

# Selling modernity through advertising: Technological progress and its reflections on the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American advertising

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*Received: February 2005*

*Final Acceptance: December 2005*

## **Abstract:**

This paper contextualizes the relationship between advertising and technology by categorizing the different dimensions of the relationship and by examining the parallels between their histories during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century America. Investigating the relevant social, cultural, and political conditions surrounding advertising practice with a historical framework will help reveal technological change and its sociocultural implications.

The histories of advertising and technology, examined together, show that their development has mutually reinforced each other. While advertising has helped the advance of technology within the capitalist system by creating markets for the mass produced products, increasing sales, and helping technology become mainstream, technology has assisted in advertising's achievement of unlimited cultural authority through technical means and possibilities. The side effects of the relationship between advertising and technology have been social and cultural: the establishment of the values of a capitalist system despite its negative aspects, in addition to the establishment of social roles.

In examining the contextual dimensions of advertising and technology, this paper uses examples, specifically, from the early twentieth century America where the development of advertising and technology gained momentum with the advance of modernity and industrialism. These examples also help in the discussion of the relationship between advertising and the various politics of technology.

**Keywords:** *Advertising; modernity; advertising history; history of technology; technological change; relationship between advertising and technology*

## **Introduction**

Advertising is an influential but taken-for-granted part of our everyday life. Through advertising, companies seek to create positive perceptions of their products and increase sales. They try to reach audiences via advertisements that promote products through the messages grounded in improving one's

individual, social, and cultural being and living. Drawing on cultural values, knowledges, and shared reality, advertisements not only reflect on humans' basic physical needs, but also create a sense of necessity out of desires. In order to communicate messages; create shared understandings, and be relevant to target audiences, advertisements have to be grounded in the events of popular culture and everyday socio-cultural and political life. In this respect, advertising is a mirror, reflecting what is happening in the contemporary world or immediate surroundings of individual cultures. Besides reflecting culture and society, advertising also shapes culture in attempting to inscribe (consumerist) values and behavior on public. Because it's grounded in everyday life and because of its connections with production, business, politics, economy, society and culture, advertising history has great potential for shedding light onto sociological and cultural change created by the events of history.

This paper looks at the ways in which advertising reflects the change created by modernity and technological progress. The focus will specifically be on the American culture during the early decades of the twentieth century, when technological production became commonplace and gained momentum. The first part of the paper will contextualize the relationship between technology and advertising. First, advertising will be identified within the world of technology as a boundary domain located between mass production and consumption. Second, different dimensions of their relationship will be discussed to provide a fuller perspective. The second part of the paper will examine the sociocultural and political implications of the intertwined histories of advertising and technology. This discussion will show how the development of technology and advertising has mutually reinforced each other, establishing ways of modern living and being; creating a mass consumer culture for the excess of modernity's products; and influencing the public to come to terms with the demands of capitalism, politics and modernity along the way.

Advertisements during the early twentieth century America encouraged and reflected social and cultural acceptance of technology and the transition from being a highly manual culture to a technological one. They also show how a consumer culture was created in response to modernization and mass production taking place in factories and how advertising was used as a propaganda device to shape public opinion and act when necessary.

The word technology will be used throughout the paper to indicate applied science in use - wide range of mass produced technological objects offered for mass consumption. While the singular use of the term will indicate technology on a broader level, the plural use will emphasize a collection of individual technological objects or products. As it will become clear, a neutral perspective towards technology is adopted-a perspective that contextualizes technology and the conditions that surround it.

### **Advertising as a Boundary Domain between Production and Consumption**

Processes, politics, contexts, and effects of technology have been a highly popular domain in social sciences. The field of Science and Technology Studies, for example, analyzes technologies' effects on society and the environment. Processes and conditions of production are also very influential directions in this field where the content or internal practices of technology-social relationships, politics, and circumstances of the production

process are investigated. This thread of research is described as “opening the black-box” (Hess 1997; Whitley 1972). However, apart from the fields of scholarly research that study them, technological products get *black-boxed* once the manufacturing process ends: the contingencies and the politics of their previous production lives are concealed and technologies come to be seen as neutral entities.

Advertising can be considered a “boundary-domain” where this neutralization process occurs. According to Jean Baudrillard (1996), advertising marks the distinction point between labor and product. When disconnecting the product from its history, advertising represents the product as a new, simple, and pure being (p. 175). Thus, advertising activity serves as a mechanism where technological products leave their production context, black boxed, and are appropriated for consumption. In advertisement development processes, the politics and contingencies of production are concealed and products are attributed new cultural meanings and are presented to larger public for consumption. Advertising strips away the politics of production and enables the transfer of products into mainstream culture where they are sold and used in social and personal environments. Advertising, then, is a mediator between production and consumption.

In the course of mediating products, advertisements use culturally shared knowledge, reality, and social representations in order to find a common language to communicate with the designated target audience. These cultural elements exist and circulate in society through individuals and institutions in daily interactions. People think, act, and react in their sociocultural environments according to these guidelines. Advertising’s communication with the public through the assemblies of these cultural elements becomes a vehicle that constructs and shapes reality and knowledge. In other words, advertising actively constructs what we socially and culturally know and regard as “real.” Advertising defines and creates individual and sociocultural identities, contributing to individuals’ and society’s self-perception. It describes and prescribes ways of seeing, thinking, being, and behaving. Thus, when it comes to technology, advertising, with its implicitly influential nature and wide reach, is an effective venue that help shape public understanding of technology.

### **The Relationship between Technology and Advertising: Four Dimensions**

In order to investigate how technology and advertising has come to reinforce each other’s development and establishment in society, it is necessary to contextualize their relationship. Sorting this complex relationship will enable a better understanding of the outreaching dimensions of technology, its politics, and how technology and advertising has mutually supported each other. The relationship might be analyzed in four different categories:

- Advertisements for technology
- Advertising by means of technology
- Advertisements using technological media
- Advertising, technology and the modern style

#### ***Advertisements for technology***

This category involves advertisements created for promoting the sales of technological objects. In stripping away the politics of production, advertisements are used in “push” and “pull” strategies in increasing sales

(Wells, Burnett and Moriarty 1995:101). Through these strategies that either push the products through the channels of retailers or pull consumers by creating direct demand, advertisements seek to seduce consumers by creating desire for the technological products that they praise. With the messages and meanings embedded in advertisements, these efforts not only increase sales but also create a consumer culture (Laird 1998).

Advertisements promoting technologies convey the messages of reliability, efficiency, and modernity. While helping to create/maintain consumer culture, these advertisements tell the consumer how to perceive technologies, how to react to their existence and benefits, and how to adopt an attitude towards technological objects, and develop a consequent buying behavior (figure 1).

### Advertisements by means of technology

This category includes technologies enhancing various *styles* and *practices* of advertising. Promotion between technology and advertising has actually been mutual: as advertising has helped to promote technology and made it mainstream, technology has helped to promote advertising style and practice through technical possibilities.

Technologies enhancing the *style* of advertising include technical developments that aid in the creation of ads. These developments have brought new possibilities for more aesthetic and convincing advertisements. For example, during the late 1920s and the 1930s, color printing and airbrushing techniques advanced photographic negatives, which helped in producing better advertisements. These techniques served the promotion of consumption greatly:

*for example, air brushing photographic negatives produced a range of effects [including]...the homogenization of consumer and product in magazine advertisements. The merging of housewife and washing machine, of office girl and filing cabinets, as if both were made of the same substance, becomes one of classic indicators of modernity itself. The highly commercial value of newness as such ('brand new,' so new you can see the brand) was signaled unmistakably (Smith, 1993:183).*

More recently, computer hardware and software have enhanced advertising style to a great extent. Nowadays, graphic designers have many opportunities in producing attractive graphics for both print and electronic media, showing consumers how well the new products would fit into their lives, completing not only their lives but also their identities.



**Figure 1.** This 1930 Hoover vacuum cleaner advertisement depicts four well-dressed women admiring the machine. The imagery of sublime in this ad regards technology as the ultimate entity of the modern age, attempting to shape the perception, attitude, and reaction of consumers towards technology and modernity.

Technology has also enhanced advertising *practices* as well. Throughout the history, railroads, telegraph, telephone, and computers have contributed immensely to the expansion, efficient administration, and organization of advertising. For example, advertising administration greatly benefited from the managerial revolution in American business which was dependent on technologies like railroads, telephone, and telegraph (Chandler 1977; Smith 1993). Better communication means enabled the mobility and efficiency of actors in the advertising business, and transportation and electronics on the other hand helped improve the distribution of advertisements and the media that they are embedded in.

Expressed in 1913, the following comment from the advertising manager of the *Chicago Record-Herald* newspaper is an excellent example of this type of relationship between technology and advertising:

*it is the contention of others that modern invention, improved facilities of transportation, the telegraph and telephone have helped to raise advertising to its present importance in the business world...[a]dvertising is not the end result of progress. It has made progress. Advertising is not the result of modern invention, because it has been the channel through which all improvement, betterment, and achievement have been fostered and popularized (Laird, 1998:379).*

Thus, the relationship between technology and advertising has been mutual (figure 2). Advertising not only helped modernity, it itself got modernized along the way.

**“Advertising”** . . . says  
FRANCIS H. SISSON  
*“is perhaps the Greatest Agency  
of Natural Selection in the  
Business World”* . . .



“It accelerates the process whereby the world’s productive activity is becoming centralized in the hands of those who are best equipped to carry it on.”



IN this statement Mr. Sisson points out with admirable clarity the rôle of advertising in the modern economic process.

Production facilities today are wonderfully efficient, but adequate and suitable markets are needed before the most effective organization of production can be achieved.

It is the function of good advertising service to locate and develop these necessary markets on the scale which modern industry requires, and with a selectivity which keeps costs at a minimum.

Many manufacturers, through the use of such services, maintain an active demand for their products—and keep in a position to profit by the economies of large-scale production and concentrated control.

In the cultivation of markets essential to this achievement, the J. Walter Thompson Company has successfully served many of the leading enterprises of this country, helping to work out practical market strategy based upon accurate research and wide advertising experience.

Two folders, entitled “Selling at Home” and “Selling Abroad,” have been prepared briefly to show the scope of the services of the J. Walter Thompson Company.

Each or both of these folders will be sent to executives interested. Write to the New York Office, and copies will be forwarded promptly.

**J. Walter Thompson Company**  
New York • Graybar Building • 420 Lexington Avenue

Chicago, Boston, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Los Angeles • Montreal, Canada • London, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Antwerp, Warsaw • Alexandria, Egypt, Port Elizabeth, South Africa • Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Sao Paulo, Brazil • Bombay, India • Sydney, Australia • Harbin, Joo

Five or more electrical appliances, a J. Walter Thompson survey indicates, will be found in 70% of all average households. Excessive new machinery over 15,700,000 American homes. New conditions which electric power develops in the home have a marked influence even on the market for articles seemingly so remote as soap and toilet. Study of such influences, on which sound market strategy is based, enables the J. Walter Thompson Company to prepare advertising which strengthens the position of its clients in their many markets.

### Advertisements using technological media

Advertisements using technologies as channels can be analyzed at this level. Technologies have not only improved advertising style and practices, but also helped advertisements reach a wider set of audiences through various technological media. Electric signs and internet ads are among the examples of this type of relationship. David Nye, in *American Technological Sublime* (1994), illustrates how advertising employed electric signs in the first half of the twentieth century as a new method to attract attention of and create interest and desire in consumers. More recently, the internet has been an excellent medium for advertising in reaching wide range of audiences. It created an efficient environment for companies in advertising their products to different segments of audiences while promising good revenue for medium providers.

**Figure 2.** Appearing on a business periodical, *Fortune Magazine*, this 1930 J. Walter Thompson Company (an advertising firm) ad praises advertising as an agency that “accelerates” the “productive activity” and the “economic process.”

### Advertising, technology and modern style

The modern worldview’s effect on advertising styles constitutes this category. During the early years of

modernism in the 1920s and 1930s, the idea of industrialism informed and inspired art and advertising to a great extent. The intertwining of art/design and technology started with the movements in art/design circles. The key art and design movements such as Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism, De Stijl, and Dada had profound influence on the practice of advertising. These movements united into a “genuinely new ‘modern style’ characterized by a *purity of form, an exact sense of function based on the machine, [and] a preference for mass-manufactured material*” (Smith, 1993:353) (emphasis added).

Collectively, these movements advocated a stronger link between art and industrial production and encouraged the move towards bold geometric forms, the elimination of decoration, and the use of asymmetric layouts (Livingston and Livingston, 1992:136). According to Terry Smith (1993), the “obviously modern” visual form in advertising helped to spread the modern perspective to all aspects of everyday life in the 1930s (p. 354). Advertising was considered as a pure art form then, and advertising professionals consisted of artists (Smith, 1993; Laird 1998).

During the early years of the twentieth century, ads associated products with the symbols of modernity. Defining the product as “modern” was an important part in persuading consumers. This was often accomplished through “a visual field, sometimes photographic, which was characterized by diagonal or zig-zag lines and geometric or streamlined shapes...This vivid ‘look’ established the product’s own lines and its association with other objects of ‘modern’ style” (Marchand, 1985:155) (figure 3).



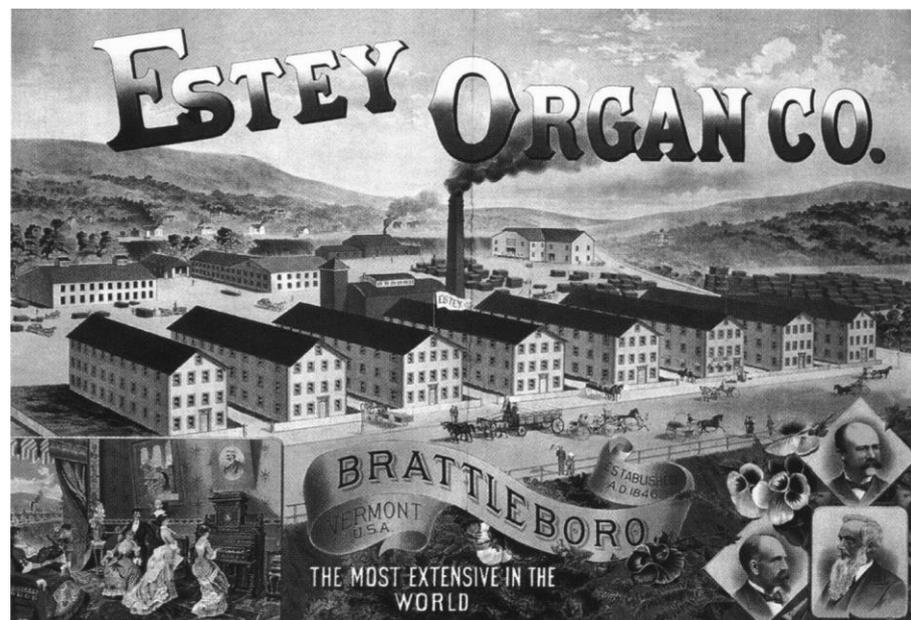
**Figure 3.** This Brunswick Radio ad depicts a futuristic scene of a city filled with elevated crossing highways and skyscrapers. Note the centralized control exercised by the male figure on the upper left corner of the ad, who himself looks very “modern,” as if he was made of the same substance with the elements of the modern world; therefore is in perfect harmony with the technological, modern life.

All the elements in advertisements, like the images/photography, the copy, the headlines and their relationship to each other (the layout) were used to create an illusion on people's dreams and promised that upon the acquisition of the product advertised, the dreams would come true. The consumer was gradually placed in the consumer culture. The more s/he paid attention to advertisements, the more s/he was part of the modern illusion and life.

### **Histories of Advertising and Technology**

Advertising reflects technological change not only in its style but clearly also in its representations as well. A look at the history of advertising and specific instances reveals how the representation of technological change has taken place. First advertising agencies started to appear with the rise of industrialism and modernity during the 1860s (Livingston and Livingston, 1992:14). Advertisements of that period onwards conveyed the messages of national and cultural progress through technological developments. This progress was based on a modern, material standard and consumers' endorsement of that standard. Symbols of contemporary technological achievement, such as the images of clocks, factories, steamships, and trains, appeared in the advertisements of the late nineteenth century, along with the images of the founders of firms whose products being promoted.

Advertisements, at first, were more "producer-oriented," reflecting business owners' ideas propagandizing progress and "emphasizing a production ethos and notions of progress that were tied to production and producers" (Laird, 1998:5 and throughout). The production ethos in advertisements conveyed to consumers the message that it was manufacturers who enabled progress by moving production from the home to the factory where it could be done more efficiently and economically (Laird, 1998:377). The consumer was believed to be immutable, and the advertisements sought to seduce them with enhanced and enlarged images of factory buildings, transportation vehicles, and products (figure 4).



**Figure 4.** This poster/ad (circa 1890) depicts the owners of the Estey Organ Company and the company establishments, claiming a place in the era of technological development and the modern social life it entails (note the insert picture on the lower left corner).

Gradually, advertisements became more and more consumer oriented with the *structural changes in business* and *rising competition*. Structural changes came with managers replacing owners in companies and the managerial revolution in American business, in addition to business mergers and national markets. The closing of the geographical gap between different regions of the U.S. through technologies like telegraph, telephone, and railroads required more powerful companies and created opportunities for business mergers.

Competition, on the other hand, was mainly due to little differentiation in products and the expansion of domestic markets. Enlarged companies created more demands on more powerful managerial systems, which had already started to happen after the second half of the nineteenth century. Professional managerial systems helped corporations act efficiently on the domestic stage and compete effectively. As Alfred Chandler (1977) shows, the growing sizes of the firms enabled them to control national markets, to raise capital, and to consolidate operations.

Consumer-oriented tendency in advertising regarded “consumption as the driving force of progress” (Laird, 1998:5 and throughout). As Roland Marchand (1985) suggests, in the early twentieth century “[n]ot only did the number of advertisements, the variety of products advertised, and the media available to advertising expand dramatically; in addition, advertisements increasingly gave predominant attention to the consumer rather than the product” (p. xxi). The common theme of the consumer-oriented style was modern products enhancing the lives of consumers. This shift signaled the creation of a consumer culture as we know today. The best of modernity—technological artifacts, started to enter into homes, making consumers modern by enabling them to participate in modern life through their use (figure 5).

In the 1920s and 1930s, representations of technological products in ads with modern images promised the attainment of the American dream. Grand technologies like skyscrapers and bridges created awe-inspiring sublime experiences for viewers while also contributing greatly to American nationalism conveying the messages of America’s greatness (Nye, 1994). Industrialism and technology were implicitly or explicitly represented in advertisements as elements crucial for the future of American civilization. This representation played a very important role in the process of the public’s embracement of technologies and the changes it brought.



**Figure 5.** This Certain-teed ad depicts the transformation from a manual culture to a modern, technological one. The doors of modernity and the bright future are opened.

Advertising has also had close relationships with industrial design, a relationship that helped the dissemination and embracement of modernity. While in the 1920s industrial design was a subsidiary of advertising,

*by the early 1930s it was being heralded, along with advertising, as the major means to stimulate consumers to buy...Advertising insisted more and more on substituting its own representations for the referents it was selling; industrial design increasingly sought to invest the referent with the signs of its representation, to physically transform it into its representation, turning the product into its advertised exaggeration...Industrial design, in this context, becomes a discourse for the insertion of the priorities, values, and imagery of advertising deep into the productive process (Smith, 1993:357).*

In fact, both fields “invaded the production process demanding that it recast its priorities.” Smith (1993) attributes the 1927 Model A shift at the Ford Motor Company and the prior design changes in the General Motors and Chrysler to this influence (p. 357).

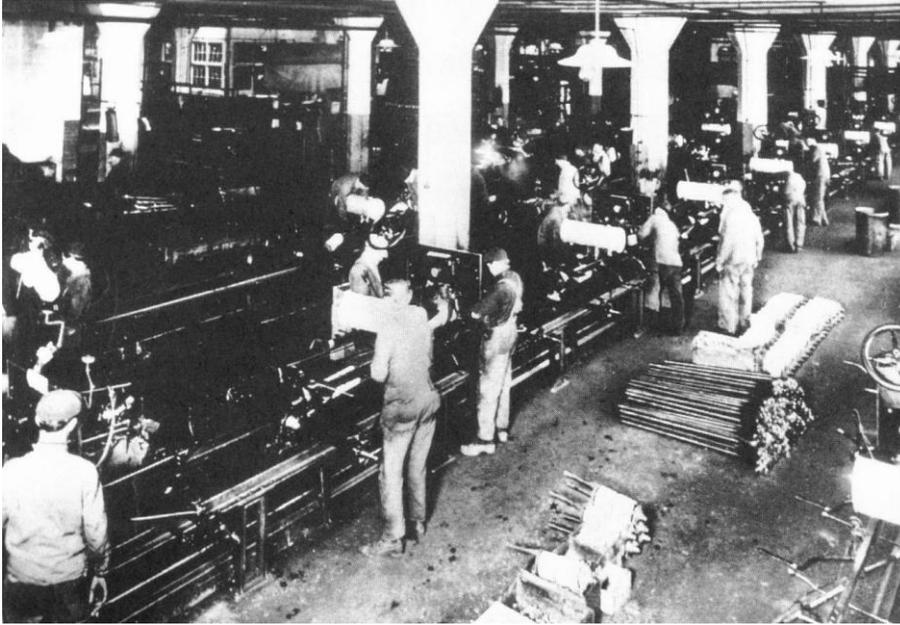
The revolutions in the managerial system, methods like Frederick Taylor’s scientific management system and Fordism stressing the importance of efficiency in the workplace, technologies like assembly lines enabling fast production, and competition all acted as economic impetus that boosted the practice of advertising. As Smith illustrates,

*the excessive overproduction of successful and widely applied Ford Company—type mass manufacturing, allied with the need to assuage the social unrest caused by the very changes this system was effecting in working life, was the key impetus for the great expansion of advertising in the 1920s, from \$15 million in national periodicals in 1915, to \$150 million in 1929 (Smith, 1993:357).*

Advertising constantly paid its debts to technology by promoting, praising, and disseminating it. Advertising professionals, as well as politicians and large segments of the public were sure of advertising’s role in providing bright and civilized futures, an educated and prosperous public, and a wealthy nation (Laird, 1998; Fox, 1984). By praising technologies and creating consumers for excessively produced products, advertising kept the wheels of production and economy in motion and opened the doors for technological change, helping it write its history.

### **Advertising and the Politics of Technology** ***Politics of the workplace and capitalism***

As discussed, in the 1910s and 1920s, advertising was vital to the modernization efforts. It was not only used as a vehicle for the mass market to absorb the overabundance of mass production, but also, on a larger level, was employed as a means to create a consumer culture *in reaction to the political threat of workers protesting the capitalist system’s degradation of labor* (Smith, 1993; Ewen, 1976). For example, the assembly line, a symbol of industrial revolution and mass production, had an important part in the degradation of labor. On a business point of view assembly line, as a contemporary workplace technology, both highly increased the number of products produced and reduced the production time considerably. At the same time, the production process was much less dependent on human power. The technology brought precision, efficiency, speed, and economy. Because of these efficiencies, the technology was embraced highly by companies (figure 6).



**Figure 6.** An assembly line at Ford Motor Company plant during 1913-1914.

However, the technology had a negative influence on workers for a variety of different reasons. Workspace was organized based on the demand of the assembly line and the new machines; turning the human activity into a simple function. Workers only performed simple, repetitive gestures as they assembled parts to the objects moving through the assembly line. Machine logic allowed no agency for workers. For example, at Ford company during the early 1910s, rest time for workers was excluded, toilets were installed close to the line so no extra time was spent, and going outside plants was banished. Individual control over work was reversed; the machine, not the human controlled the pace of work. Furthermore, because the assembly line required no specific skills, workers were easily discarded if they did not or could not comply with the new work system (Smith, 1993:32).

It was this degradation of the workplace that advertisements attempted to disguise. Ads, targeting industrial workers among consumers, promised a virtual escape from the poor working conditions and a membership in the new magical modern world. For the Ford Company, for example, workers served both purposes: production and consumption. One Ford advertisement in 1925 (figure 7) used the headline “Within the means of millions” and used the images of Ford factory workers leaving their factories in their private Ford cars. The copy argued that the parking lots of factories started to fill up with workers’ automobiles, proving that American workers, too, enjoy better living standards (Smith, 1993:107). Workers were the consumers of their own production. Thus, the “consumer culture developed in fear of, and in contradiction to, the destructiveness of anti-capitalist rebellion” (Smith, 1993:179).

### ***Wartime politics***

A careful look at the advertising history reveals another case of the intertwining of advertising and the politics of technological production. During the World War I (WWI), advertising was a very popular medium. It was crucial to manufacturers who, at the time, were converting from making consumer goods to war production, because they wanted to keep their name

familiar to the public. Manufacturers stated in their advertisements that WWI was a “businessman’s war” and they argued for the American industry’s power to “win [the] war for human liberty,” asking for devotion from the workers (Fox, 1984:76).



*Within the means of millions*

Automobile parking grounds adjacent to factories may be seen today in every American industrial center. They offer a striking proof of the better standard of living that workers in this country enjoy.

Here Ford cars usually outnumber all others. Their low cost and operating economy bring them within the means of millions; and in families where the cost of living is high even in proportion to income, the purchase of a car is possible with little sacrifice through the Ford Weekly Purchase Plan.

Runabout \$260 | Tudor - \$580  
 Touring - \$290 | Fordor - \$660  
 Coupe - \$520 | All Prices F. O. B. Detroit  
On Open-Car Starter and Demountable Wheel Extra  
 Full Size Radials Extra Equipment  
 at an extra cost of \$27

**Ford**  
 THE UNIVERSAL CAR

FORD MOTOR COMPANY    DETROIT, MICHIGAN

MAKE SAFETY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

**Figure 7.** 1925 Ford Motor Co. ad. “Within the Means of Millions.”

The American government, on the other hand, used advertising for different reasons at the time, ranging from uplifting public mood and enhancing the feelings of nationalism, to financing the war and promoting conservation, and from creating enthusiasm for the future to recruiting people for the workforce and the military (figure 8). The government also regarded advertising as a medium to reinforce devotion to the war through production. Messages boosting public enthusiasm and cooperation aimed to bring closure to the social unrest and to settle down the disturbance created by the war (Fox, 1984:74-77), which in return, established advertising’s cultural authority. Advertising, in fact, was a popular medium in *both* world wars of the twentieth century for the American government. The times of depression and conservation reflected on other advertisements as well (figures 9 and 10).

The advertising industry gained maximum benefit from this popularity, which it had achieved by serving the politics of technological production: it acquired, professionalized, and institutionalized unchallenged authority. According to Laird (1998), in 1917, Missouri governor Frederick E. Gardner, welcomed participants to the convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World by saying that advertising professionals “could do national service and ensure military victory if they kept business going in a ‘steady, unbroken’ manner.” He said, “[b]y doing so...you will not only write advertisements—you will write history” (p. 329).

**Politics of gender and social roles**

Advertisements reinforced the politics of workplace and technological production in other dimensions as well. From a gender point of view, advertising used messages that—depending on the socio-political circumstances, both encouraged and discouraged women from participating in worklife in the factories and companies of the modern world. Women were both portrayed as workers/producers and consumers in advertisements during the different periods in the twentieth century US history.

During the both world wars, women replaced men in factories, who left their countries and families for the war. Due to the remoteness from the physical brutality of the wars happening outside its national borders, and women working in defense industries, support services, and domestic production, American industrial and technological production continued efficiently. The wartime military and governmental advertising portrayed women in their new roles, attempting to attract more women for the workforce. The roles of women working for the nation were glamorized and glorified with the images of attractive and confident women in advertisements. The best known symbol of wartime patriotic womanhood is the Rosie the Riveter poster (figure 11) that emerged during the WWII. The name "Rosie the Riveter" became the nickname of women workers, characterized by their work overalls and tools.

American industry gained new momentum with the production of technological products and machines for domestic and international consumption. After the WWII, especially, when war-torn Europe struggled to start from scratch, America produced machines and products for the domestic market and the Old World, Europe. With



**Figure 8.** A poster/ad from World War II (WWII): Uncle Sam recruiting soldiers. “I Want You for U.S. Army”

**AMERICA HAS CLOSED ITS FIST**



From a nation that spent money like a drunken sailor, we have become a people who think twice before we spend at all. • As a result, advertising to-day must not only move money in the direction of specific merchandise—it must first overcome the reluctance to part with that money. • This puts an added obligation on advertising. • It puts an added obligation on those who create advertising. • It makes the choice of the right advertising agency more important than ever before.

YOUNG & RUBICAM, INCORPORATED • ADVERTISING  
NEW YORK • PHILADELPHIA • CHICAGO

**Figure 9.** Young & Rubicam Incorporated, an advertising firm, calls business owners to invest on the right advertising agency that would overcome “the reluctance to part with...money” that consumers “think twice before” they spend during the times of depression.

**THE LAST DROP MAY BE PROFIT**



AND it's necessary not only to get all of the juice, but to get it as economically as possible. Making profits is a matter of how thoughtfully the job is done.

On every side we find business profitably operating on volumes that were formerly considered ruinous. Manufacturing, merchandising, transportation, insurance, public utilities—in all these fields investigation shows individual firms successfully operating in spite of situation opportunities, because of an uncanny ability to extract income in excess of expenditure. This ability is, in every case, the intelligent utilization of *Control Figures*—getting out all the juice . . . economically.

*Control* is possible only from unshuffled information—accurate information on every phase of every activity of the business—collected and analyzed while it is of use, not weeks or months afterwards. With Powers Punched Card methods the creation of such *Control* figures is automatic. Not only is the executive guided in extracting all the possibilities of an operation or territory but is further aided in expense control so that there may be a substantial remainder . . . profit.

And Powers is not a burden. Its machine, an *ideal, flexible, simple, rugged* instrument. They produce the all so necessary *Control Data* and at the same time perform the regular operations of accounting at a cost which shows savings to the users. The Powers story of *Control* is mighty interesting. Don't you want to hear it?

**POWERS**  
POWER'S PATENT  
**ACCOUNTING MACHINES**  
Division of REMINGTON-RAND, Inc., Boston, New York

**POWERS SERVES** MANUFACTURING, MERCHANDISING, TRANSPORTATION, INSURANCE, PUBLIC UTILITIES, INVESTMENT, FINANCIAL, REAL ESTATE, AND ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES. **LETTERS, QUOTES, DEMONSTRATIONS, CATALOGS, LITERATURE, BOOKS, SPECIALS, SERVICE, REPAIRS, AND REFINISHING.** Write for literature and information.

Send for a copy of "Mastering Facts For Management"

*Just what is it to be*  
**A Good Wife in this**  
MODERN AGE?



KEEP down in your heart—in the heart of every woman—is that eager, wistful wish to be a good wife—a partner in your husband's plans; his cheery companion in leisure hours.

You realize that in this advanced age your husband needs a more modern-minded wife; a wife whose aims and temperament are attuned to the present-day pace. He is moving ever forward. You can not afford to lag behind.

In the world of Business, men have banished the dragon of Drudgery. But what of your world? Are you still hampered by heavy household tasks that take your time and sap your strength? Does the weekly washday take its heavy toll of hours that you could spend so joyously, so profitably in other ways?

**TUNE IN ON LAUNDERLAND**

See the lady and her lady of *Launderland*. Broadcast for all the laundrywomen listening evening at 8:30 P.M. (Pacific, Eastern Time) and at 9:00 P.M. (Pacific Time). Tune in on your favorite station of the National Broadcasting System for a real musical treat.

Are you passing up enjoyable, stimulating, youth-bringing pleasures and pastimes because of this heavy burden? It is no wonder then that washday steals more of Youth and Beauty than the other six days can restore!

Washday in your home is doomed—a day of rest and recreation is assured—if you will decide now to get the facts to see for yourself just what the modern laundry has to offer. In place of drudgery you are given a full day of freedom; happy hours for those pleasant pastimes—those gracious arts—that make one a truly good wife—a worthy companion of the twentieth century husband.

You will find there is a laundry service that exactly meets your needs, one that fits snugly into your Family Budget. Moreover, in this progressive day, the laundry can be relied upon to wash clothes clean and make them last long. The health of your family is safe-guarded with every scientific aid. Modern laundry service really *cuts in* in the long run.

At the other end of your telephone there is a laundryowner who will gladly continue this story. Talk with him—this morning. Let him send you the delightful journey booklet of "Alice in Launderland." It's the next thing to visiting the laundry yourself.

LET THE **Laundry** DO IT

SPONSORED BY THE LAUNDRY OWNERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Figure 10. This ad for Powers Accounting Machines also depicts a clenched fist, a common visual symbol of the times of depression expressing determination and courage.

Figure 12. This laundry service ad claims that every women "wishes to be a good wife," which can be attained by using the service of the company being advertised.



Figure 11. "We Can Do It!" Rosie the Riveter, a symbolic beautiful female worker of war times, confident in that the females would handle the hard work and the country would emerge from the difficult times.

the return of men from the wars, the gender

scene in factories and companies changed. The American workforce became male dominated again with women going back their homes to perform their traditional domestic duties. This time, advertisements encouraged women to return to their homes, be good wives and nurturing mothers (figure 12) and enjoy using technological products at home.

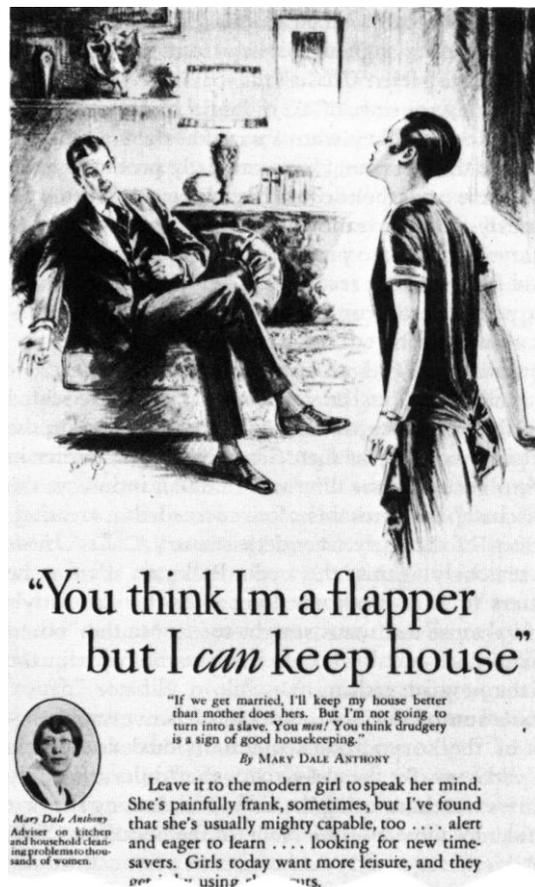
National advertisements promoting new domestic technologies helped to secure the male-dominated workplaces and production processes by depicting women in their homes. Women were represented in advertisements doing housework: cooking, taking care of children, cleaning, and providing sanitary environments for their family. Ads for technological products promised women that using the products, they would save time and escape from the drudgery of housework. However, according to Ruth Schwartz Cowan (1983), these technologies invisibly increased the amount of work that women had to do. Women were attributed new responsibilities, expected to achieve more and be clean, caring, and attractive at the same time (figure 13).

This portrayal of women in advertisements tightly secured women's places at home, stereotyping them (Cowan, 1983). Advertisements targeting women even provided guidelines for competency. Being a good mother was measured by the extent a woman provided a sanitary environment for her family, how well she cooked, whether she had a refrigerator, and whether and how often she used her vacuum cleaner. Advertisements extended the politics of technology and its production and deeply established the traditional stereotypical roles for males and females, both in the public and the private spheres. Even today with the high percentage of women working outside, women's places are still their homes—cooking, cleaning, and being responsible for the care of children.

### Conclusion

The relationship between advertising and technological production is a close and complex one. By looking at the relevant sociocultural, political, and economical conditions surrounding advertising and its messages, a better understanding of the advertising practice and its multidimensional relationship with technology can be established. Analyzing advertising practice in a larger context reveals the technological change that occurred during the early twentieth century and its sociocultural implications.

The histories of advertising and technology, examined together, show that their development has mutually reinforced each other. Advertising benefited from technological changes in terms of its design, style, practice, and



**Figure 13.** Representations of the high expectations of women: the young and attractive housewife who is able to keep her house better than her “mother does hers.” She is able to do so with the “time-savers:” domestic household technologies of her age.

dissemination. On the other hand, it helped the technological change to a great extent by creating a consumer culture, promoting the sale of products, expanding markets, and veiling the negative influences of the capitalist system such as the degradation of labor. The side effects of this relationship have been social and cultural: the establishment of the values of a capitalist system and of the social and domestic gender roles.

The history of advertising reveals a conquest for cultural authority and power in creating a consumer culture in response to the technological production, which has been dependant on markets for its survival. Advertising does not simply inform consumers of products anymore, as it did when it first emerged during the 1860s. It creates needs out of desires. These false needs are mostly social, cultural, and psychological: by consuming the products advertisements promote, individuals participate in the widely accepted and established consumer culture, becoming a part of what is modern, hip, and contemporary.

By contextualizing the relationship between advertising and technology and by investigating the early years of modernity, this paper has attempted to investigate the parallel points between the histories of advertising and technology. Social implications of the relationship were exemplified through social, cultural, and political instances in history that demonstrate the extent to which advertising history reflects technological change. Because it draws on cultural elements, values, and shared realities to communicate its messages and to be relevant to its audience, advertisements clearly reflect the social, cultural, economic, and political conditions of their day and age.

In looking at advertising and its relationship with technology from different perspectives, we have seen the identities of advertising from informing people of the objects offered to their service to turning desires into social and individual needs; and from creating a spending-oriented consumer culture to being a propaganda device. As well as being a selling strategy, advertising can easily be a device of social illusion or a propoganda device that shape public opinion and bahavior during the times of social political or cultural uncertainty and dismay.

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#### **Moderniteyi reklam yoluyla pazarlamak: Teknolojik ilerleme ve erken 20. Yüzyıl Amerikan reklamlarındaki yansımaları**

Bu makale, reklam ve teknoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi, bu ilişkinin değişik boyutlarını kategorize ederek ve reklamcılık ve teknoloji tarihi arasındaki paralel noktaları inceleyerek bağlamsallaştırır. Erken 20. yüzyıl Amerika'sında yaşanan endüstriyel ve teknolojik gelişmelerle kendini gösterip bir kültürel otorite halini alan reklamcılığı, teknolojinin ve modernleşmenin gündelik yaşama getirdiği değişiklikler kapsamında inceler. Reklam ve teknoloji aktivitelerini çevreleyen ilgili sosyal, kültürel ve politik durumları tarihi bir çerçeve içinde araştırmak teknolojik değişimin ve bunun sosyo-kültürel ve politik boyutlarının ortaya çıkmasına yardımcı olacaktır.

Reklamcılık ve teknoloji tarihi beraber incelendiğinde bu iki fenomenin gelişiminin birbirini büyük ölçüde etkilediği görülür. Reklamcılık, kapitalist sistem içerisinde teknolojik gelişime, büyük ölçekte üretilen ürünler için market açıp satışların artmasına ve teknolojinin yaygınlaşmasına yardımcı olurken, teknoloji de reklamcılığın, sağladığı teknik araç ve imkanlarla bir kültürel otorite halini almasını sağlar. Reklamcılık ve teknoloji arasındaki ilişkinin yan etkileri sosyal ve kültürel: negatif yanlarıyla kapitalist sistem değerlerinin ve sosyal rollerin yerleşmesi gibi.

Bağlamsal çerçevede incelenen reklamcılık, bize reklamların sadece yeni çıkan yada piyasada varolan ürünleri tanıtmakla kalmayıp geniş toplumun ve kültürün düşüncelerini, yaşam standartlarını, ve davranışlarını etkileyen bir araç olduğunu, gerektiğinde toplumsal zorluk anlarında bir propaganda aracı olarak da kullanıldığını gösterir. Çünkü reklamlar, izleyici yada hedef kitlesine ulaşabilmek için günlük yaşamdan alınan sosyal, kültürel, ekonomik ve toplumsal elementleri kullanır. Bu elementler sayesinde reklamcılık, izleyici kitlesi ile iletişimde ortak bir payda bulup iletişimin anlaşılır ve kalıcı olmasını sağlar. Reklamlarda kendi yaşamlarından ve sosyo-kültürel, politik ve ekonomik çevrelerinde olan olaylardan izler bulan izleyici kitlesi, reklamları doğal olarak içselleştirir ve reklamlardaki mesajları yaşamına yansıtır.

Makalenin ilk bölümünde, reklamcılık ve teknoloji arasındaki bağı kurmak amacıyla reklamcılık, teknolojinin üretim ve tüketim aşamalarında bir aracı unsur olarak çerçevelenir. Teknolojik ürünlerin üretim süreçlerinde varolan ve ortaya çıkan ürünü teknik ve yapısal olarak etkileyen sosyal, politik ve ekonomik dinamikler üretim aşaması bittiğinde reklamcılık tarafından nötr hale getirilir. Ürünleri geniş çaplı tüketim için hazır hale getirip yeni toplumsal ve kültürel anlamlar yükleyen reklamlar, üretim aşamasındaki bu dinamikleri örtbas ederek ürünlere yeni bir kimlik kazandırır.

Makalede reklamcılık ve teknoloji arasındaki ilişki, bağlamsal çerçevede incelemeye zemin hazırlamak için dört ayrı kategoride gruplanır. Bu kategoriler teknoloji için

reklamlar; teknoloji yoluyla reklamcılık; teknolojik medyaları kullanan reklamlar; ve reklamcılık, teknoloji ve modern stil olarak adlandırılmıştır.

Makalenin ikinci bölümünde reklamcılık ve teknolojinin erken 20. yüzyıl Amerika'sındaki gelişimi ele alınır. Ulusal tüketim için artık büyük miktarlarda üretilen teknolojik ürünler, yeni bir işletimsel idari sisteme ihtiyaç duyar. Yerel olmaktan çıkıp ulusal markete hitap ederek büyüyen şirketler, ürünlerini geniş çapta satabilmek için giderek artan oranda reklamcılığa yönelir. Modern, teknolojik topluma girişin ve şirketlerin bundaki payının reklamlarda yükseldiğini ve toplumun refah seviyesini yükseltecek yeni modern yaşam tarzının empoze edildiğini görürüz. Reklamcılığın tüketim kültürünü kurup yaygınlaştırması ve toplumun geniş çapta düşünce, davranış ve yaşayışlarını değiştirmesi bu döneme rastlar.

İkinci bölümün takip eden analizlerinde reklamcılığın, teknolojinin getirdiği yeni yaşam standartlarına uyumda ve toplumsal/politik çöküntü zamanlarında propoganda aracı olarak kullanıldığı, ve tüketmeye odaklı bir kültürü sağlamlaştırırken aynı zamanda yeni kapitalist sistemin ve birinci ve ikinci dünya savaşlarının getirilerine cevap vermek için kullanıldığı görülür. Artık ürünleri tanıtmakla yetinmeyen reklamcılığın daha büyük toplumsal amaçları vardır: bahsedilen olayların yarattığı özellikle negatif değişimlere toplumun ayak uydurmasını sağlamak gibi. Geniş çapta zor çalışma şartlarında üretilen teknolojinin negatif etkilenen işçisi olan kitle, kendi ürettiğinin tüketicisi durumuna dönüştürülür ve kapitalizmin yan etkileri böylelikle gizlenir.

Üstlendiği bu misyonlarla bir toplumsal ve kültürel otorite halini alan reklamcılık, aynı zamanda zor şartlarda kitlelerin moralini düzeltmek ve parlak bir geleceğe ulusal olarak inanmayı sağlamakta kullanılır. Bu geleceği sağlarken de, reklamlar, insanları içinde bulunulan dönemin getirdiği toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine uygun davranışlar sergilemeye yönlendirir. Örneğin reklamlar kadınların evhanımlığı ve toplumsal rolleri arasındaki geçişi sağlar. İlanlar ve posterler yoluyla birinci ve ikinci dünya savaşları esnasında fabrika ve işyerlerinde savaşa giden erkeklerin boşluğunu doldurmaya yönlendirilen kadınlar, erkeklerin savaş sonrası ülkeye dönüşlerinde evlerine dönüp ailelerine teknolojik ürünleri kullanarak iyi bir yaşama ortamı sağlamaya özendirilir.

Reklamcılık ve teknolojinin bağlamsal boyutlarını inceleyen bu makale, özellikle modernleşme ve endüstrileşme ile reklamcılık ve teknolojinin gelişiminin ivme kazandığı erken yirminci yüzyıl Amerika'sından örnekler kullanır. Bu örnekler, makalede reklamcılık ile çeşitli teknoloji politikleri arasındaki ilişkinin tartışılmasına da yardımcı bir unsurdur.