"Corporations put ads on fruit, ads all over the schools, ads on cars, ads on clothes. The only place you can't find ads is where they belong: on politicians."

– Molly Ivins, syndicated columnist, 2000

- The relationship between advertising and its symbols is more complicated than sponsorship agreements and sellouts to corporations.
- Millions of people happily purchase and don clothing decorated with Nike swooshes, soft drink logos, NFL sports team symbols, university names, Disney characters, or the clothing’s designer name. Others delight in a McDonald’s jingle or Geico’s lizard ads or admire the daring design of Calvin Klein print ads.
- Advertising can be an annoying, even oppressive, intrusion into our lives, but it also seems to have become a “natural” part of our popular culture’s landscape.

- Today, ads are scattered everywhere—and they are multiplying. Chameleon-like, advertising adapts to most media forms. At local theaters and on rented DVDs, advertisements now precede the latest Hollywood movies.
- Today, ads are scattered everywhere—and they are multiplying. Chameleon-like, advertising adapts to most media forms.
  - At local theaters and on rented DVDs, advertisements now precede the latest Hollywood movies.
Ads take up more than half the space in most daily newspapers and consumer magazines. They are inserted into trade books and textbooks. They clutter Web sites on the Internet. They fill our mailboxes and wallpaper the buses we ride.

Dotting the nation’s highways, billboards promote fast-food and hotel chains while neon signs announce the names of stores along major streets and strip malls. According to the Food Marketing Institute, the typical supermarket’s shelves are filled with thirty thousand to fifty thousand different brand-name packages, each functioning like miniature billboards.

Without consumer advertisements, mass communication industries would cease to function in their present forms. Advertising is the economic glue that holds most media industries together.

Yet despite advertising’s importance to the economy, many of us remain skeptical about its impact on American life.

Early Developments in American Advertising

The earliest media ads were in the form of handbills, posters, and broadsides (long newsprint-quality posters).

English booksellers printed brochures and bills announcing new publications as early as the 1470s, when posters advertising religious books were tacked on church doors.

In 1622, print ads imitating the oral style of criers began appearing in the first English newspapers.

Announcing land deals and ship cargoes, the first newspaper ads in colonial America ran in the Boston News-Letter in 1704.
The First Advertising Agencies

- The first American advertising agencies were really newspaper space brokers: individuals who purchased space in newspapers and sold it to various merchants.
  - Newspapers, accustomed to a 25 percent nonpayment rate from advertisers, welcomed the space brokers, who paid up front. In return, brokers usually received discounts of 15 to 30 percent but sold the space to advertisers at the going rate.
- In 1841, Volney Palmer opened the first ad agency in Philadelphia; for a 25 percent commission, he worked for newspaper publishers and sold space to advertisers.

Advertising in the 1800s

- Originally called the Joseph A. Campbell Preserve Company back in 1869, the Campbell Soup Co. introduced its classic red and white soup can labels in 1897 after an employee was inspired by the uniforms of the Cornell University football team.
  - Today, the label looks different, but Campbell's red and white cans remain one of the most recognized brands in the country.
- Historians point to a more fundamental reason for advertising's development on a national scale: "the need to get control of the price the manufacturer charged for his goods."
- Manufacturers came to realize that if their products were distinctive and became associated with quality, customers would ask for them by name;
- Manufacturers would then be able to dictate prices without worrying about being undersold by generic products or bulk items. To achieve this end, manufacturers began to use advertising to establish the special identity of their products and to separate themselves from competitors.
One of the first brand names, Smith Brothers, has been advertising cough drops since the early 1850s. Quaker Oats, the first cereal company to register a trademark, has used the image of William Penn, a Quaker who founded Pennsylvania in 1681, to project a company image of honesty, decency, and hard work since 1877.

Other early and enduring brands include Campbell’s Soup, which came along in 1869; Levi Strauss overalls in 1873; Ivory Soap in 1879; and Eastman Kodak film in 1888.

By the end of the 1800s, patent medicines and department stores dominated advertising copy, accounting for half of the revenues taken in by ad agencies. During this period, one-sixth of all print ads came from patent medicine and drug companies. Such ads ensured the financial survival of numerous magazines, as “the role of the publisher changed from being a seller of a product to consumers to being a gatherer of consumers for the advertisers.”

Many contemporary products, in fact, originated as medicines. Coca-Cola, for instance, was initially sold as a medicinal tonic and even contained traces of cocaine until 1903, when that drug was replaced by caffeine.

Early Post and Kellogg’s cereal ads promised to cure stomach and digestive problems. Many patent medicines made outrageous claims about what they could cure, leading ultimately to increased public cynicism.

As a result, advertisers began to police their ranks and develop industry codes to restore customer confidence. Partly to monitor patent medicine claims, the Federal Food and Drug Act was passed in 1906.
With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, "continuous-process machinery" kept company factories operating at peak efficiency, helping to produce an abundance of inexpensive packaged consumer goods.

By the 1880s, however, the demand for newspaper advertising by product companies and retail stores had significantly changed the ratio of copy at most newspapers.

Whereas in the mid-1880s papers featured 70 to 75 percent news and editorial material and only 25 to 30 percent advertisements, by the early 1900s, more than half the space in daily papers was devoted to advertising. This trend continues today, with more than 60 percent of the space in large daily newspapers consumed by ads.

The Top 10 National Advertisers

Promoting Social Change and Dictating Values

As U.S. advertising became more pervasive, it contributed to major social changes in the twentieth century.

First, it significantly influenced the transition from a producer-directed to a consumer-driven society.

By stimulating demand for new products, advertising helped manufacturers create new markets and recover product start-up costs quickly.

By the early 1900s, advertisers and ad agencies believed that women, who constituted 70 to 80 percent of newspaper and magazine readers, controlled most household purchasing decisions. (This is still a fundamental principle of advertising today.)

Ironically, more than 99 percent of the copywriters and ad executives at that time were men, primarily from Chicago and New York.

- They emphasized stereotyped appeals to women, believing that simple ads with emotional and even irrational content worked best.
After the Great Depression and World War II, the advent of television dramatically altered advertising. With this new visual medium, ads increasingly intruded on daily life.

Criticism of advertising grew as the industry appeared to be dictating American values as well as driving the economy. Subliminal advertising: a 1950s term that refers to hidden or disguised print and visual messages that allegedly register on the unconscious, creating false needs and seducing people into buying products.

The Shape of U.S. Advertising Today

- Most of the history of modern advertising has been influenced by the print media and the facility of copywriters, who create the words in advertisements.
- Until the 1960s, the shape and pitch of most U.S. ads were determined by a slogan, the phrase that attempts to sell a product by capturing its essence in words.
- Eventually, however, through the influence of movies, television, and European design, images asserted themselves, and visual style began to dictate printed substance in U.S. advertising as mega-agencies dominated and boutique agencies emerged.

The Influence of Visual Design

- Part of this visual revolution was imported from non-U.S. schools of design; indeed, ad-rich magazines such as Vogue and Vanity Fair increasingly hired European designers as art directors.
  - These directors tended to be less tied to U.S. word-driven radio advertising because most European countries had government-sponsored radio systems with no ads.
By the mid-1980s, the visual techniques of MTV, which initially modeled its videos on advertising, influenced many ads and most agencies.

MTV promoted a particular visual aesthetic—rapid edits, creative camera angles, compressed narratives, and staged performances.

Video-style ads soon saturated television and featured such prominent performers as Ray Charles, Michael Jackson, Elton John, Madonna, and Paula Abdul.

The popularity of MTV’s visual style also started a trend in the 1980s to license hit songs for commercial tie-ins.

The Mega-Agency

- **mega-agencies**: in advertising, large firms or holding companies that are formed by merging several individual agencies and that maintain worldwide regional offices; they provide both advertising and public relations services and operate in-house radio and TV production studios.

- “Besides dominating commercial speech, a $500-billion-a-year industry, these four companies... —.... Omnicom... Interpublic... WPP... and... Publicis—also hold incredible sway over the media. By deciding when and where to spend their clients’ ad budgets, they can indirectly set network television schedules and starve magazines to death or help them flourish.”

**The World’s Four Largest Advertising Agencies, 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Income in Billions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omnicom</td>
<td>$15.5 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpublic Group of Cos</td>
<td>$12.0 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP Group</td>
<td>$11.4 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicis</td>
<td>$10.1 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Based on $13.10 billion U.S. revenue from agency advertising and media activities. Non-advertising revenue is excluded.
The Boutique Agency

- The visual revolutions in advertising during the 1960s elevated the standing of designers and graphic artists, who became closely identified with the look of particular ads.

- Breaking away from bigger agencies, many of these creative individuals formed small **boutique agencies** to devote their talents to a handful of select clients.

Market Research and VALS

- **market research**: in advertising and public relations agencies, the department that uses social science techniques to assess the behaviors and attitudes of consumers toward particular products before any ads are created.

- **demographics**: in market research, the study of audiences or consumers by age, gender, occupation, ethnicity, education, and income.

- **psychographics**: in market research, the study of audience or consumer attitudes, beliefs, interests, and motivations.

- **focus group**: a common research method in psychographic analysis in which a moderator leads a small-group discussion about a product or an issue, usually with six to twelve people.

- **Values and Lifestyles (VALS)**: a market-research strategy that divides consumers into types and measures psychological factors, including how consumers think and feel about products and how they achieve (or do not achieve) the lifestyles to which they aspire.
Creative Development

- The creative aspects of the advertising business—teams of writers and artists—make up its nerve center. Many of these individuals regard ads as a commercial art form.
- For print and online ads, the creative department outlines the rough sketches for newspaper, magazine, direct-mail, and Web advertisements, developing the words and graphics.
- For radio, the creative side prepares a working script, generating ideas for everything from choosing the narrator’s voice to determining background sound effects.
- For television, the creative department develops a storyboard, a sort of blueprint of roughly drawn comic-strip version of the potential ad.

The average costs for a thirty-second commercial during popular prime-time programs on network television for a Monday and Thursday night.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Time (ET)</th>
<th>9 p.m.</th>
<th>10 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Dancing With the Stars</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Big Bang</td>
<td>$170,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>House of Lies</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOX</td>
<td>Bones</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Ugly Betty</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Survivor</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>The Office</td>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOX</td>
<td>House of Lies</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
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</tbody>
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Persuasive Techniques in Contemporary Advertising
- Conventional Persuasive Strategies
  - famous-person testimonial: an advertising strategy that associates a product with the endorsement of a well-known person.
  - plain-folks pitch: an advertising strategy that associates a product with simplicity and the common person.
  - snob appeal: an advertising strategy that attempts to convince consumers that using a product will enable them to maintain or elevate their social station.
  - bandwagon effect: an advertising strategy that incorporates exaggerated claims that everyone is using a particular product, so you should, too.
  - hidden-fear appeal: an advertising strategy that plays on a sense of insecurity, trying to persuade consumers that only a specific product can offer relief.
  - irritation advertising: an advertising strategy that tries to create product-name recognition by being annoying or obnoxious.
The Association Principle

• the association principle, a persuasive technique used in most consumer ads. Employing this principle, an ad associates a product with some cultural value or image that has a positive connotation but may have little connection to the actual product.

  For example, many ads displayed visual symbols of American patriotism after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in an attempt to associate products and companies with national pride. In trying "to convince us that there's an innate relationship between a brand name and an attitude," agencies and advertisers may associate products with nationalism, freedom, adventure, happy families, success at school or work, natural scenery, or humor.

Advertising as Myth

• myth analysis: a strategy for critiquing advertising that provides insights into how ads work on a cultural level; according to this strategy, ads are narratives with stories to tell and social conflicts to resolve.

  Myths are the stories a society constructs to bring order to the conflicts and contradictions of everyday life.

• Three common mythical elements are found in many types of ads:
  - Ads incorporate myths in ministory form, featuring characters, settings, and plots.
  - Most stories in ads involve conflicts, pitting one set of characters or social values against another.
  - Such conflicts are negotiated or resolved by the end of the ad, usually by applying or purchasing a product. In advertising, the product and those who use it often emerge as the heroes of the story.

Critical Issues in Advertising

• Children and Advertising

  Because children and teenagers influence up to $500 billion a year in family spending—on everything from snacks to cars—they are increasingly targeted by advertisers.

  • very young children cannot distinguish between a commercial and the TV program that the ad interrupts.
Advertising in Schools

- The brainchild of Whittle Communications, Channel One offered "free" video and satellite equipment (tuned exclusively to Channel One) in exchange for a twelve-minute package of current events programming that included two minutes of commercials.
- A 2006 study found that students remember "more of the advertising than they do the news stories shown on Channel One."
- "It isn't enough to advertise on television... you've got to reach kids throughout the day—in school, as they're shopping in the mall... or at the movies. You've got to become part of the fabric of their lives."
  —Carol Herman, senior vice president, Grey Advertising, 1996

Health and Advertising

- **Eating Disorders**
  - A long-standing trend in advertising is the association of certain products with ultra-thin female models, promoting a style of "attractiveness" that girls and women are invited to emulate.
  - Such advertising suggests standards of style and behavior that may be not only unattainable but also harmful, leading to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia.

- **Tobacco.**
  - Tobacco ads disappeared from television in 1971, under pressure from Congress and the FCC, and the hard liquor industry voluntarily banned TV and radio ads for many decades.
  - Over the years, numerous ad campaigns have appealed to teenage consumers of cigarettes. In 1988, for example, R. J. Reynolds, a subdivision of RJR Nabisco, revived its Joe Camel cartoon character from an earlier campaign, outfitting him with hipper clothes and sunglasses.

- **Alcohol.**
  - Many of the same complaints against tobacco advertising are also being directed at alcohol ads.
    - Alcohol ads have also targeted minority populations.
    - College students, too, have been heavily targeted by alcohol ads, particularly by the beer industry.

- **Prescription Drugs.**
  - With the tremendous growth of prescription drug ads in television, newspapers, and magazines—affecting billions of dollars in prescription drug sales—there is the potential for false and misleading claims.
  - But as spending on direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertisements has risen, federal enforcement is on the decline.
Comparative Advertising

- From 1983 to 2000, former fashion photographer Oliviero Toscani developed one of the most talked-about ad campaigns of the late twentieth century. As creative director for clothing manufacturer Benetton, Toscani used “United Colors of Benetton” poster-style images featuring few words and no Benetton clothing. Instead, the ads carried frank, often controversial sociopolitical images, such as a white infant nursing at a black woman’s breast, a nun kissing a priest, Jewish and Arab boys embracing, dying AIDS patients, and U.S. death row prisoners.

Puffery and Deceptive Ads

- Since the days when Lydia Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound promised “a sure cure for all female weakness,” false and misleading claims have haunted advertising. Over the years, the FTC has played an investigative role in substantiating the claims of various advertisers. A certain amount of puffery—ads featuring hyperbole and exaggeration—has usually been permitted, particularly when a product says it is “new and improved.” However, when a product claims to be “the best,” “the greatest,” or “preferred by four out of five doctors,” the FTC has often asked for supportive evidence.

- When the FTC discovers deceptive ads, it usually requires advertisers to change or remove them from circulation. Although the FTC does not have the power to directly assess financial penalties, it can seek monetary civil penalties for consumer redress in court, and it occasionally requires an advertiser to run spots to correct the deceptive ads.

Product Placement

- Product placement: the advertising practice of strategically placing products in movies, TV shows, comic books, and video games so the products appear as part of a story’s set environment.

- Will Ferrell’s 2006 movie Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby satirized the over-the-top product placement advertising that supports Nascar.
Advertising’s Threat to Journalism

- With many dailies facing financial difficulties in the 1990s and the early 2000s, some editors turned their investigative eyes away from controversial business stories in order to keep advertisers happy.

- Local television news outlets are also subject to advertiser pressure. A survey by the nonprofit Project for Excellence in Journalism in 2004 found that one-third of local journalists had been pressured by advertisers or corporate owners about what to write or broadcast.

Advertising, Politics, and Democracy

- Through its seemingly endless supply of pervasive and persuasive strategies, advertising today saturates the cultural landscape. Its ubiquity raises serious questions about our privacy and the ease with which companies can gather data on our consumer habits.

- As advertising has become more pervasive and consumers more discriminating, ad practitioners have searched for ways to weave their work more seamlessly into the social and cultural fabric. Products now blend in as props or even as “characters” in TV shows and movies.

- Among the more intriguing efforts to appear a seamless part of the culture are the ads that exploit, distort, or transform the political and cultural meanings of popular music.

- A more straightforward form of cultural blending is political advertising, the use of ad techniques to promote a candidate’s image and persuade the public to adopt a particular viewpoint.

- As individuals and as a society, we have developed an uneasy relationship with advertising.

- We should remain critical of what advertising has come to represent: the overemphasis on commercial acquisitions, the overreliance on compelling images rather than substantial print information, and the disparity between those who can afford to live comfortably in a commercialized society and those who cannot.