

A STUDY OF DISGUISED ADVERTISING  
IN TELEVISION BROADCASTING

By

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Bachelor of Arts

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Edmond, Oklahoma

1984

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate College  
of the Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE  
December, 1986

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## PREFACE

This study pertains to advertising disguised as programs, and their effects on consumers. A special thanks to Robert and Dave in assisting me by taping relevant program material.

My sincere appreciation to my graduate committee and Consumer Studies Center personnel for their assistance with special thanks to Dr. William L. Johnston, Director of the Center for Consumer Services; Dr. Carl Hall, Head of the Department of Housing, Interior Design and Consumer Studies and David P. O'Brien, Graduate Teaching Associate, and friend, Center for Consumer Services, Oklahoma State University.

An extra thanks to my family, for their encouragement and support, during this endeavor and a lifetime of love and loyalty.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Commercial television advertising is commonly recognized as interruptions of 30-seconds each of regular programming. While much research effort has been devoted to adverse television and advertising in general, little notice has been given to advertising disguised as programs and its effect on consumers. These programs wear many masks and vary in length from thirty minutes to two hours. Generally no program breaks occur for designated commercials except to re-emphasize the product or service being peddled.

Because of the unique qualities of television, unlike no other medium, society is still uncertain how to use it to full potential. One factor is certain - television demands participation from the viewer.

Recognition of the influence of modern advertising was noted by President Calvin Coolidge in 1926 in an address to the American Association of Advertising Agencies. Television was an experimental infant. President Coolidge credited advertisers with contributions to trade in the modern society and said they were "molding human minds."

Advertising gradually became the medium utilized to stimulate the popular idea "that what was new was desirable." Public

acceptance of this philosophy was essential for economic growth in modern times.

Contradicting characteristics of modernization resulted in the development of new strategies in advertising. Instead of focusing on the object product advertisers began the trend toward emotional appeal with a more personal tone. This change evidenced a shift from the "factory viewpoint" to concern with "the mental processes of the consumer" (Marchand, 1985).

Shortly after World War II television evolved into a dominant medium of social expression. The electronic stranger was welcomed into American homes and reciprocated by educating, entertaining and informing its host.

During those early years criticism was low grade, attributable basically to intellectuals who referred to television as a wasteland. By 1970 criticism of the media escalated, focusing on its effect on the individual rather than on content. The pattern of the development of television criticism follows that of literature, film and art, i.e. understanding the message; interest in style and form; and finally, the relationship to humans and social dimensions. Therefore, advertising aired on television, and as a function of television, cannot be viewed or criticized solely on the basis of form or content. It must be viewed wholly (Lowe, 1981).

Raymond Williams, a current television theorist (Lowe, 1981, p.15) expressed the rationale for the relationship between reality and the media when he wrote the following words:

Many people seem to assume as matter of course that there is, first, reality, then, second, communication about it. We degrade art and learning by supposing they are always second-hand activities: that there is life, and then afterwards there are these accounts of it. Our commonest political error is the assumption that power - the capacity to govern other men - is the reality of the whole social process, and so the only contest of politics. Our commonest economic error is the assumption that production and trade are our only economic activities, and that they require no other human justification of scrutiny. We need to say what many of us know in experience: that the life of man, and the business of society cannot be confined to these ends: that the struggle to learn, to describe, to understand, to educate is a central and necessary part of our humanity. This struggle is not begun at second-hand, after reality has occurred. It is, in itself, a major way in which reality is continually formed and changed. What we call society is not only a network of political and economic arrangements, but also a process of learning and communication

#### Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study is the continuing evidence of sponsor dominated program advertising or advertising in disguise and its impact on consumers. The purpose of this study is to examine televised commercials disguised as programs with respect to consumers. Questions expected to be answered are:

1. Are full length televised programs, formatted to sell products/ services, unfair or deceptive to the public? and
2. How do television programs, which are program length commercials, affect consumers?

#### Assumptions

This study assumes the viewer is an adult. Further, it assumes the programs used for evaluation are representative of commercialism programming referred to in this study.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Power of Television

Television's power in communication is awesome. Communication can be used to exercise control over the environment (Lowe, 1981, p. 132). Thomson (1972, p. 28) advances the following as some of the ways television controls:

- Increases awareness and perception of the environment, ourselves and our relations to it and to each other.
- Amplifies and extends our power, skill, control and intelligence.
- Transmits, stores, retrieves, and gains access to information and experience.
- Communicates and expresses our thoughts and emotions to others and receives theirs.
- Regulates human thought and behavior either by reflecting reality (informing on the basis of objective truth), or by creating the illusion of reality (propoganda).
- Creates and destroys.

Herbert Krugman, a researcher for General Electric Company believes the special power of television advertising translates into a low-involvement learning process. He argues that evidence in psychology on learning and memorization of nonsense syllables or other trivial items is very much like the research on recall of television commercials. Thomas Robertson (Williams, 1982) concurs with Krugman. The traditional view of the active audience with emphasis on the selection process, is only part of the

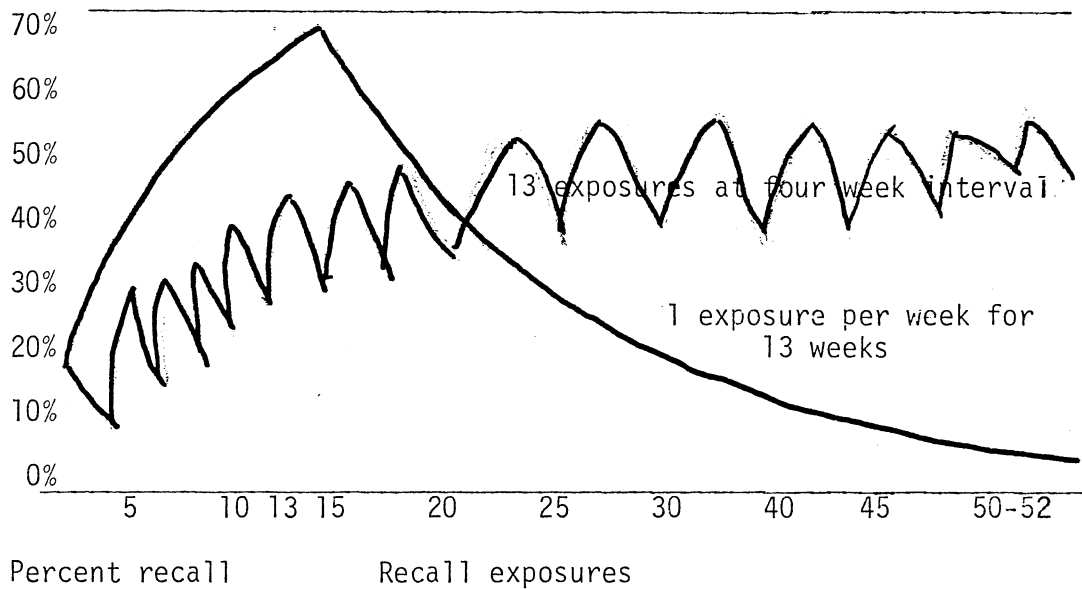
picture. It may be appropriate if an audience is highly committed audience dealing with equally important issues. However, many consumer's decisions are not earth-shaking and noncommitting, leaving consumers vulnerable to change. Generally, consumer commitment is associated with the strength of a person's belief system and perceived attributes. Therefore, Robertson concludes that much consumer behavior is not associated with high commitment behavior, and television advertising is received and processed at a low level of involvement. However, an important aspect of this theory suggests maximizing exposure levels and weight of the media may be the key to high-commitment, rather than attempting to increase recall or learning levels (Williams, 1982).

Additionally, Alfred Politz (Taylor and Rob, 1975, p. 317) also emphasized exposure, and went further to suggest the medium "goes beyond that - into the mood it creates in its...listeners, their confidence in the medium and other benefits the medium delivers for its advertising content. (See Tables I and II). Table I indicates the relationship between the weight given in conjunction with frequency. Table II indicates the relationship to exposure with regard to recall.

TABLE I  
CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY WEIGHTS COMPARISONS

Frequency	Frequency Weight	Frequency	Frequency Weight
1	.30	6	1.00
2	.40	7	.90
3	.50	8	.80
4	.80	9	.80
5	1.00	10	.80

TABLE II  
RECALL EXPOSURE



These studies were duplicated by the Committee on Printed Advertising Rating Methods (PARM) and Starch and Gallup and Robinson with reasonably accurate results. There is no syndicated service that rates the levels of perception for individual television commercials shown in the United States. Individual agencies frequently check by telephone. However, the theory of weight distribution with regard to frequency in relationship to perception recall is relevant (Taylor and Robb, 1975).

Schudson (1984, p. 228) gives Melford Spiro, an anthropologist, credit for determining five levels at which people may "learn" an ideology. They may learn about an ideological concept; they may learn about and understand the concept; they may believe the concept is true or accurate; the concept may become salient to them and inform their "behavioral environment" and finally; they

may internalize the belief, becoming not only cognitively salient but important as a motivating factor, in that it serves as a guide and instigates action. Advertisers are more interested in the last two stages; however, it has not been validated whether the stages must be experienced in sequence or whether an individual can reach the final levels without passing through the initial ones.

There is no doubt individuals do recall television advertising, regardless of the method of retention. A recent survey by PM Magazine, aired on television October 3, 1986, indicated the three most effective advertisement tools are 1) special effects, 2) humor, and 3) jingles. The survey indicated 46 percent of Americans remember the Coco Cola jingle used two years ago. It hasn't been used since that time. Statistics from the survey illustrated the extent of commercial television involvement. For every four hours of television viewing, one hour is spent watching commercials.

Finally, the power of television is acknowledged several times by the Federal Trade Commission's Staff Report on children's advertising (1978, p. 268).

Although the Supreme Court was careful to distinguish the "special problems" of the electronic broadcast media in each of its recent commercial speech cases, the Court has not to date identified or described those "special problems." Presumably, they include the unprecedented power of broadcast communication... and the fact that broadcast advertising via the electronic media to particularly vulnerable...viewers presents "captive audience" issues. (It further said)... the "Special Problem" of the electronic broadcast media is its unprecedented power as a mode of communication.

## Sponsor Dominance

Although as early as 1950 the system of sponsor dominated and network acquiescence was seriously questioned, it remains alive and well in the 1980s. Advertisers originally initiated productions of programs for the air time purchased or, by virtue of owning the time slot. They exercised direct control over the writers, directors and producers of the show. The shows were nothing more than full length program commercials. This type of advertising, dominated by the sponsor for the purpose of either selling a product or image is called 'direct response advertising' (O'Toole, 1985). It is the only type of advertising which can be reliably evaluated by a single number: Responses divided into costs. It is estimated \$15 billion was spent by business in 1983 for this type of advertising through television alone. Another \$15 billion was spent utilizing the postal system.

Supposedly, the 30-second commercial became standardized but because of the nature of television or maybe the advertiser, sponsorship and sponsor oriented programs still flourish. Legitimate business, as well as modern swindlers are acutely aware of the potency of television as a commercial tool. Therefore, the conscious appeal is materialistic. But it is the non-commercial messages which Aaker and Day (1982, p.211) believe in some instances are distorted answers to the needs and ambitions, fantasy yearnings and fears, the hopes and felt inadequacies of the complex individuals who make up American society.

The classic concept of salesmanship focuses upon the salesperson's actions, referred to as the AIDA model. The seller captures the prospective buyer's attention, then builds interest, creates a desire for the product and, finally, suggests actions. The salesperson determines the buyer's needs, as the buyer is viewed as passive in this theory as in all salesmanship theories. Regardless of the theory, no explanation is available to understand why a purchase is made from one salesperson over another salesperson. Therefore, it can be safely stated, the success of a sale is determinant upon both the buyer and the seller (Williams, 1982). (See Table III).

TABLE III  
Concept of interaction in Selling

Salesperson			Prospect		
Role concept/expectations: Self, Prospect, Reaction			Role concept/expectations: Self, Salesperson, Reaction		
Knowledge of: Product, Company, Selling Prospect			Knowledge of: Product, Company, Selling Salesperson		
Attitudes toward: Selling, Company, Prospect			Attitudes toward: Selling, Company Salesperson		
Personality structure: Salesperson's Prospect's			Personality structure: Prospect's Salesperson's		
Objective and physical Attributes: Education    Politics    Weight Income        Family        Age Religion      Social        Height Occupation    Habits Appearance			Objective and physical Attributes: Education    Politics    Weight Income        Family        Age Religion      Social        Height Occupation    Habits Appearance		
Company			Influencers		
Training Support		Reputation Advertising	Spouse Family	Friends Experts	
(Verbal and Nonverbal Communication)			Social Distance		

## Credibility

Do people avoid you at parties because you are bald or obese? If so, I can help you. If this sounds like an old-time patent medicine man be assured this type of television advertising is as modern as today. Medical gyps prey on that segment of society that has a need - that bond between perception and gullibility (Gentry, 1966). Abraham Maslow (Psychology, 1970) developed a theory regarding "motivation." The theory is based on the satisfaction of various needs. Television utilized this aspect of human needs to sell. The first three basics are physiological needs, consisting of hunger, sex, and thirst. When those needs are satisfied, then a need for safety must be satisfied. After these have been satisfied, the individual's needs turn to a relationship and the need to belong. After these requirements are met, the next level is self-actualization or achievement needs. Maslow believed all humans have all levels. Therefore if the need to achieve is a basic human characteristic, then logically someone will attempt to help satisfy that need.

When Virginia Knauer spoke to a media advertising executives group she admonished the fact that the very source consumers are dependant upon for information, implies through the same source, claims which are incredible are true. She said if one message could be relayed to consumers to reduce gullibility it would be 'If something is too good to be true, it probably is' (Consumer News, May, 1986)

Fear is another factor which aids in selling bogus medical cures. One exposure of a modern day medicine man erodes the consumer's confidence in the marketplace. Individuals with cancer, arthritis, baldness or obesity are desperate people. To take advantage of those unfortunate individuals is insidious. It is inconceivable that they must clutch at fabricated webs woven with one purpose in mind - economic gain. The American public is traditionally faddists to a degree. Additionally, Americans are health conscious. Further, Americans are vain. These factors make an ideal setting for the medical quack.

Both men and women express desires to retain or grow new hair. Obesity is both an appearance and health problem, but no miracle formula will either grow hair or melt fat. Only money will melt away (Gentry, 1966).

Many individuals dream the dream advertisers advertise. The "Fisher Body Girl" established the normative image for women in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The creation by illustrator McClelland Barclay, this heroine of the Fisher body ads, was slender, youthful and sophisticated (Marchand, 1985), not unlike the image projected today.

Just because products are offered for sale does not mean they will affect a cure. In many cases quite the opposite is true. For example the National Research Council's Food and Nutrition Board found supplemental amounts of Vitamin D beyond the recommended daily allowance of 400 international units are unnecessary, resulting in hypercalcemia, i.e. too much calcium in the blood.

Generally, drugs taken internally are more hazardous than



external remedies; however, they also can be dangerous. Consumers must be cautious of products that promise a cure for everything - a so-called miracle drug. The files of the Federal Drug Administration have records of billions of dollars spent by millions of consumers for "infallible cures, for everything from baldness to "melt away" fat without dieting (Myerson, 1978).

Probably the most important issue of disguised advertising, whether it be product, service or news, is the deprivation of accurate unbiased information about the marketplace. People like to think they are very hip to ads, but when it comes in the form of a news story, it has a lot more truth to the average view. By disguising the advertising as news, consumers are deprived of accurate, unbiased information about the marketplace, and the media was derelict in performing a vital function (Consumer Report, March, 1986).

The cost to the American people for miscomprehended, or falsely promoted, worthless, or dangerous drug products is at least one billion dollars a year, according to the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates. Much of that billion dollars was spent for magic products which will vanish unwanted pounds, without no more commitment than pill-taking.

The product "Regiman" has been clinically tested" and results show an individual can eat anything desired and still lose 28 pounds in 28 days. I want to introduce you to Mary and Jane who will tell you about their experience with "Regiman." This pitch was made over twenty-five years ago by a drug swindler, selling a weight reduction product on national television. Two doctors were bribed to confirm the effectiveness of the product. Their confirmation lended credibility. Not only did the promoter receive a New York grand jury indictment for 130 counts, 25 were proven and seven counts of misleading advertising were proven. The drug firm, the advertising agency and the promoter were fined large fines and the promoter received an 13-month jail sentence (Gentry, 1966).

## Religion

Television is a natural for advertising religion. The imagery in the form of crucifixes, saints, biblical verses, paintings and even the structure of the church are items that advertise religion. Religion, like television, uses emotional appeal. Religion, like art, brings some images and expressions quickly to mind and makes others relatively unavailable. However blatant the content of art, its consequences remain subtle. The issues are not the images of life, but the conjecture that imagery is perceived as experience. Further, the advertised experience frequently is less than the best of human endeavor, entrapping, exploiting and desensitising. In religion, as in television, the the flow of information is entirely in the control of the sender. The element of surprise is the broadcaster's trump card.

There are many religious programs aired on television; however, the ones which are brought to mind with singing and preaching are not of concern in this study.

It is the programs, which omit their religious identity and pose in a cloak of public information, that this study addresses. The sin of omission.

The reason it is harmful is because it misleads viewers, a miscomprehension. A study, completed in 1980 by Professor Jacob Jacoby of Purdue University provided the first real insight into how people receive television. The study, comprised of 2,700 individuals studied thirty-two pieces of television communication, representative of both commercial and noncommercial material. After studying the material the

subjects were asked six questions to determine whether or not they understood what they saw and heard. The degree of miscomprehension ranged from 50 percent to 11 percent.

One note: Commercials were not likely to be miscomprehended as program material (O'Toole, 1985, p. 26).

Religion is recognized as big business. God's television the phrase used on one of Pat Robertson's programs, provides a meeting ground for fundamentalist believers in the faith and business men who know how to give consumers of the faith the words they want most to hear. The image projected by the television church is entertainment, stories, and down-home folksy talk, designed to run smooth (Lowe, 1981).

If what is perceived is not credible, how can there be equality in the marketplace, even if it pertains to religion. Maybe it should be credible because it does pertain to religion.

Advertising, inserted in a news release, and handed to the media makes the words disguised by the public relations personnel, more credible, according to the Editors of Consumer Reports (May 1986). This practice has gone on for as long as there have been public-relations firms; however, in recent years the techniques used to insert the plugs in the media under the guise of news have become more sophisticated. The terminology used in television is "canned." They can run a video news report just as received or the station can use their own reporter for an overlay to make it appear fresh. The technique has spilled over to travel sections, according to an editorial in Advertising Age (July, 1986).

## Education

Consumer information is basically educational, but it differs from promotional material. Business sponsors should avoid letting conflicting objectives such as promoting products/services and provide consumer education, because inevitably the education integrity will be undermined (Sellers, 1980).

Both the advertising industry and consumers believe that once ads were primarily information, appealing to the rational consumer, but modern ads have become increasingly persuasive. They are oriented toward non-rational impulsive drives of the buyer. Advertisers also agree the added dimension of the visual in television has stimulated the development of the emotional, affective, or mood advertising (Schudson, 1984, 63).

Commercial program sponsors utilize the emotional tone, in the name of education material, to sell real estate manuals, obtainable at the local library.

As the need to achieve motivates individuals, the need for information in new settings and situations is relevant to manage new roles. The elderly, some psychologically or physically disengaged, read less and spend more time with the television as companion. To function in our complex society information is a prerequisite for equality in the marketplace. School children can be taught economics from both sides, business- and as consumers. It is absolutely possible to say advertising works, or that it fails to work. If the role of advertising is to sell, that is to be understood, the important question is

under what circumstances will advertising be more or less likely to make a difference. Advertising's role cannot be finally understood if only business's advertising is considered. The romance of the commodity in the American culture and the buyer's knowledge of the marketplace must be evaluated (Schudson, 1984).

There is a fine line between persuasive communication and consumer information. However, the issue is not whether the information is provided to persuade, but whether it provides information. Armstrong Cork Company, makers of flooring products, provides consumers with information about decorating, yet the magazine costs \$1.75. This develops a positive image for Armstrong Cork. Consumer information programs, designed to educate the consumer can have positive results. Further, a good program can stimulate new product ideas and marketing techniques and provide customer satisfaction (Aaker and Day, 1982).

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH

This study of advertising disguised as television programs combine literary review with content analysis research. After several sessions of previewing programs on various television channels, the researcher made a judgement decision to use television Channels 25, 43 and USA as a cluster sampling.

The weekend days, Saturday and Sunday, were scheduled for observation. Two sessions for each day were observed. The designed for the days utilized were chosen because working individuals traditionally relax and watch television.

Times for review were scheduled beginning 7:30 p.m. until 1:30 a.m. The timeframe was selected based on experience that the times are optimum television viewing times.

Recorded factors included the following: Date, Television Channel, number of advertisements, advertisement breaks, tone, type of advertised item, format, testimonies, entertain/informative.

The total population of the sampling was 32 of which nine shows or 28% deviated from the other 82%, with noticeable differences in most recorded factors. (See Table IV)

TABLE IV  
RECORDING SHEET FOR UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Date Channel	Times		Sponsor		Ad Breaks		Ad Item			Format			Testimonial		Tone			Type	
			2+	2-	Yes	No	Prod	Serv	Other	News	Talk	Other	Yes	No	Pers	Immed	Other	Interj	Infor
7 Sep	7:30	9:00	X		X		X					X					X		X
25	9:00	9:30	X				X					X					X		X
43	9:30	10:00		X		X			X		X						X		X
	10:00	10:30	X		X		X					X					X		X
	10:30	11:30	X		X		X					X					X		X
USA Ip	11:30	12:00		X		X			X		X		X		X	X	X		X
	12:00	1:00		X	X		X	X			X		X		X	X			X
	1:00	1:30		X		X	X				X		X		X	X			X
13 Sep	7:30	8:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
43	8:00	9:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	9:00	9:30		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
USA	9:30	10:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	10:00	11:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
25	11:30	12:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	12:20	1:30		X		X					X		X		X	X		X	X
14 Sep	7:30	8:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
USA	8:30	9:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	9:00	9:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
25	9:30	10:00		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
	10:00	10:30		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
	10:30	11:00		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
	11:00	11:30		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
43	11:30	12:00		X		X			X		X		X		X	X		X	X
	12:00	12:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	12:30	1:30	-																
20 Sep	7:30	9:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
USA	9:00	9:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
25	9:30	10:00	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	10:00	10:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	10:30	11:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
43	11:30	12:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X
	12:30	1:30	X		X		X				X		X		X	X		X	X



One program offered an "information service" for penny stock. The format was similar to a talk-show, with guest and host. One deviation included the daughter of the host in the group. This appeared to lend credibility to the program. The title was "Get Rich with Penny Stock."

One program was selling "dreams," presented as an information program. The sponsor was selling cassettes and a manual about real estate for \$289.00, and as an added feature, the program offered the opportunity to become a distributor. Testimonials were used frequently. Persons who testified appeared of the "working class." Money back guarantee was offered.

"Success" was also included in the array of advertisements. This program was based on the same type of format as the "dream" program, selling basically the same thing - real estate buying and selling techniques. One additional appeal included the sponsor who repeatedly said, "anyone can do this if I can." He was a male oriental, who claimed to have come to this country with nothing and in eight years was a millionaire.

A two-hour long program with no sponsors, was presented from 12:30 until 2:00 a.m. It was hawked by an auctioneer and two assistance. It used a "hurry this is a bargain tactic." Some of the prices listed were "too good to be true."

One show utilized motivational speakers to sell "Keys to Success." It was also an informational program, with manual and tapes for sale.

One program, which used a newscaster technique with news desk and tone, was sponsored by a religious organization. Nothing unusual about this EXCEPT the program never mentioned religion, the church or god. The topic was "Why Russia Will Not Invade Britton." The sponsored was listed, in small print, at the end of the credit role. The program was 30 minutes in length with no commercials.

Two of the programs were church and one was news.

#### Other Programs Evaluated in Preview

Weight control was the basis for advertising product which was clinically tested and proven, by testimonies, to provide results. The cost was \$39.95 for 21-days supply. Testimonies were based on nine weeks results.

Two hair growth products were advertised. They were also confirmed by individuals who had received results. Continued use assured consumers they would stop losing their hair and grow new hair.

Additionally, the popular "Night Court" was viewed in response to an investigative report by "20/20." The defendants are carefully screened along with the plaintiffs, for unusual cases. While the cases are real, with the program paying the costs, the problem comes with the fact, the judge indicated "He was educating the public." Distorted ideas that the law case is decided in 30 minutes on Thursday night television is a distorted educational program.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY

Based on the literary review it is evident television has the capacity to affect society and is both a molder and a reflection of society. Some believe advertisers go to great length to play the consumer for all his wealth and emotional well being. The salesmanship of television is comparable to God. Imagery is compared to actual experience.

Miscomprehension leaves confused viewers and surveys indicate approximately one-half viewers miscomprehend.

Programs which are not upfront about advertisements do no service to consumers. Inaccurate information is a deprivation consumers cannot afford.

Medical products are harmful and unlawfully peddled; however, medicine men persist in modern society, and costs are double barrel - health and money.

Consumers and businesses could benefit from education - not the kind of education which is merely promoting a product or service but the kind that will inform consumers about products and services. Business has as much to gain as consumers.

The research indicated different techniques were used by sponsor dominated programs. The direct response approach was used for better control of costs. Formats were used for appeal. All were disguised with one purpose - money. The tone was

either immediate or informative. The programs were solely controlled by the sponsor. Approximately 25 - 30 percent of the sample was sponsor dominated. Techniques used were testimonials, i. e. opinions, which is one indication consumers should be aware. The advertisement indicates item is too good to be true, playing on the "need to achieve." Finally, another warning - Buyer Beware - there is rarely something for free.

Whether or not sponsor oriented programs are unfair or deceptive is dependent on the individual receiving the communication. The fairness of advertising in general and specifically is directly proportionate to perceived deception and or fairness. Elements which contribute to the perception are basically media environment and individual psychological makeup.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

Television is a reflection of society, changing as rapidly and radically as consumers have allowed. Advertising cannot be held apart from the whole for evaluation, as the human social dimensions are involved. It is a powerful tool in our culture.

Based on individual needs, whether manufactured by television images or needs of reality, humans are persuaded or motivated to buy what is needed either in reality or perceived.

While there has always been that segment of society who make their way in life at the expense of others' misfortunes, there are also guidelines which are acceptable for order. While we have not yet determined the fullest potential for the use of television, the tide is changing with consumerism moving over the land, advocating education, information and dependable regulations. Machines cannot control as long as man controls policy.

Direct control over programs by sponsors place consumers at a disadvantage. Because of the bombardment of the time length, consumers are more vulnerable. Couple the length of time with need to achieve appeal and the sum result is vulnerability. Those are powerful tools in the hands of persons of questionable credibility.

Misrepresentations, distortions and omissions deprive consumers of accurate, unbiased information about the marketplace.

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## APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX A

The Better Business Bureau  
Code of Advertising

- The primary responsibility for truthful and nondeceptive advertising rests with the advertiser. Advertisers must be prepared to substantiate any claims or offers made before publication or broadcast and, upon request, present such substantiation promptly to the advertising medium or the Better Business Bureau.
- Advertisements which are untrue, misleading, deceptive, fraudulent or falsely disparaging of competitors shall not be used.
- An advertisement as a whole may be misleading although every sentence separately considered is literally true. Misrepresentation may result not only from direct statements but by omitting or obscuring a material fact. This kind of advertising must not be used.

## APPENDIX B

## Advertising Code of American Business

We hold that advertising has a responsibility to inform and serve the American public and to further the economic life of this nation.

Believing this, the following principles are hereby affirmed.

Truth - Advertising shall tell the truth, be free of the capacity to mislead or deceive, and shall reveal material facts, the concealment of which might mislead the public.

Responsibility - Advertising agencies and advertisers shall be able and willing to provide satisfactory proof of claims made. Advertising media shall require such proof when claims are considered questionable.

Taste and Decency - Advertising shall be free of statements, illustrations or implications which are offensive to good taste or public decency.

Disparagement - Advertising shall offer merchandise or service on its merits and refrain from attacking competitors or disparaging their products, services or methods of doing business.

Bait Advertising - Advertising shall be bona fide and the merchandise or service offered shall be readily available for purchase at the advertised price.

Guarantees and Warranties - Advertising of guarantees and warranties shall be explicit. Advertising of any guarantee or warranty shall clearly and conspicuously disclose its nature and extent, the manner in which the guarantor or warrantor will perform and identity of the guarantor or warrantor.

Price Claims - Advertising shall avoid price or savings claims which are unsupported by facts or which do not offer bona fide bargains or savings.

Unprovable Claims - Advertising shall avoid the use of exaggerated or unprovable claims.

Testimonials - Advertising containing testimonials shall be limited to those of competent witnesses who are reflecting a real and honest choice.

## VITA

Carrie Louise Dycus

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

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IN TELEVISION BROADCASTING

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Biographical:

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