

# front & center

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## Happy 150th, JWT!

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the J.

Walter Thompson

Company (JWT) advertising agency. The Hartman Center, as JWT's archive of record, congratulates the agency and joins in celebrating an enormous feat of longevity. JWT is the oldest enduring advertising agency in the United States and one of the largest and most successful in the world.

In the fall of 1864, Captain William James Carlton returned from the Civil War to his home in New Jersey. His stepfather, Dr. Thomas Carlton, Senior Agent for the Methodist Book Concern, advised William to go into the advertising business, selling space primarily in the religious publications produced by the Book Concern. So William did, partnering with financier Edmund Smith. The partnership only lasted two years, but by then Carlton was able to manage on his own.

In 1868, a recently discharged marine, James Walter Thompson, came looking for a job, and Carlton hired the young man as an assistant and bookkeeper. Thompson had bigger ambitions, and quickly became an advertising salesman and convinced Carlton to expand to general publications, especially the popular women's magazines. When Carlton sought to retire from the business, Thompson bought the company reportedly for \$500 and \$800 for the office furniture, and so the J. Walter Thompson Company came to be. When Thompson retired in 1916, the sale price of the agency was \$500,000.

Thompson transformed the agency to provide a full range of trademark management, publicity, packaging, display and creative services. The rapidly growing company went on to pioneer techniques in color, typography, the use of photography, and celebrity endorsements, and was an early adopter of new media, from radio and television to satellite transmission. The agency was one of the first to use computers to manage billings and finance. They were the first U.S. agency with international offices and a global footprint.

JWT has produced advertisements for products and services that have become part of the fabric of American culture: Ford, Kraft, Pond's, Kodak, and PanAmerican, and slogans that have become legendary: "There's a Ford in Your Future"; "She's Young—



She's Beautiful—She Uses Pond's"; the Oscar Mayer weiner and bologna songs; "When You're Out of Schlitz, You're Out of Beer"; and "My Dog's Better than Your Dog."

To celebrate 150 years of JWT accomplishments, the Hartman Center has created an online, interactive timeline of events in JWT's history: long-standing clients, key personnel, office openings, and more. You can find it linked from our homepage. Join us in wishing JWT a happy 150th birthday!

## JWT Newsletters Digital Collection

The JWT Newsletters project is the latest Hartman Center contribution to Duke University Libraries' digital collections repository. Thanks to the work and expertise of our colleagues in Digital Projects & Production Services, this tremendously rich resource is now publically available online, to read or download. Users can also search across the entire collection using keywords and phrases.

The collection comprises the agency's internally produced newsletters, and range in date from 1916 through 1986. The newsletters address issues of importance to the entire company with articles on account news, clients lists (including gains and losses), biographies and short profiles on JWT staff, professional accomplishments, promotions and transfers, visits to other JWT offices, families and hobbies.

The newsletters also document the results of both general and client-specific market research surveys, as well as general discussions of various markets and industries; developments in various forms of media

such as radio, television and print; and news from and profiles of JWT's offices and divisions around the world, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s when there was an increase in the frequency and depth of attention paid to the company's global operations.

Please visit our website and explore this fascinating window into the operations of one of the world's largest and most enduring advertising agencies.

*A sampling of newsletter issues from the collection*



Summer 2014  
Vol. 20 No. 1

### IN THIS ISSUE:

News & Notes 2

New Acquisitions and Guides 2

Call Center Marketing 3

Travel Grant Awards 3

Looking Back: RCA's 1939 TV Debut 4

By preserving historical records and archives and sponsoring related programs, the John W. Hartman Center stimulates interest in and study of the roles of sales, advertising and marketing in society.

## VISITORS

- FOARE Board of Directors
- Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising Co.
- Trish Wheaton, Wunderman & Y&R

## CLASSES

We welcomed the following classes in the spring semester:

- Dr. Orion Teal's "Origins of Corporate America"
- Dr. Adriane Lentz-Smith's "Gatsby's America: US in the Jazz Age and Great Depression"
- Dr. Marcia Rego's "Embodying Social Meaning"
- Dr. Richard Nace's "Food, Culture, Community"
- Dr. Leslie Maxwell's "Cult of Domesticity"
- Dr. Jeri Langford's "Creativity in Advertising," visiting from the College of Business at Johnson & Wales University

## NEW INTERN

We welcome Whitney Jordan as our new intern! Whitney has a Masters in Information Management & Preservation from the University of Glasgow. She will be helping us develop and further document our Arlie Slabaugh Direct Mail Literature Collection and will also be assisting with reference work.

## Jam in Wartime

*February 18, 1943: Reeling from defeat on the Eastern front, Joseph Goebbels delivers a radio speech calling on the German people to commit all resources to "Total War." In divided, partially occupied France on the same day, the advertising agency of Roger-Louis Dupuy calls on French preserve manufacturers to commit to a unified, industry-wide campaign to promote "Quality Preserves."*

The Hartman Center has recently acquired a unique wartime document: *A Draft Proposal for an Industry-Wide Campaign for "Quality Preserves,"* prepared for the Trade Association of Manufacturers of Preserves in France by the R-L Dupuy agency. Dupuy, one of the oldest advertising agencies in France, was founded around 1926 by Roger-Louis Dupuy. An engineer by training, Dupuy learned the advertising trade at the agency DAM, founded by Etienne Damour, one of the founding figures in modern French advertising. Dupuy went on to author several instructional manuals on advertising, and was named to the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Consumption in France in 1968. The Dupuy agency was acquired by and became the French office of Compton before being absorbed into Saatchi & Saatchi in the 1980s.

The draft report is a rare glimpse into the daily activities of an advertising agency operating under wartime conditions. On the one hand, preserves manufacturers still confronted public dispositions toward brand-name or store-bought preserves (not nutritious, chemically adulterated, not as good as home-made, French-made vs. imports, etc.); on the other, they confronted wartime realities such as rationing, shortages of supplies (apparently apples were the only fruit available at the time) and packaging, prohibitions on certain types of media



usage, the division of France into Occupied and Unoccupied zones. The report spells out a two-month marketing campaign intended to (1) shift the urban market in favor of brand-name commercially produced preserves, and (2) establish the use of an industry-wide service mark that would guarantee a standard level of quality assurance among the Association's members, much like the Milk Board or fruit growers' cooperatives do in the U.S. There is also a look toward the postwar period which lends a sense of urgency to establishing this campaign.

The campaign sets out talking points (only sugar and fruit used; preserves are just as nutritional as fresh fruit, etc.) and identifies media outlets in both the Occupied and Unoccupied zones in France. The report includes an appendix of scripts for broadcast spots as well as print executions. It is a remarkable document that covers an area not addressed by much of the Center's existing wartime materials, and a welcome addition to our collections.



1943 layouts for the proposed jam campaign.

## Newly Available Collection Guides

- Arthur Einstein Papers, 1978-2001
- J. Walter Thompson Company. Burt Manning Papers, 1956-1988
- J. Walter Thompson Company. Peter Schweitzer Papers, 1916-2005
- Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalog Collection, 1910-1994

These and other finding aids for Hartman Center collections can be found at: <http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/>

## FORD MOTOR COMPANY RESOURCES

We have launched a research guide related to Ford Motor Company and its advertising. Check out our website and find it under Research Guides,

# “Hi, I’m Judy” Visualizing the Call Center in the 1980s

*Richard Popp is assistant professor of media studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research at the Hartman Center, supported by a travel grant, focused on the Wunderman Archives and Lester Wunderman Papers. He is currently working on a history of direct marketing, communication networks, and long-distance shopping in the making of American consumer capitalism.*

In 1983, a group at Wunderman, Ricotta & Kline Inc. (WRK) fixed their attention on the “the wraparound” spot, a direct-response commercial the agency had developed for *Time* magazine. The 90-second commercial, built around a fictional call center operator named “Judy,” featured a three-part structure, where viewers were introduced to Judy, then shown a short film touting the merits of *Time*, and then reconnected with Judy, who explained that she was standing by to take orders. Finding an ad that pulled well, WRK kept it for years and used the “wraparound” template in campaigns pitching *Sports Illustrated*, Time-Life Books, Columbia House, Disney vacations, AT&T calling cards, and other products.

The “wraparound” and WRK’s understanding of why it performed so well offer a lens on direct marketing in the late 20th century, especially with communication networks and their changing role in consumer capitalism. The “wraparound” illustrates the marketing world’s efforts to shape telecommunications into two-way channels of commerce, capable of conveying messages to consumers, but of transmitting the orders as well. This involved a grafting of direct-mail marketing tactics onto telecommunication networks. It also developed new infrastructures through which orders and payment could be captured by authorizing charges to a credit card.

Doing so required the interweaving of three distinct communication networks: television, telephone, and delivery. Television networks broadcast the sales pitch; telephones transmitted customer orders; and the delivery service shipped the product. While all three were

integral to the transaction, the telephone system was thrust into the central role, linking the other two. There information was transmuted into something tangible: for the seller, payment; and for the consumer, products arriving in their mailbox.

This was a fairly novel role for the telephone. Though retailers used the phone throughout the early to mid-twentieth century to field orders, this was a largely local enterprise. Even mail order’s use of the phone was anchored in local networks, as shoppers would call nearby “catalog stores” or visit the catalog desks, where their orders could be phoned in. National campaigns predicated on long-distance dialing were simply too expensive for company and consumer alike.

This began to change in the late 1960s, with the introduction of AT&T’s In-WATS program (Inward Wide Area Telephone Service), which allowed subscribers to rent dedicated lines to field toll-free long-distance calls for a flat monthly fee. Consumers came to know the program through the prefix given to those “800” numbers. As businesses integrated 800-numbers into their operations, they gave rise to new communication infrastructures that maximized the profit potential of toll-free lines. The call center, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, was the apotheosis of this trend. By the early 1980s, many Americans were aware that they could dial a ten-digit number and make a purchase.

Enter Judy, WRK’s carefully crafted image of call center labor. As veterans of the direct marketing field, WRK’s staff was fully cognizant of the challenges that faced this mode of selling, the most acute of which was its ostensible immateriality. “When someone sees a direct response commercial,” a WRK analyst explained in 1983, “there’s already some sales resistance because he can’t hold the product, examine it and judge its worth for himself. Then he’s asked to call a total unknown...and commit himself to this thing he can’t judge. That’s even more sales resistance.” Judy, played by actress Ann Burr Roberts, was created to overcome these fears and cultivate trust. “She’s the girl next door and you can’t help liking her on the spot.” Judy’s inherent trustworthiness was meant to embody the broader system. She “projects the telemarketing center as a professional outfit equipped with competent, cordial operators.” By visualizing the call center WRK hoped to screen out preconceived notions about telephone commerce, and quell any lingering concerns.

Along with establishing credibility, WRK aimed to create a sense of immediacy among viewers. Although business hours had expanded, shopping was still largely contained within daylight and early evening hours. As such, late night purchases did not fit everyday American consumer culture. WRK feared that a number of intrigued viewers would fail to respond immediately, simply because “they didn’t believe the phones would be manned that late at



**1983 storyboard for Time’s wraparound commercial by WRK.**

The Hartman Center travel assistance grants and fellowships this year include:

**Two FOARE Fellowships for Outdoor Advertising Research.**

- **Craig Lee** (University of Delaware) will research “Letter Building: Signage, Supergraphics, and the Rise of Semiotic Structure in Modern American Architecture.”
- **Daniel Towns** (Stanford University) will research “The View and the Value’: Historical Geography of Signs in San Francisco.”

The Center awarded one **John Furr Fellowship for JWT Research to Lisa Haushofer** (Harvard University) to research “Edible Health: ‘Health Foods’ in Science, Industry, Culture in Britain and the United States, 1884-1950.”

**Alvin A. Achenbaum Travel Grants include:**

- Faculty:**  
**Dr. Cynthia Meyers**, (College of Mount Saint Vincent)  
**Dr. Cristina Ziliani**, (University of Parma)

- Students:**  
**Cara Fallon**, (Harvard University)  
**Catherine Hennessey Wolter**, (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)  
**Kelly Jones**, (SUNY – Stony Brook)

**Independent Scholar:**  
**Daniel McKay**, Newbury, England

(continued on page 4)

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(continued from page 3)  
**"Hi, I'm Judy"**

## LOOKING BACK

### RCA's 1939 World's Fair TV Debut

On April 30, 1939, Radio Corporation of America (RCA) first introduced the world to broadcast television at the New York World's Fair. The theme of the Fair was "Building the World of Tomorrow," and the technologies introduced there would fundamentally alter broadcast communications and our modern way of life.

The live broadcast was co-sponsored by NBC and featured an address by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In order to convince fair-goers that the new technology was real, RCA set up blank television sets that aired live footage of the attendees, allowing fair-goers to see themselves on camera. The primary television in the lobby was constructed with the help of DuPont and featured their own revolutionary new product, Lucite, which would pave the way to the world of plastics.

While radio remained the dominant medium into the early 1950s, television would eventually overtake it and change the communications, advertising and entertainment industries.

night." This was troubling to direct marketers because conventional wisdom held that to pull orders most effectively, direct-response appeals had to evoke urgency among the audience – hence the steep price-cuts about to expire and premiums "while supplies last." What was needed was a way to represent the call center's all-night hours. The solution was to create a "LIVE EFFECT," by filming the core 60 second product pitch and videotaping the Judy wraps. "We did our utmost to make it look as though a live camera had been turned on at this response center and operators were busy taking calls," WRK's internal study explained. The desired effect would be a portal opened on an office abuzz with activity, which viewers could connect with in a matter of seconds.

One of the larger insights seen in the Judy spot, and WRK's reaction to its success, is that Americans had to be eased into the new patterns of commerce made possible by 800-numbers and direct-response television. For consumers, the benefit of convenience was not enough to outweigh fears or disbelief that workforces were in place all night for orders. But as WRK and others recognized, the viability of an ephemeral new 24-hour marketplace depended on putting such concerns to rest.

– Richard Popp



A 1939 Bloomingdale's ad for an RCA television.