

# CASE STUDY: ANALYSING IMAGES

- Advertising images
- Images from photojournalism
- Voices and sound images

This case study takes still advertising and photojournalist images and tries to give you confidence in analysing them, using semiotic, along with more traditional, compositional approaches, and referring to debates from Chapter 1. We also suggest ways of analysing **sound ‘images’**. We have deliberately not analysed a set of moving audio-visual images because this is so hard to do adequately on the page. But Chapter 11 contains many of the terms you will need for this, and the method of applying them is similar to that outlined here.

## Advertising images



Figure 1.8a 'The new Corolla is supported by Toyota's biggest ever television and Cinema campaign . . . launched . . . on New Year's Day [2002] by showing all 6 ads in the new Corolla 'a car to be proud of' series, back to back, in one epic ad break. The ads will be coming to the web soon' (Toyota website).

The Toyota Corolla (according to the *Guardian's* car correspondent, 29 January 2002) is the world's biggest

- References
- Further reading

selling car – so any relaunch is potentially very risky and needs to be carefully designed. The ad we've chosen was part of a series for the whole range: in print forms (billboard and press), on the website and on television.

In textual analysis with any image, you need to observe its formal or rhetorical strategies, especially:

- Q how does it seem to address its readers?
- Examine the areas of composition, framing, colours, choice of words, if any (verbal elements are always worth focus), setting, lighting, key signifiers, references to other texts (intertextuality), including other ads.

Focus on the question:

- What is my evidence for arguing that this mode of address seems to be at work?

Some advice:

- The analysis need not be overlong. Don't make it sound like a mechanical checklist – important to make one, but it should be done beforehand. Below we suggest one possible way of concisely analysing the Corolla ad, italicising words which show you have considered key concepts.
- Beware of writing as though the ad is having a predictable or momentous *effect* on readers ('the ad makes us . . . forces us to . . .' etc.), a common mistake. It can only make *invitations* to