# Advertising in the 20th Century







In order to sell a product, companies try to CONNECT to consumers. The way that they do that is by showing people what a product can do and how it will improve their life.

Because of that advertisements in any decade tend to reflect the values, norms and styles that are common in that decade.

#### Focus for today:

To make connections between the historical trends & the ads of that decade.

#### We are going to:

- 1. Remind ourselves of events in that decade.
- 2. Examine the ads of that decade.
- 3. Make connections between the events & the ads.

### Advertising in the 1930s





## What was Happening Historically in the 1930s?

- The <u>Stock Market crashed</u> in Oct. 1929 triggering the start of a 10+ year long Great Depression
  - Companies had to make huge <u>budget cuts</u> and lay off most of their workers.
  - <u>Unemployment rates reached 25%</u> nationwide but rose as high as 40% in cities like Detroit.





#### What was Happening Historically in the 1930s?

- The first <u>radio</u> station was established in 1930
  - Radios made advertising easier than ever before
  - Public radio was free
  - Radio stations were accessible from most anywhere in the country
  - Radio was accessible to everyone (even those who couldn't read)



#### Radio Advertisements

Listen to each of the jingles to get an idea of what 1930s ads sounded like:





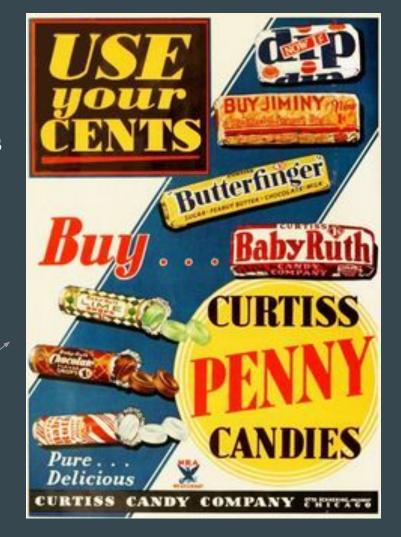
- Due to the popularity of radio and the decrease in newspaper/magazine sales, companies spent less \$ on print ads & spent more on radio ads
  - o <u>Jingles</u> (little songs) became popular they found it was easier for the consumer to remember the tune than a print ad.

#### Advertising in the 1930s

- Because people had less money to spend in the 1930s, consumers were more wary of products and advertisements.
- Advertisers needed to convince potential buyers that their product was worth it.



Many 1930s ads focused on affordability or practicality.



#### Many ads <u>tried to guilt</u> <u>consumers into buying</u> <u>their product</u>

• Companies tried to convince consumers that they would fail without it (played on people's fears or struggles.)

At a time when millions were looking for a job or were desperate to hold onto their job, this company implied gray hair could be a factor...

## Gray Hair Cost Her Her Job!

but gray hair made her look old and slow. "A younger woman would work more snappily," was the verdict.

Gray hair does make a person look old, but gray hair is an unnecessary burden. Today, many women—and men—know that a

She was willing and capable,

women-and men-know that a mixture of sage tea and sulphur actually restores gray, faded or streaked hair to its original life and color. You can either prepare the mixture at home yourself, or more conveniently, buy it already prepared and ready to use. All druggists carry it in the form of Wyeth's Sage & Sulphur, and since the cost is only 75c a bottle, there is really no need to prepare it yourself. You simply moisten a comb or soft brush with it and draw it through your hair, one strand at a time. One application banishes the gray and one or two more completely restore your hair to its original color, so evenly, so naturally that no one can possibly tell you have used it.



Everyone's worst fear: gaining weight! And to think a cigarette could "fix" that problem?



#### Demanding Truth in Advertising

• To protect consumers, the federal govt began regulating advertisers, and demanded greater truth in advertising.



Do you really think this product will make someone's chin smaller? Hmmm... probably not!

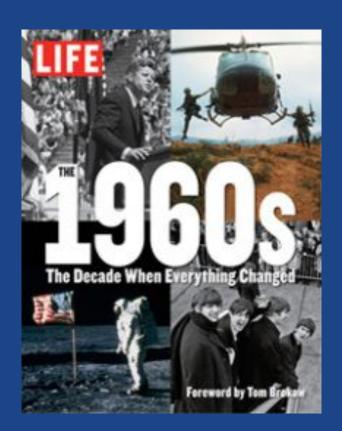
How energized do you feel after eating bread? I don't think so!



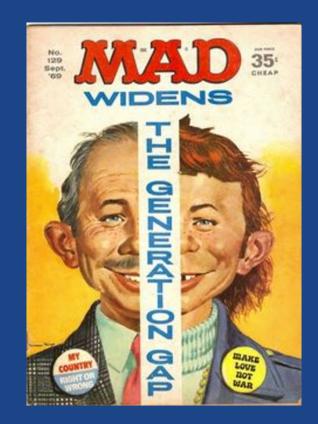


RECAP: How does this advertisement reflect the events or trends in 1930s advertisements?

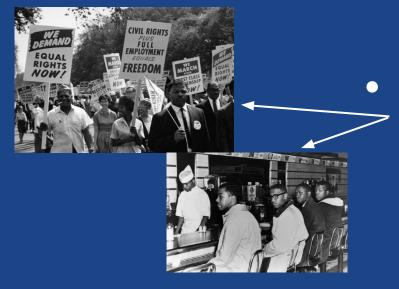
## Advertising in the 1960s







#### What was Happening Historically in the 1960s?



The **Civil Rights movement** was going on

- Protests, lunch counter sit-ins and marches
- New laws were passed banning discrimination in schools, protecting black voting rights, etc.



The <u>women's liberation</u> movement had started by the end of the 1960s.

#### What was Happening Historically?

- The <u>Vietnam War</u> raged on and divided the nation.
  - O By 1968, the U.S. had over 530,000 troops in Vietnam
  - Young people began to protest against war.





VS

• There was a growing gap between the generations (youth vs the older generation had different values & goals.)



Conservative parents



Hippies

#### Advertising Shifts to the Youth

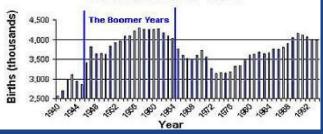
- Because ½ of Americans were 25 or younger, advertisers realized they had to start targeting a younger market.
  - They began to shift their focus from the older generation who grew up during the Great Depression (who were less likely to spend \$) to young people (who could be a lifelong customer.)

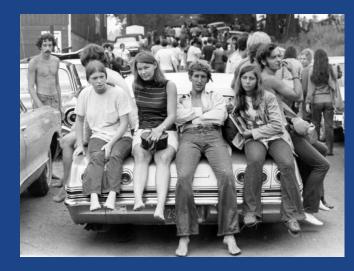
• Advertisers focused on making ads that reflected the ideas & attitudes of the younger generation.

#### Baby Boom

- US population grew by 29 million in 1950's
- · Why?
  - Returning soldiers marrying & having kids
  - Lower infant mortality

U.S Births: 1940 - 1994





#### Values of 1960s Youth

- Many young people in the 1960s did NOT want to grow up to be like their parents.
  - HATED: suburbs, strict gender roles, conformity, normality, war, racism
  - WANTED: originality, diversity, peace





#### The Counterculture

A culture of young people with values that ran counter to those of the established culture

Generation Gap: the differences in attitudes between people of different age groups



#### Advertising to the young (counterculture)



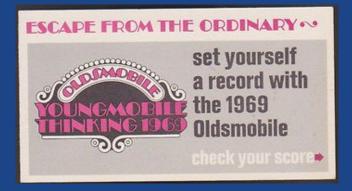


• Advertisers used psychedelic graphics, hired more racially diverse actors, featured long-haired models in hip clothing, and used sounds such as heavy guitar music to attract youth and appear hip.

#### Advertising to the Older Generation

By the mid 1960s, advertisers began to change how they advertised to older people. They <u>tried to convince</u>
 them that old people could look young by buying the right products.





Oldsmobile commercials used popular music and offered people an opportunity to "escape from the ordinary."

Oldsmobile nicknamed itself the "Youngmobile" in its commercials to try to attract older generations as well as young.

#### Advertising Liberates Women

- The women's liberation movement became an important aspect of marketing strategies towards the end of the 1960s
- •Some ad agencies <u>began to target the</u>

  <u>"new woman"</u> (others continued to hold onto tradition)
  - Ex.: Some ads showed nontraditional activities for women such as working on a motorcycle while others continued to show women as housewives only.



VERSATILE

DEPENDABLE
COMPATIBLE
(MAYBE EVEN SEXY)

CALL IT
WHAT YOU WANT...

We call it a PENRIL MODEM!
Penril's modems are all performers—
with a family ranging from teletype
(Bell 101C) modems and single card LSI
1200 BPS (Bell 202C) modems up to our
adaptively equalized 4800 BPS models.

Deta Communications, Inc.

Il be on display at Booth 2028 at FICC in Las Vegas



VS

## We make Virginia Slims especially for women because they are biologically superior to men. That's right, superior. Women are more resistant the red-green type, day blindness, night-blindness, nomedism, blindness, blindness, blindness, blindness, blindness, bli

That's right, superior.
Women are more resistant
to starvation, fatigue,
exposure, shock, and
illness than men are.

Women have two "X" chromosomes in their sex cells, while men have only one "X" chromosome and a "Y" chromosome ... which some experts consider to be the inferior chromosome.

They are also less inclined than men to congenital baldness, Albinism of the eyes, improperly developed sweat glands, color blindness of

the red-green type, day blindness, defective hair follieles, defective iris, defective tooth enamel, double eyelashes, skin cysts, of hair.

In view of these and other facts, the makers of Virginia Slims feel it highly inappropriate that women continue to use the fat, stubby cigarettes designed for mere men.

Virginia Slims.

With rich Virginia flavor women like.

You've come a long way, baby.

#### Advertising with a feminist twist (Virginia Slims)





#### Advertising to African Americans

"In the 1960s, African Americans began to be recognized as important consumers."

- Before the 1960s, most ads featured white middle/upper class people.
  - The assumption was that white people would ignore the ad if there was a black person in it.
- In the '60s, advertisers finally saw a benefit in advertising to non-white consumers too.
  - They started hiring more black actors for their ads.





All people drink
Pepsi and buy
laundry
detergent, right?
So why not
show a diverse
group of people
using the
product!

RECAP: How does this advertisement reflect the events or trends in 1960s advertisements?

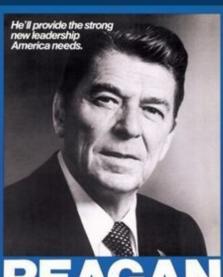


Honda shapes the world of wheels You've got to hand it to Honda. New designs. New colors. Altogether 20 models to put a glint in your eye. That famous four-stroke engine takes everything in stride. Won five out of five '66 Grand Prix Championships, 50cc to 500cc. A world's record. With Honda, performance counts as well as style. And that tells it like it is. Any questions? See your local Honda dealer for a safety demonstration ride.

For a free calor brochure and safety pamphies write: American Honda Motor Co., Inc., Dept. QF, Box 50, Gardena, California 90247, 05967, AHM.

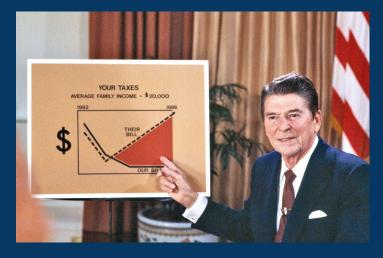
## Advertising in the 1980s







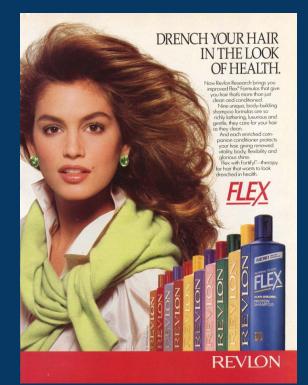
## What was happening historically in the 1980s?



- Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980
  - Introduced a plan to strengthen the US economy through
    - Aid to the rich/businesses & cuts to poverty programs, urban spending, social services
- The '80s saw a growing gap between the rich & the poor.
- After a decade of economic recession, in the 1980s the economy rebounded and **people were obsessed with wealth**.

#### Advertising Trends in the 1980s: Celebrity Endorsements

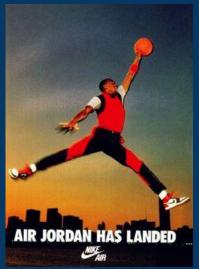
- Style mattered more than substance
  - People cared less about
     what the product could
     do, and more about who
     had it and how popular it
     was.
  - If a beautiful or famous person used the product, other people wanted it too...



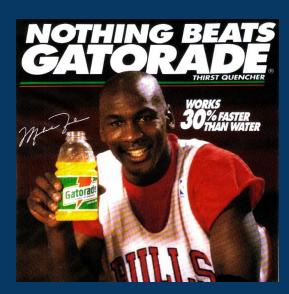


#### Celebrity Endorsements

Advertising began to rely on celebrity endorsements as the face of their brands helped make consumers want the product (a way to be like their favorite stars!)

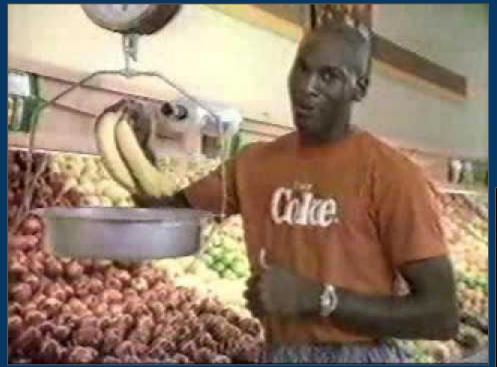








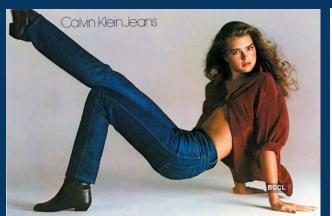
Bill Cosby played a major part in the "Coke is it" campaign and made almost 1/3 of his income in the '80s from advertising.



Watch these 1980s tv commercials for an example of celebrity advertising:



#### Advertising Trends in the 1980s: Selling the American Dream





• Ads told Americans the only way to be successful or cool was to wear the right clothes, drink the right drinks, and drive the right cars.



- Ads made it seem like owning the product would give you a better, happier life
  - Companies used the promise of the American Dream to sell their products
- Ads that targeted working class Americans often promised better lifestyles (i.e., Miller Brewing Company's "High Life.")





## Advertising Trends in the 1980s: TV advertising





#### TV advertising dominated

- Commercials used catchy slogans and famous songs sung by characters or different celebrities.
- One of the most iconic '80s ad campaigns: Wendy's "Where's the Beef?"
  - Was so successful, t-shirts & underwear used the iconic slogan.
  - This campaign showed the power of advertising.

## Advertising Trends in the 1980s: Infomercials



• Infomercials, 30-minute commercials often centered around product promotion by celebrities, became popular.

Watch the video - what's one funny example?





RECAP (choose 1): How does the advertisement reflect the events or trends in 1980s advertisements?