Gillette did the unthinkable... they managed to "Thanos Fingersnap" their main target group. Soooo this was the plot twist...

👍 593 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 14 svar](#)

157



**Doc** for 2 uger siden

< So you say there is "Toxic Masculinity" then in turn there is also " Toxic Femininity" so over a year later why is there still no Gillette Venus Be The Best Woman You Can Be short film? >

👍 30 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

158



**Lame game Guy** for 1 dag siden

I disliked 5 months ago and it's still here that's surprising

👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)


159

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 dag siden  
<Gillette: We're glad we started a conversation. Also Gillette: deletes literally Millions of critical comments. Nah Gillette, I don't think what you are looking for is a conversation.>  
👍 6 🗨️ SVAR


160

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 uge siden  
<Gillette all-time highest Market Cap was on December 27, 2019 at \$314,440,000,000 Gillette Market Cap right now is only \$251,489,000,000. That means Gillette has lost \$62,951,000,000 in 2.5 months.>  
👍 9 🗨️ SVAR


161

 **N M** for 7 måneder siden  
Anyone here after the P&G 8 billion dollar Gillette write down? 🤖😂  
👍 17.454 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 311 svar](#)


162

 **Manthan Shah** for 3 uger siden  
Gillette removing dislikes and adding likes.  
This shows just how cowardly they are. They're too scared to face the truth that they're losing customers.  
👍 33 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 5 svar](#)


163

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 uge siden  
Brie Larson just bought two homes. Two. Both use tons of energy that causes Global Climate Change. SHAME!!!  
👍 8 🗨️ SVAR


164

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 uge siden  
They must have told all the paid posters to stay home.  
👍 13 🗨️ SVAR

165

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
<  
"If the ultimate goal is lasting love, women are going to have to become comfortable with sacrifice and capitulation. Because those are the underpinnings of a long-term marriage – for both sexes.">  
👍 4 🗨️ SVAR

166


 **Luminous** for 1 år siden (redigeret)  
122k dislikes. Faith in humanity restored.

Edit: Hey thanks for all the likes. Care to check out my YouTube channel?

👍 438    🗨️    SVAR


▼ [Se 15 svar](#)

167

 **Mech Engineer** for 1 dag siden  
<When did Trentsauce change his avatar from the NE Patriots to Pepe?>


👍 7    🗨️    SVAR

168

 **Juicy Smellit** for 2 uger siden  
I wouldn't even trust Gillette to provide grooming products for my sweaty peanut.


👍 8    🗨️    SVAR

169

 **Dermot O'Sullivan** for 4 dage siden  
< For Gillette customers who have to contend with severe razor burn on a daily basis this coronavirus is a small concern >.

👍 8    🗨️    SVAR

170

 **darkfriend17** for 5 dage siden  
Former customer here. Still haven't purchased a product since this video came out.

👍 11    🗨️    SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

171

 **Stannis Baratheon** for 7 måneder siden (redigeret)  
Gillete attacks their 1 and only demographic:

Outstanding move

👍 532    🗨️    SVAR

▼ [Se 5 svar](#)

172



**Follower Of Duck** for 1 år siden

this is coming from a company that uses forced child labor

👍 19.605    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se 138 svar](#)

173



**SCP - 173** for 1 dag siden

just checkin to see if my dislike is still here

👍 5    💬    SVAR

174



**Mark Frost** for 1 uge siden

I had disliked this propaganda, why was my dislike removed?

👍 15    💬    SVAR

175



**Mike Hawk** for 3 uger siden

Kid Gamora: Was it worth it?

Thanos: Yes...

Kid Gamora: What did it cost?

Thanos: 8 billion dollars.

👍 24    💬    SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

176



**Dermot O'Sullivan** for 3 dage siden

< Life is so much better without Gillette >

👍 11    💬    SVAR

177



**John Doe** for 1 år siden

>the young turks

Apparently gillete denies the armenian genocide, wonderfull

👍 397 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 7 svar](#)

178



**John Johansson** for 3 dage siden (redigeret)

1:06 They took the shot, releasing they're Childworkers and yet put them into a bad light. I'd rather eat a Gillette razor than to buy one.

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

179



**Jules G** for 2 uger siden

I'dRatherWalkToWuhanAndBackThanAcceptAJilletteRaz0rForFree

👍 17 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

180



**Chad Hartkopf** for 6 dage siden

<gillette: the worst humanity can get>

👍 8 🗨️ SVAR

181



**Yul Hubbart** for 3 uger siden

Hey, Gillette - don't you think you should have stuck to disposable razors instead of a disposable company? Great business model, you world class clowns.

👍 30 🗨️ SVAR

182



**Dr. Casual** for 1 år siden

BREAKING NEWS: Gillette stocks hit rock bottom.

Evil white men to blame.

👍 597 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 26 svar](#)


183

 **Wendell Ellis Edwards** for 1 måned siden  
<Gillette: We're glad we started a conversation. Also Gillette: delete literally Millions of critical comments. Nah Gillette, I don't think what you are looking for is a conversation.>  
👍 11 🗨️ SVAR


184

 **Juicy Smellit** for 6 dage siden  
Dan S is having another hormonal meltdown.  
👍 12 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 3 svar](#)


185

 **Jesse Young** for 4 dage siden  
They're definitely making fake accounts for fake likes. I guarantee it.  
👍 13 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 2 svar](#)


186

 **Jimmy Trollson** for 2 uger siden  
I quit using everything Gillette makes after this aired. Then weened my family off all proctor and gamble products. I couldn't be happier, expressing myself with my wallet.  
👍 16 🗨️ SVAR

187

 **cuda260** for 1 år siden  
So just to clarify, the company (Procter and Gamble, Gillette's owner) pumping out this garbage:  
  
- tests products on live animals  
- exploits child labour (male and female) in developing countries...  
Læs mere  
👍 2.383 🗨️ SVAR  
▼ [Se 52 svar](#)

188

 **Chad Hartkopf** for 1 uge siden  
<"Here are young women with more opportunities, more liberties than almost any women in history and at that moment we tell them they're short-changed silenced victims of a patriarchy? It's defeatist and demoralising.">  
👍 11 🗨️ SVAR

189



Yuet Lee for 4 dage siden

<I think Dan S Sleevey did something to piss off his mom and she switched off the Wifi as punishment.>

👍 7 🗨 SVAR

190



Špagetka 111 for 2 uger siden

wow, they are still trying to hide their failure...

👍 19 🗨 SVAR

191



Ay. an for 1 dag siden

I was a loyal Gilletter before, now I trim.

👍 3 🗨 SVAR

192



iyfranco151 for 1 år siden

The same Company that charges Woman extra \$2.00 for PINK Razors.

👍 1.908 🗨 SVAR

▼ Se 23 svar

193



Chad Hartkopf for 2 uger siden

<gillette: the worst humanity can get>

👍 16 🗨 SVAR

194



Chad Hartkopf for 1 uge siden

<"Progressive feminists have shown nothing but the most reflexive, regressive contempt for women on the other side of the ideological aisle. It doesn't matter if you're a conservative stay at home mom, work at home mom, or work outside the home mom. If you're Right, the Left is gonna hate.">

👍 11 🗨 SVAR

195



123abc for 4 dage siden

Its the evolution: Gillette becomes Nissan becomes Always.

👍 4 🗨 SVAR

196



**Tony Koshy Mathew** for 1 måned siden

Apparently the best a man can get is a beard.

👍 1.505 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 10 svar](#)

197



**J C** for 1 dag siden

Ugh, the pandering is real. How disgusting this world has become...

👍 5 🗨️ SVAR

198



**Wendell Edwards** for 1 uge siden

<went to the store. They were totally sold out of everything! water, toilet paper, food... Everything..... except mountains of gillette products. People wouldn't get caught dead using gillette!>

👍 7 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se svar](#)

199



**gregor anderson** for 3 dage siden

Wow. Never buying another Gillette product. Tired of this narrative being so mainstream and acceptable.

👍 10 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 2 svar](#)

200



**Apex Gemini** for 1 år siden

Gillette: The Razor Your Wife's Boyfriend Prefers.

👍 633 🗨️ SVAR

▼ [Se 3 svar](#)

## 9.2 Mass Media Articles

### 9.2.1 Article 1 - New York Times

Attached separately



### 9.2.2 Article 2 - Fox News

Attached separately

### 9.2.3 Article 3 - Glamour

Attached separately

### 9.2.4 Article 4 - Esquire

Attached separately

## 9.3 Coding Scheme

Attached separately