

AMERICANNED CREATIVITY

**Advertising brainwashes our facts
and our attitudes toward facts.**

**How the medium gets into you
and how to get into the medium.**

Those were the days, my friend. She came on all sweetness and light. Wholesome. Long summer dress. Long hair. Big summer hat. A change, man. Like lightning in her eyes. She whipped off her innocence with her straw hat. She belted: “Yeooo...can take Salem out of the country, BUT.”

Can you, can any of you, resist adding: “You can’t take the country out of Salem.”

Of course not.

Until this Sweet Young Belter and the Marlboro Man were, along with all cigarette commercials, dropped from the telewaves, no one could resist saying Salem’s name. Even non-smokers soaked up the brainwash.

Every ad agency aims to make you say its product’s name. To say the name of the brand is to burn it into your brain. In the land of the free, we are programmed by TV advertising.

TV can make you want what you never knew you wanted. Blacks in Watts watch TV and want the same Good Life that Evanston Whites can buy. A pretty girl with curly brown hair watches a Clairol commercial. Right off, she wants the straight blonde Surfer Girl Look.

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But, what if society keeps Blacks from buying the life that TV promises? What if that brown-haired girl doesn't have more fun as a blonde? Was the radical Abbie Hoffman right, after all, to say that every American can learn all he needs to know from TV? How to keep teeth bright, toilets clean, and underarms sweet.

So who needs Salem, Clairol, and Abbie Hoffman's boring old Revolution?

You do.

At least, you and your critical self-defense can't ignore them. The reason you can't is that, like Mount Everest, they are there. And if mountaineers climb Everest simply "because it's there," then we scale the TV pitch because it, too, is there. And like some roaring avalanche down Everest's slopes, what is there, affects us.

Remember this commercial? "Come to where the flavor is, come to...? Chances are, you do. You can hardly help saying "Marlboro Country."

Don't let it swell your ego though. Programmed chickens can peck out "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head," if they get enough corn for their reward. Did you have any choice *not* to learn commercial jingles? Not if you turned on the TV, you didn't. *Repetitio est mater studiorum* they used to say in Latin class. Loosely translated that means: Repetition is the mother of studies. Repeat anything often enough and it will stick.

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Once upon an American time, TV advertisers watched a motion-picture experiment. In 1958, the producers of *My World Dies Screaming* tried to increase the shock of their horror movie. They knew that the human eye sees "motion" at basically twenty-four still frames per second in 16 millimeter. With this physiological fact in mind, they calculated that if

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they flashed the word *blood* on the screen for a superfast 1/50 of a second, no one would consciously see it. The viewers would, however, perceive the suggestive word subliminally. (*Sub-liminal* means *below the threshold* of awareness.) In this subconscious way, the audience would become more terrified watching the heroine's screaming close-up. They would not really know why, since they could not "see" the word *blood* dripping down star Cathy O'Donnell's face.

Since terror in any audience's head is an immeasurable variable, another experimenter interedited the movie *Picnic* not with *blood* but with *Drink Coca-Cola* and *Hungry? Eat Popcorn* at 1/3000 of a second every five seconds. Confection sales, unlike terror, are measurable. Because of the subliminal suggestions, the Coke sales at the Fort Lee, New Jersey, experimental moviehouse rose 57.7 percent and popcorn, 18.1 percent. Subliminals significantly swelled the sales.

In the late fifties, a radio station experimented with these Hidden Persuaders. The disc jockey announced that during the next song he would broadcast a message subliminal to the threshold of hearing. Listeners who could figure out what they couldn't hear were to call the station. What the jock broadcast was "Someone is at the door." One woman claimed that for the rest of the afternoon, "for some strange reason," she kept checking her front entrance as well as her drive-way. Another listener, later that night, woke suddenly from a deep sleep and knew exactly what subliminal message his subconscious had "heard" earlier in the day and had freed later into the swirl of his conscious dreams.

After a fashion, The Beatles subliminally engineered several of their albums: *Sgt. Pepper*, *Magical Mystery Tour*, and *Abbey Road*. Play these sides backwards, sideways, slow and fast, to get some idea not only of the hidden audibles but the deep-down subliminals John and Paul buried in the ninety-six tracks that make those albums so heavy. The

mix of these subliminals was the start of the rumor that McCartney was dead.

Naturally, America took out after the subliminal Image Makers. You can't have people motivated by Hidden Persuaders, can you? What do you think of the morality of the Subliminal Sell? Subliminal persuading was ruled illegal. But is the illegal necessarily the immoral? Legality and morality are often two different things. Consider the possibilities.

Everyone agreed that Richard Nixon's TV image needed repair. What if the ad agency that filmed his TV campaign spots added words like *Patriotism*, *Motherhood*, *Apple Pie*. We couldn't see those words, but because Americans supposedly like patriotism, mothers, and apple pie, we would be subliminally influenced to transfer our goodwill to Mr. Nixon.

What if a rival agency removed Nixon's subliminals (sounds like a TV series plot, doesn't it?) and edited in instead 1/3000th pictures of nineteen-year-old dead soldiers, 1/50th word-flashes of *A-Bomb* or *High Taxes*? Would that be fair to Mr. Nixon?

Imagine a TV Eden of no conscious commercials. You'd no longer have, in the seven minutes between *Daniel Boone* and *Ironside*, thirty-seven different commercial spots before your eyes (including Station Identification). Instead the "unnoticeable" Subliminal Sell could make you want Fritos and Pepsi smack in the middle of David Brinkley's newscast, even though you loathe "junk food." Subliminal suggestion could barrage you with a hundred tension-making words, causing you a headache which other subliminals pushing aspirin and Bufferin could cure. It boggles the mind. What if Hitler had had it? Or what if now the Establishment or the new Revolutionaries should try it?

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The TV you watch at this point in 1971 revels in two basic sells: the Hard (Sock-it-to-'em) and the Soft (Sneak-it-to-'em).

About the Hard Sell nothing is subliminal. It blips on the screen shilling at you as if you were a moron, "proving" its products through demonstrations of slurping paper towels, invisible deodorant shields, and time-lapse photography that only numbskulls could believe. The Hard Sell is brassy, visually dull (e.g. some old guy sitting at a desk, pretending to be a doctor, pushing Nature's Remedy at you for your own good), and often offensive (like the Poli-Grip freak who digs his dentures into an apple and talks with his juicy mouth full telling you how his upper plate doesn't fall out of his face anymore).

So let Poli-Grip sue me.

After all, what is distasteful is, like beauty, in the mind of the beholder.

The King of Hard Sell Offensive was last year's Silva Thin cigarette commercials. Most of the Silva Thin spots built their "dramatic appeal" on a denigrating view of women. Witness: "Cigarettes are like women. The best ones are thin and rich." Small wonder Women's Lib has been screaming, "Up yours, Silva Thins!"

The Soft Sell commercial, on the other hand, is very like the subliminal in its indirect approach. The Soft Sell is a well photographed, pleasant package. You feel warm and beautiful watching the commercial come alive. The Soft-Sellers hope you will transfer your goodwill to their product. Xerox Corporation Super-Soft-Sells by withdrawing all interrupting commercials. They gentle you into their product by advertising only at the beginning and the end of the show.

Kodak is currently King of the Soft Touch.

Nice families, sunshine, and GI's coming back to their sweethearts to the tune of "The Green, Green Grass of Home" populate Kodak country. The outlawed Marlboro commercials, mythologized as superbly as they were photographed

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and edited, made you want to return to the honest simplicity of Marlboro Country. (Wherever *that* was.) Marlboro, you'll recall, never ever mentioned smoking. So Soft was their promise it almost said, if you can't say something good about smoking, don't say anything at all. Marlboro never really sold cigarettes. They sold real estate and an American myth of individual masculine freedom, wide as all outdoors.

TV has two other ways to suck you in: The Sex Sell and the Security Sell. (Either can be hard or soft.)

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, theorized that everybody is motivated by sex. Madison Avenue calculates, therefore, that if you cast a beautiful "sister" in a car commercial, "dudes" will buy that car figuring she is standard equipment. The psychologist, Karen Horney, felt Freud was too narrow. More than by sex, she felt that people are motivated by security. In the Security Sell, "Mad Avenue" lays lines on you like:

"Don't be half-safe. Use Arrid to be sure."

"Ban won't wear off as the day wears on."

"Your social security number: Seagram's 7."

Pick up the point of all this? Once you understand critically how and why you react emotionally to commercials, you are no longer the TV brainwashers' victim. You get on top of the commercial psychology. You understand how companies try to manipulate you. You get to be an objective critic. And *voila!* You start seeing the TV commercial spots for the great little entertainments they are.

No matter what anyone says about *Myra Breckinridge*, author Gore Vidal's satire can hardly be faulted. Myra, talking of TV as the new high point of American culture, says:

I must confess that I part company with Myron on the subject of TV. Even before Marshall McLuhan, I was drawn to the gray shadows of the cathode tube. In fact, I was sufficiently avant-garde in 1959

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to recognize the fact that it was no longer the movies but the television commercial that engaged the passionate attention of the world's best artists and technicians. And now the result of their extraordinary artistry is this new world, like it or not, we are living in: post-Gutenberg and pre-Apocalypse. For almost twenty years the minds of our children have been filled with dreams that will stay with them forever, the way those maddening jingles do (as I write, I have begun softly to whistle "Rinso White," a theme far more meaningful culturally than all of Stravinsky or even John Cage...) The relationship between consumer and advertiser is the last demonstration of necessary love in the west, and its principal form of expression is the television commercial.

Vidal, using his Myra as a fictional cover for his long essay on American culture, argues well for the TV commercial as the New Art Form. Isn't it true in your own experience that the TV commercials are, more often than not, more enjoyable and intelligent than the shows they sponsor?

If money can buy the world's best artists and technicians, then why shouldn't the commercials be good? After all, a sixty-second commercial may be budgeted at \$100,000 for that minute. What movie ever spread bread like that? (Two hours of *Easy Rider* cost only \$400,000.) Since these TV persuaders cost so much, they must sell plenty. They must make us buy.

* * * *

The various commercial sells often overlap. New ones are constantly being invented. To the seven basic categories currently at the top of the TV marketeering, add your own nominees.

- **THE SECURITY SELL.** The basic appeal here, remember, is “conform to be safe.” For example, three good-looking jocks repeat like sheep:

“I came back. I came back. I came back. To Brylcreem.”
 “And we’re glad they did,” boops Betty the Cheerleader.

An adult-appeal variation of this is a pretense of doing your own thing within the confines of Establishment limits. You can “rebel” within the system: “The Dodge Rebellion wants you!” (Rebellion? Independence? Can you imagine the Black Panthers driving around in a Dodge?)

- **THE SEX SELL.** Seduction explains itself. Singer Lainie Kazan comes on like gangbusters for Aqua Velva after-shave: “I get a warm romantic notion, when you use Aqua Velva Lotion. That’s how our romance began.”

Then there’s the Swedish girl who, over the music of “The Stripper,” shills shaving lather: “Take it off. Take it all off.”

If these are too latent, be blatant. Try: “New Ultra-Brite Toothpaste. The taste you can really feel...Gives your mouth. Whee! Ting! SEX APPEAL! “

- **THE MUSICAL SELL.** Done well, the musical commercial can be very pleasing; poorly conceived, nauseating. Beyond the jingle, the more sophisticated musical sell sometimes becomes a radio hit song in itself, like “Percolator,” and Bob Crewe’s original Pepsi theme: “Music to Watch Girls By.”

Sometimes it borrows a song like the Schick Barber who sings “More” from the movie *Mondo Cane*, or the Marlboro Theme which is the title music from the cowboy movie *The Big Country*. Sometimes this Sell reaches us through satirical pop-culture nostalgia. Music hath indeed charms to soothe the savage buyer with its Soft soaping.

A-1 Sauce’s Musical Sell glorifies the American Product like Ziegfeld’s *Follies* glorified the American Girl. While

lovely ladies, dressed as national dishes from different countries, parade down a staircase past the camera, a voice-over announces grandly: “First there was salt and pepper and NOW (drum roll!) there is A-1 Sauce!”

Hollywood star Ann Miller condensed all the magic of MGM musicals for TV viewers with a one-minute extravaganza as she tapped away, with twenty chorus girls, in a big Busby Berkeley-like dance number for “Great American Soup.”

Perhaps the jazziest Nostalgia Spot was the award-winning “Cold Diggers of 1969,” a Contac commercial choreographed by TV’s most famous dancer Peter Gennaro. Recalling, again, the ever-popular Busby Berkeley and his film *Gold Diggers of 1935*, twelve identically dressed chorines in identical blonde wigs tapped out the hit song, “Button up your overcoat when the wind blows free.”

We have to laugh at the dancers’ not-quite-precision routine. The exaggeration amuses us. What else can we do when our nose blows free, but remember to buy Contac.

- THE EGO-TRIP SELL. This is a variation of the Security Sell. We receive assurance we should do our own thing, and that we’re beautiful, healthy, rich, and cool enough to do it.

Phillip Morris Filters assured us: “He’s an independent guy.”

Camel Filters told us: “Camel Filters. They’re not for everybody.”

Schlitz says, “You only go around once in life.”

Clairol adds, “If I’ve only one life to live, let me live it as a blonde.”

Virginia Slims cigarettes confirmed the femininity of liberated females with the frilly costumes backing up the line: “You’ve come a long way, Baby.”

And Pepsi shores up our confidence by telling us: “You’ve got a lot to live.”

- **THE CATCH-PHRASE SELL.** This seller makes his product name (or a punch-line from his product’s commercial) into a household word.

Excedrin is the Catch-Phrase champion. Excedrin made “Mother, please. I’d rather do it myself!” into a nationwide joke. More recently, Excedrin has taught us that the superlative of headache is not “very *bad* headache,” but is “I have an *Excedrin* headache.”

Laugh-In’s popularity is built on Catch Phrases. People feel they have to watch Rowan and Martin to be Up with the latest Catch to follow *bippy* and *sock-it-to-me*.

Get Smart added “Would you believe?” to our conversations. TV and its commercials change our language. And our grammar. Winston cigarettes advertised, “Winston tastes good like a cigarette should.” Noting the difference between *like* and *as*, the very popular commercial added as a punch-line: “What do you want? Good grammar or good taste?”

- **THE EPIC SELL.** This relatively new genre imitating epic Hollywood movies gives you the impression that the grand product is larger than life.

Bacchus After-Shave enlists a cast of thousands to pull a huge flagon of Bacchus Lotion into a C. B. DeBiblical city. The thousand men become irresistible to their thousand wives. “At that moment, the Romans would march in and take over. And that,” Bacchus’ commercial insists, “is how the Romans conquered the world.... Go out and conquer your own empire.”

Hai Karate, working the battle of the sexes in its epic punch-and-kick kung-fu commercials, makes even a quiet man so irresistible that the green bottle comes with a Self-Defense pamphlet to fight off women turned on by the

cologne, warning, “The new Hai Karate after-shave is so powerful it drives women right out of their minds. Be careful how you use it.”

This Epic genre is a huge Put-On, an exaggeration, spoken by an announcer whose tongue is planted hard in his cheek.

Seven Seas Salad Dressing sells Caesar Salad the same way. “Hail Caesar! Hail Caesar!” shouts the cast of Romans in togas.

- THE MAGIC SELL. The Wizardry Sell can be both the most inventive and the hardest to take.

Remember how “Wanda the Witch” started this sell for Hidden Magic Hairspray?

Remember Crest’s “Decay Switch Witch” living in the bathroom medicine cabinet?

The “Giant Hand” in the washing machine?

The Ajax White Knight?

That Wizard of a Man from Glad?

The omens of the White Tornado and the Dove flying in the kitchen window?

Remember Manwich Sandwich for women who want to enchant husbands and children? Remember Latex Spred Paint for the time “when your house begins to haunt you”?

Remember the Giant Green Jolly?

If there be definition by example, these ample samples show you something about the Magic Sell. Historically, the Church and State tested witches to see if they were guilty or innocent.

Today on TV the tables are turned. The witch and sorcerer have become the testers and endorsers of every kind of wonderful and marvelous product. The advertising psychology is: If we can’t prove this product through reason, you’ll have to buy its magical results on faith alone.

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Television has programmed Americans into short attention spans. Sell it in twenty-five words or else don't sell it. Teachers met this problem when the first kids raised on TV hit kindergarten. Today, few young adults can bear to sit through a long old-style movie, much less a long concert or opera. We can enjoy Woodstock, the place, or *Woodstock*, the episodic movie, because we pay attention to it because we dig it.

Sesame Street, like *Laugh-In* requires an average twenty-second attention span. No one sits down to watch all of a program like *Sesame* or *Laugh-In* unless they were raised before TV and don't know any better. TV is not meant to be an Oberammergau Passion Play Marathon experience. Writers for TV scripts like *Judd for the Defense* peak their excitement every seven minutes: building to suspense right before each commercial.

The commercials themselves run thirty or sixty seconds. Of the primetime spots, eighty percent let it all out in thirty seconds. They sock the whole message to you: fast. The Great American Novel, all this considered, can no longer be predicted to be the Dostoyevskian length of *Gone with the Wind*. Broadway composers Jerome Ragni and James Rado may be right in their notes on the album of *Hair*. The narrative song called "Frank Mills"—less than twenty-five lines—is probably the Great American (Post-TV) Novel.

In our society, time is money. Americans, with hats off to the wild Oscar Wilde, know the price of everything and the value of very little. (That's perhaps the final difference between literal and metaphorical people.) Grant some inherent value to *The Movie of the Week*. That value you will find undercut by a TV Code maximum of ten minutes of commercials per primetime hour. Other times (mornings, afternoons, and late nights) the Code permits sixteen minutes of

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commercials an hour. So don't you ever pity Johnny Carson having to perform ninety minutes five nights a week. Nearly half of the Carson Show, forty minutes, is nothing but mass sell.

Should the willing suspension of disbelief you give *The Bold Ones* be broken by all these clarion calls to (under) arms? Is Pay-TV or Cable-TV the answer? Will the new videotape cassettes revolutionize programming so radically we will spend commercial-free evenings at home watching a rented video-cassette of a current Broadway hit musical like *The Rothschilds*?

For TV today, the Commercial Sell is the Frankenstein that creates our buffered, not-so-glad-wrapped, gotta-have-a-gimmick Americanned culture. Whenever business lays its hands on art, art suffers the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune hunters. If business exists to supply the demand, business often must create the demand. Advertisers, like politicians, tell us what they think we need, what they want us to demand, so they can supply it. In the following blank, enter your nominee for the most worthless product ever plugged as a necessity: _____.

More complicated than shilling cornflakes, TV's real advertising potential comes not with selling *Products* but with selling *Attitudes*.

The critical viewer can hardly doubt it: check out the recent FCC ruling that the networks must give equal and free network time to responsible opponents of the President of the United States of America.

Times change and we change with them.

Ten years ago, Academy Award winner Joanne Woodward could not have publicly supported Planned Parenthood in a sixty-second plug about the Population Explosion.

Even if you cannot consider—along with the Dutch-Catholic theologians—that maybe the biblical dictum to

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multiply and fill the whole earth is ended now that the earth is SRO (standing room only), then you might consider the “Plurality of Opinion” that it is every person’s duty to respect. After all, America, like love, is a many-splintered thing. TV, recognizing this of late, is now helping us get it together.

* * * *

Ever watch Sunday morning TV? Yech. Those so-called “religious” programs are often the worst kind of hard-sell. They are esthetically dull and intellectually insulting. The only thing worse than these Sunday “Holy Soaps” is the syndicated *Sermonette*, your local station’s midnight sign-off—and turn-off—when it rolls short “inspirational” films of various depressing preachers tucking us into bed.

Dead, but not buried, such smug spirituality died in 1963 when super-satirist Stan Freberg slicked up the United Presbyterian Church with Soft-Sell inspiration. Religious commercials changed. Freberg’s freestyle quickly inspired Los Angeles’ St. Francis Productions. Their twenty-man Franciscan staff, budgeted at \$150,000 annually, has found the Soft Spots of over seven hundred stations.

To knock those Sunday morning shows is not to knock religion. You needn’t, after all, toss out the baby with the bathwater. The FCC requires each TV station to air a certain amount of public service programming. Freberg, the Franciscans, and your station figure alike: No one watches the doldrums of Sunday morning TV anyway, but prime-time viewers will catch a sixty-second spiritual ad slipped into an otherwise unsold commercial slot.

These spiritual commercials are more slick than sick. They’re a sort of *Sesame Street* to teach adults about society. They focus on family, social, and political problems in easily digestible units. Friars Emery Tang and Karl Holtsnider of St. Francis Productions soft-sell street religion

to everyday people. Sunday morning services are fine, say the Franciscans, but religion happens twenty-four hours a day. Franciscan scripts look like this:

Script No. 1

Scene: Cocktail party.

Situation: Host suggests playing a game of
“Word Association.”

HOST: Money.

GUESTS: Bills. Evil. Las Vegas.

HOST: Freeway.

GUESTS: Death. Ticket. Hurry.

HOST: God.

GUESTS: Dead silence. Stares.

As *Time* magazine points out: No one knows what to say about God anymore. Let's re-think Him.

Script No. 2

Scene: Close-up of Black hand shaking White hand.
The hands hold.

VOICE-OVER:

All things considered, that's not very much is it?

Typical of their soft psyching, St. Francis Productions cool their Catholic viewpoint. They ecumenically emphasize the brotherhood of man and the unity of Christianity rather than Christian sectarianism.

Pope John XXIII would approve of the interchange ability of Catholic and Episcopal commercials.

One Episcopal plug dramatizes a middle-aged, middle-class, middle-western, mid-American flipping TV channels

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from one on-screen disaster to another. He finally tunes in a “Lions vs. Christians” movie.

The score as usual is “Lions, 406. Christians, 0.”

Immediately he time-travels back into the Coliseum.

The VOICE-OVER says: “Being a Christian didn’t use to be a spectator sport...It still isn’t!”

* * * *

Besides selling “Religious” attitudes to this One Nation Indivisible (“under” the recently inserted “God”), TV commercials have been pressured to destroy socially harmful stereotypes and misconceptions rather than create them.

Italians dislike the Mafia names used on detective shows like *The FBI*. Jay Silverheels, playing Tonto as sidekick to the Lone Ranger, insists he is not the last of the Mohicans. Like Cree singer Buffy St. Marie, Silverheels campaigns for “real” Indians to play “reel” Indians. If palefaces must portray Indians, Silverheels wishes them to act with greater dignity. Madison Avenue is learning not to ask Silverheels to be typecast as a sidekick to another TV hero dressed in white: the Man from Glad. How’s that grab your greater dignity?

Even when the stereotype is “humorous,” offense can be taken. Chicanos have protested the Frito Bandito out of television existence.

Stereotypes, no matter how “humorous,” says Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, professor of psychology at New York City College, “almost invariably assert the inferiority of one group and the superiority of another. Needless to say, these explanations are satisfying to the group on top, and disturbing to the group on the bottom.”

The ad agencies have long celebrated the narrow Judaeo-WASP stereotypes of beauty, humor, and superiority. But as Peggy Lee sings, “Is that all there is?” Emphatically no!

New agencies, like Manhattan's Zebra, have succeeded in the last two years on their premise that "Integrated Is Also Beautiful." Co-racial to the proportion its name implies, Zebra's Black management is a far cry from the Black ad men that film-maker Robert Downey created in his satire on ad agencies, race, and corporate power, *Putney Swope*. The movie itself is in black-and-white, except for the TV commercials the agency shoots in color.

Zebra's advertising promotes alternative standards of beauty, behavior, and popular culture. Aren't we all freer for no longer having to be Clairol blondes or WASP Brylcreem jocks?

Chicago's "Project Straight Dope" destroys misconceptions and sells reality in its anti-drug abuse campaign. Straight Dope's short spots are cold and reasoned. Steve Lehner, vice-president and creative supervisor of North Advertising, explained Straight Dope's commercials to *Chicago Sun-Times*' Ron Powers:

The spots are terse. Stark. They are terribly honest. Unslick. Real. The intrusive sound of a Moog synthesizer is the attention-getter. An un-announcer voice achieves the one-to-one relationship with the listener. He presents the facts coldly and precisely. He explains why dope is dumb. He gives the listener the tools he needs to say no to narcotics.

The ads are designed to make kids think for themselves. This is not easy because kids are not introduced to narcotics by a gangster in a trench coat. Kids are introduced to narcotics by their friends. It is hard to say no to a friend.

Beyond such a public-service Reality Pitch, and Nearer-My-Cash-to-Thee, is the Commercial of Golly-Gee-Whiz Verisimilitude.

You know: the lady caught by the candid camera in her favorite laundromat, the man who endorses his favorite product in a parking lot. Since nothing succeeds like *reality* these frank days, commercial film-makers like Chicago's young Michael Gray often prefer the total reality of an actual location to a studio set. With today's lightweight equipment, Gray finds no need to shoot anywhere but the actual site, whether filming an old-timey pub for a *Chicago Tribune* TV spot or shooting in Kentucky for Colonel Sanders.

Real locations require real people. Put yourself in the shoes of young California housewife Sue Sherwood. She read a small ad in her local newspaper: "Mother, would you like to participate in a household experiment? We'll pay baby-sitting and transportation." She made contact and was told to ask no *Mission Impossible* questions. Her instructions told her to bundle her dirty laundry and take it to a motel. She was interviewed, taken to a laundromat, given soap for her wash, and told if she was caught or killed the *Mission* staff would disavow any knowledge of her existence.

So far so good. Then enter Rose Marie, co-star of *The Dick Van Dyke Show* and *The Doris Day Show*. Rosie made pleasant enough conversation about kids, families, detergents, and then laid it on Mrs. Sherwood: "Do you know you've been on TV all along?" If the screeching Mrs. Sherwood didn't, she did the day Tide rewarded her 4,000 dollars for spontaneously endorsing their product.

Mrs. Sherwood lived the American Dream: she got something for nothing.

Not many have her luck.

Even with a portfolio of composites (glossy photos of oneself) and a resume (of modeling, acting, or technical experience), the competition is keen even for brothers and sisters who can get it all on.

As of 1971, nearly seven hundred non-entertainment production companies, varying in size from three to a

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hundred people, telefilm 15,000 different gigs annually. These include films for company training-via-videotape, public relations, sports, technical and scientific information. (Cape Kennedy launches, for instance, are photographed by as many as eighty technical cameras.) In the US approximately 115,000 men and women produce TV commercials and spot announcements for national, regional, and local distribution. Searching for a career? The field is wide-open and growing, growing, growing.

