

Sommer, Roy. 2011. "‘Metadesign’ A ‘Mythological’ Approach to Self-Reference in Consumer Culture". In: Wolf, Werner (ed.). *The Metareferential Turn in Contemporary Arts and Media*. New York: Rodopi.

Abstract

Although the emerging field of metareference studies has – with a few notable exceptions – so far been mainly concerned with literature, film, cartoons and games, metareference is not restricted to fictional representations in verbal and audiovisual narratives but has become a recurrent feature of consumer culture as well. Using musical instruments, fashion and cars as my examples, I demonstrate how product design and advertising exploit the commercial appeal of metareferential objects and their representations in the media. I argue that such a ‘metareferential’ approach to consumer culture offers a new perspective on the concept of ‘myth’ and the ‘mythological’ method originally proposed by Roland Barthes and thus provides a key to the study of contemporary culture.