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Madison Avenue versus *The Feminine Mystique*:

How the Advertising Industry Responded to the Onset of the Modern Women's Movement

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Abstract

In her now-classic 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique,* feminist author and activist Betty Friedan charged the advertising industry with perpetuating and exploiting the oppression of women through the use of negative stereotypes. Her book and its charges gave impetus to the growing women's movement and led to an all-out campaign of political action against advertisers in 1970. Madison Avenue at first responded with protestations and denials, but the threat of product boycotts and pressure from many women within the industry itself led to at least superficial changes. Companies also realized that changing their approach made good business sense and began creating products and marketing strategies that exploited the idea of the "new woman."

Introduction

In 1963, Betty Friedan, a writer for women's magazines with a background in psychology, published what many consider to be the seminal work of feminism's second wave. *The Feminine Mystique* gave voice to the unhappiness and frustration many women found in male-dominated society and helped motivate the political and social action that brought about many of the changes that followed.

In her book, Friedan described what she called "the problem that has no name" -- the vague feelings of dissatisfaction in some women who, despite being financially secure and well-educated, found themselves trapped in "the comfortable concentration camp" of suburbia. Friedan argued that American culture's "mystique of feminine fulfillment" was a sham (1963).

> Based on old prejudices disguised in new pseudo-scientific dogmas, (the feminine mystique) defines woman solely in sexual terms, as man's wife, mother, love object, dishwasher and general server of physical needs, and never in human terms, as a person herself. It glorifies woman's only purpose as the fulfillment of her "femininity"

> through sexual passivity, loving service of husband and children, and dependence on man for all decisions in the world outside the home: "man's world." (1970, 268).

Friedan's book became a runaway best seller, purchased and read by millions of women in the United States and around the world. Calling it "the book that changed lives," second wave historian Flora Davis (1991) argues that *The Feminine Mystique* "laid the groundwork for the new mass movement and provided the first inkling that women's rights might attract broad support once again." (50)[1,2]

The publication of *The Feminine Mystique* was especially consequential for the advertising industry because Friedan placed much of the blame for women's unhappiness on America's post-war consumer society and especially on advertisers' exploitation of women.

> It is their millions which blanket the land with persuasive images, flattering the American housewife, diverting her guilt and disguising her growing emptiness. They have done this so successfully, employing the techniques and concepts of modern social science, and transposing them into those deceptively simple, clever, outrageous ads and commercials, that an observer of the American scene today accepts as fact that the great majority of American women have no ambition other than to be housewives. If they are not responsible for sending women home, they are surely responsible for keeping them there. (1963, 218-219)

As might be expected, early responses of the advertising industry to the charges made by Friedan were extremely defensive. During a session of the 1965 Advertising Federation of America's convention, advertising executive Jo Foxworth--a woman--called *The Feminine Mystique* "a mistaque," and challenged Friedan to a debate.[3] Foxworth said the book was "depressing" and disputed the whole notion that the American woman–in her interpretation of Friedan--"is a pitiably frustrated creature . . . who is eaten up with agony over her lot in life." According to *The New York Times* account of the session, "the speaker appeared to delight her audience, which had a heavy sprinkling of other advertising women." Foxworth went on to offer "Nine Commandments for Women in Business" which included "Thou shalt know when to zip thy ruby lips and let the men do the talking," and "Thou shalt carry no stick, save lipstick" (Carlson, 1965).

But despite such initial reactions, Friedan's complaints about advertising, along with those of others in the the women's movement, were ultimately to have a major impact on the industry. Two main factors were decisive. First, the advertising industry had a significant number of women workers who were in positions of responsibility. Many of these women agreed with at least some feminist aims and felt that the charges against objectionable ads were legitimate. A significant number of ad women took up the call for change and worked from within the industry to bring it about, not only campaigning against exploitative portrayals of women in ads, but also against the sexual discrimination in hiring and promotions that they had personally experienced within the industry. As insiders, their actions helped legitimize women's complaints in a largely male-dominated industry. Second, *The Feminine Mystique* spoke to (and for) a new kind of oppressed group–not a poor, exploited minority, but rather the affluent middle class women who are the major purchasers of many of the products advertised so heavily in American media. As these women began to take the movement seriously, advertisers realized they had a

crucial economic interest in responding to their concerns.

"How Can Anyone Object to That?": The Campaign Against Advertising

One of *The Feminine Mystique's* major themes is that the American advertising industry consciously manipulates its portrayals of women to insure they will continue serving as good consumers of the thousands of products and services sold by the food, drug, beauty, and fashion industries. As Friedan wrote,

> . . . the perpetuation of housewifery, the growth of the feminine mystique, makes sense (and dollars) when one realizes that women are the chief customers of American business. . . . the really important role that women serve as housewives *is to buy more things for the house*. (1963, 197)

Friedan pointed out that although advertisers did not cause the feminine mystique, "they are the most powerful of its perpetuators." By portraying housekeeping and other "feminine duties" as the ultimate goal of the modern woman, "ads glorify her 'role' as an American housewife–knowing that her very lack of identity in that role will make her fall for whatever they are selling" (1963, 219).

By the late 1960's, women (and a few men) had begun organizing to promote feminist objectives, and several of the groups that formed actively campaigned against the advertising industry. Probably the largest and best known of these is The National Organization for Women (NOW), founded in 1966 with Friedan as president. From its earliest days, NOW had a heavy agenda of political and social actions in several areas, including campaigning against advertising images.

Tactically, the targeting of media images made a great deal of sense. Feminists saw advertisements as clear and tangible evidence of a sexist society (Humm, 1990, 3). The ads were ubiquitous and so served as constant public reminders of women's objections. In addition, ad content was controlled by a relatively small number of organizations that could easily be identified and targeted for political action. But perhaps most importantly, the advertising industry was highly vulnerable to economic retaliation by women. Few advertisers are interested in insulting their target audience, so the specter of legions of housewives boycotting certain products because of offensive advertising would certainly have a powerful effect.

Beginning in 1970, NOW and other women's groups began an organized all-out assault on the advertising industry. Disruptive acts such as a day-long sit-in in the New York editorial offices of *The Ladies' Home Journal* (Lichtenstein, 1970; The new feminism, 1970) and the shouting down of CBS Chairman William S. Paley at the company's annual stockholder's meeting gained national attention (Militant femmes, 1970). Other tactics included the placing of stickers stating "This Ad Insults Women" and "This Exploits Women" on subway cards and other ads posted in public places (Dougherty, 1970; Grant, 1970).

Advertisers began to take notice of what appeared to be a growing wave of feminist objections, and major efforts were made to gauge just how influential their ideas were becoming. The research department at one of the nation's largest advertising agencies, Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborne (BBD&O), began conducting focus groups among feminists. Among the

information they sought was exactly what products and ad images these women thought were most objectionable and why.[4] The *New York Times* reported that 19 women made up the two groups studied and that all were "well educated and articulate, many were good looking . . . " The agency's major finding was that their major complaint seemed to be "resentment against advertising's constantly reinforcing the women's-place-is-in-the-home idea" (Dougherty, 1970).

Any doubts that the industry may have had about the influence of feminist groups was dispelled in June, 1970, when Congressional hearings on discrimination against women were held in Washington. NOW Vice-President Lucy Komisar used the opportunity to criticize discrimination in both media employment practices and in portrayals of women. Citing objectionable ads for products as diverse as Barbie dolls, Parker pens, and Iberia airlines, Komisar told the Special House Subcommittee that NOW's members would be boycotting products they felt were demeaning to women (Discrimination against women, 1970, 424). Subcommittee member Edith Green, Representative from Oregon, agreed with many of Komisar's comments. Green even announced her own personal boycott:

> I have made a personal resolve not to buy certain products advertised by ridiculing women; and I would hope that (women's groups) would really carry on a systematic boycott of products that in their advertising depict the woman as a supercilious idiot. This is what happens in a lot of the TV commercials. I see it and I think this is by design. We have gone past that stage." (428)

Two months later, NOW and a coalition of other women's groups did call for boycotts on four specific products: Silva Thins cigarettes, Ivory Liquid detergent, Pristeen feminine hygiene deodorant, and *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Advertiser response to the threat was mixed. A spokesman for Procter and Gamble (makers of Ivory Liquid and countless other household products) was quoted as saying the company "would be interested in hearing what the objections were," while Warner Lambert, the maker of Pristeen, responded that "Pristeen is for femininity, freshness and women's confidence. How can anyone be against that?" (Charlton, 1970).

Although it is unclear that NOW's call for boycotts was ever taken seriously by enough women to have a significant economic impact on advertisers, it probably caused a good deal of uneasiness in corporate boardrooms. However, it is clear that by the close of 1970, the women's movement had made significant progress in its goal of focusing attention on the issue.[5]

"You've Come A Long Way, Baby": Advertisers Begin to Adapt

The movement's campaign against objectionable ads received a good deal of help from within the advertising industry itself. A significant number of women held influential positions in advertising and many were outspoken in their support of feminism.[6] Yet, others staunchly defended the *status quo*. Many women were directly involved in producing and advertising many of the products that Friedan and other feminists so loudly criticized.[7] Then, too, some were sympathetic to the movement's goals, but were afraid that appearing "too militant" would harm their careers. As one woman ad executive explained, "It might scare off prospective male clients" (Klemesrud, 1973).

But as time went on, more advertising women began to speak out in agreement with the women's movement. During the decade of the 1970's, when the feminist critique of the industry was at its height, the trade publication *Advertising Age* carried numerous stories about seminars and workshops called to discuss industry practices in regard to women, almost all of which were conducted or hosted by advertising women. Trade publication articles calling for reform were also common during this period and virtually all of these were written by advertising women.[8]

the most persuasive argument for change in the industry was based on plain economics rather than feminist philosophy, and especially influential was the campaign waged by Franchellie Cadwell, president of Cadwell Davis, Inc., a New York advertising agency. Cadwell said she did not see herself as being a women's rights advocate, but rather argued that revising advertising's image of women simply made good business sense (Grant, 1970, 32). In a two-page ad in the April, 1970, issue of *Advertising Age*, Cadwell's company announced in huge type "The lady of the house is dead," and went on to point out that women constitute "53% of the population of the country with 85% of the spending power," and suggested that "at the very least women deserve recognition as being in full possession of their faculties."

> As an advertising agency with a woman president and specializing in selling to women, we are deeply involved in what transpires in the feminine mind. . . .Women's "arms" are their spending power. Their attack will be not identifying with the advertising images that demean them, leading to a product boycott. . . . An upheaval in women's thinking is here. The advertiser who doesn't move to meet it is going to bear its full brunt. And he deserves it. No force has demeaned women more than advertising. (The lady of the house, 1970)

As objections to ads grew, many advertisers came to the same conclusion as Cadwell--offending women was just bad business. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), a watchdog group made up of industry representatives, appointed a "consultive panel" drawn from its own membership to study "advertising portraying or directed to women." In its report, released in early 1975, the panel admitted that there was a problem, and provided a "checklist" of questions that advertisers were supposed to ask themselves when creating ads. These included such items as, "Do my ads portray women as more neurotic than men?" and "Do my ads portray women actually driving cars. . . ?" (National Advertising Review Board, 1975, 76).

But even before the NARB report, ads began to appear that not only avoided objectionable images, but even attempted to curry favor with women who had become sensitized to liberation issues. Madison Avenue began to refashion the "new woman" to its own ends and in so doing, it successfully coopted the movement's message.

Advertising the "New Woman"

At its most successful, the industrial response to the women's movement took the form of the creation of whole new brands coupled with new woman-centered marketing strategies. These new products and their advertising campaigns were created to baldly exploit the excitement many women felt about liberation. One of the earliest of these, and—at least from the industry's point of view—one of the most successful, was Virginia Slims, a cigarette created by Philip

Morris and specifically targeted to women.

Virginia Slims were introduced in July, 1968, with an advertising campaign designed by the Leo Burnett Company of Chicago. The ads

> portrayed a series of fictional historical events involving women in the early suffrage period. In the first commercial, a manufactured sepia-tone film purported to show Pamela Benjamin who, in 1910, was caught smoking in a gazebo. "She got a severe scolding and no supper that night." The ad continued, "In 1915, Mrs. Cynthia Robinson was caught smoking in the cellar behind the preserves. Although she was 34, her husband sent her straight to her room. Then, in 1920, women won their rights." The ad concluded by turning to a modern color format, featuring a fashion model with a Virginia Slims cigarette and a musical theme singing the jingle "You've come a long way, baby." Subsequent television ads and print advertising followed this same format. (Simley, 1994, 622)

The ads evidently struck a chord with many women whose sympathies had been aroused by the women's movement, but who were only dimly aware of feminist ideology. The humorous satirizing of male chauvinism was extremely popular and the Slims slogan became a national catch phrase. But despite the campaign's popularity with many women, others expressed objections. They resented both the commercialization of feminism and the fact that the ads trivialized the movement's message. They pointed out that despite what the ads claimed, women had not really come very far at all (and they added their own new catch phrase, "and don't call me 'baby'!"). NOW awarded the Slims' agency one of its "Old Hat" awards for ads that demean women (Sloane, 1971).

But such objections evidently went largely unnoticed by most women. Virginia Slims' introductory ad campaign has been called "wildly successful," and one industry observer claims that "millions of women were compelled to try this new brand, even women who did not smoke." (Today, Virginia Slims remains popular, ranked tenth in sales out of some 175 cigarette brands on the market.) (Simley, 1994, 623).[9]

The remarkable success of Virginia Slims and its introductory advertising campaign had a major impact on the industry. As one marketing executive put it, the campaign "bounced most of us on our ears," and "set a new tone in women's products advertising" (Robinson, 1985).

Many businesses weren't as sophisticated as Virginia Slims in their approach to advertising to the "new woman." One simple strategy to avoid women's objections was to simply change ads by reversing traditional gender stereotypes. This approach was even encouraged by Lucy Komisar, vice-president of NOW, who praised counter-stereotype portrayals and urged advertising agencies to adopt them (Komisar, 1971, 216).

A perusal of 1972 copies of *Ms.* magazine reveals the following fairly typical examples of counter-stereotype ads: A double-page spread for Leilani Hawaiian Rum asks "Why shouldn't a woman make a good daiquiri? And why shouldn't she go on from there?" (Why shouldn't a woman, July, 1972). An American Express ad features a male model addressing the camera: "It's time women got their own American Express Card and started taking <u>me</u> to dinner." Readers who wished to apply for the card were asked to fill out an attached "Women Only" application (It's time women, December, 1972). Dewar's Scotch Whiskey featured 28-year old

physicist, Sheila Long, in one of it's "Dewar's Profiles." Long is pictured as an attractive young woman with flowing hair staring into the camera in the familiar female-model eye-contact pose. She holds a long, slender piece of chalk in her hand and behind her is a blackboard filled with complex math equations (Dewar's profiles, 1972).

Some counter-stereotype ads were designed to suggest that the company in question agreed with at least some of the social aims of the women's movement and was undergoing a fundamental change in its business practices. For example, AT&T ran an ad in *Ms.* magazine picturing one of its "first women telephone installers" perched high atop a telephone pole, working on a line (The phone company, July, 1972). A similar ad ran in *Ms.* a month later featuring "one of several hundred male telephone operators" (The phone company , August, 1972).

Feminism, Cosmetics, and the Beauty Industry

But the women's movement's most serious challenge to advertisers was not in its objection to stereotypical portrayals. Radical feminists called for nothing less than an abandonment of a whole class of products traditionally aimed at women—those produced by the beauty industry.[10] For at least some feminists, fashion and cosmetics were simply tools of sexual objectification and therefore instruments of male oppression to be discarded.

> The real evil of the media image of women is that it supports the sexist *status quo.* In a sense, fashion, cosmetics, and "feminine hygiene" ads are aimed more at men that at women. They encourage men to expect women to sport all the latest trappings of sexual slavery—expectations women must then fulfill if they are to survive. . . . For women, buying and wearing clothes and beauty aids is not so much consumption as work. One of a woman's jobs in this society is to be an attractive sexual object, and clothes and make-up are tools of the trade. (A Redstocking Sister, 1971, 483)

As the movement evolved and this attitude among some feminists became more publicly known, many in the beauty industry became concerned that the "new woman" would be one who rejected their products altogether. As it turned out, this fear was at least somewhat justified. The decade of the 70's did see cosmetics, fragrance, and hair-care products all suffer flat or declining sales (Faludi, 1991, 202-203). But notions of femininity and beauty and their interdependence with the fashion and cosmetics industries have been very deeply ingrained in American culture. While some women began to reject these products, many others did not. Feminist pioneer Susan Brownmiller has explained early feminism's confusion over cosmetics:

> An unadorned face became the honorable new look of feminism in the early 1970s, and no one was happier with the freedom not to wear makeup than I, yet it could hardly escape my attention that more women supported the Equal Rights Amendment and legal abortion than could walk out of the house without eye shadow. Did I think of them as somewhat pitiable? Yes I did. Did they bitterly resent the righteous pressure put on them to look, in their terms, less attractive? Yes they did. A more complete breakdown and confusion of aims, goals, and values could not have occurred, and of all the movement rifts I have witnessed, this one remains for me the most poignant and the most difficult to resolve. (Brownmiller, 1984, 158)

Many women, saturated since childhood with the importance of beauty products, were extremely reluctant to give up the security they bestowed.[11] Then too, many were entering the workplace for the first time and believed that fashionable clothing and the artful use of cosmetics were essential elements of corporate success. Still another reason was that some women feared that without makeup they would appear to be a part of the "radical feminist fringe." Davis (1991, Ch. 6) describes how much of the early media coverage of the women's movement attempted to marginalize feminist ideas, frequently by questioning the femininity of the women involved: ". . . reporters, interviewing activists, seldom failed to note what they were wearing and how 'feminine' or 'unfeminine' they were" (108). The fact that several outspoken feminists were publicly lesbian compounded the effect. This seam between feminist ideology and many women's fear of losing their femininity offered the beauty industry an ideal location in which to position products. In essence, ads began to say, "we know you are liberated and deserve equal rights, but you still must be beautiful to be feminine and desirable."

Naomi Wolf has documented the response of the beauty industry to the women's movement in her 1991 best-seller, *The Beauty Myth*. Her argument is that as the women's movement took hold, the "feminine mystique" was replaced by a new mythology that women could only be accepted in this world of the "new woman" if they met rigid new standards of slimness, beauty, and fashion. This new myth, she argues, serves to repress women in new ways.

> An economy that promotes slavery needs to promote images of slaves that "justify" the institution of slavery. Western economies are absolutely dependent now on the continued underpayment of women. An ideology that makes women feel "worth less" was urgently needed to counteract the way feminism had begun to make us feel worth more. . . . As soon as a woman's primary social value could no longer be defined as the attainment of virtuous domesticity, the beauty myth redefined it as the attainment of virtuous beauty. It did so to substitute both a new consumer imperative and a new justification for economic unfairness in the workplace where the old ones had lost their hold over newly liberated women. (18)

Wolf also argues that marketing and advertising—especially advertising in women's magazines—played important roles in the transition from "feminine mystique" to "beauty myth." As the beauty industry faced flat sales and an uncertain future, new marketing and advertising strategies had to be developed, co-opting the movement's advances and exploiting them for commercial ends.

> How to make sure that busy, stimulated working women would keep consuming at the levels they had done when they had all day to do so and little else of interest to occupy them? A new ideology was necessary that would compel the same insecure consumerism; that ideology must be, unlike that of the Feminine Mystique, a briefcase-sized neurosis that the working woman could take with her to the office. To paraphrase Friedan, why is it never said that the really crucial function that women serve as aspiring beauties is *to buy more things for the body?* . . . *The beauty myth, in its modern form, arose to take the place of the Feminine Mystique, to save magazines and advertisers from the economic fallout of the women's revolution.* (emphasis in the original) (66)

Yet, as Wolf points out, this new emphasis on beauty was not part of some great conspiracy: "it doesn't have to be. Societies tell themselves necessary fictions in the same way that individuals and families do" (17).

Gradually, new strategies, campaigns, and even products began to come from the beauty industry to take advantage of these "necessary fictions." Revlon, for example, introduced "Charlie" in 1973, a fragrance designed for and marketed to the "new woman." "Charlie" ads featured what purported to be a no-nonsense single and independent working "girl" with a fashion model face and figure who was usually pictured in a pantsuit. Charlie became the nation's best-selling fragrance in less than a year, and other fragrance companies introduced their own "liberated" scents. (Faludi, 1991, 205)

Yet the ideological divisions within the women's movement sometimes created confusion about which ads were acceptable and which were not. As *Advertising Age* editorially lamented,

> When for example, an advertiser bows to a suggestion by one of the women's lib factions that his advertising is in some way demeaning, he is only too likely to be whapped by another faction claiming that his new advertising is patronizing. When a company agrees to draw away from use of "sex object" motifs, it is likely to be criticized for showing women as plain or dowdy. (Problems of women's lib, 1971)

This confusion became especially apparent when *Ms*. magazine (founded by Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and other feminists) began publication in 1972. Although the *Ms.* editors indicated they wanted to limit ads to those they felt were consistent with the women's movement, there was a significant split among feminists as to exactly what that meant. While the radical and socialist wings of the movement found most mainstream ads objectionable, more moderate "liberal" women controlled *Ms.* and sought to make the non-profit magazine available to as many women as possible by attracting a large, mainstream advertising base (Endres & Lueck, 1995, 236-242; Gatlin, 1987, 157). The first regular issue ran a controversial ad for Coppertone suntan lotion inside its front cover that featured a slim blonde woman in a bikini and said the product "helps more people get a magnificently deep fast tan" (Beautiful tan today, 1972). The magazine later ran an ad for Virginia Slims (which provoked a negative reaction in the readership) and editor Gloria Steinem consistently tried to attract ads (generally unsuccessfully) from Revlon and other cosmetics companies (Steinem, 1995).

Conclusion

Since the early 1970's numerous academics have attempted to measure and describe the changes in advertising that took place as a result of the women's movement. Bretl & Cantor (1988), for example, reported on 15 different content analyses of gender in television commercials conducted from 1971 to 1988. Other research has examined gender portrayals in magazine ads and other media texts. Courtney & Whipple (1983), Gunter (1986), Kear (1985), Macklin & Kolbe (1984), Seggar, Hafen, & Hannonen- Gladden (1981), Skelly & Lundstrom (1981), and Steeves (1987) have all summarized various aspects of this work. Although cross-study comparisons are made difficult by variations in methodology, changes in portrayals of women have been documented (see, for example, Bretl & Cantor, 1988, 606).

My own content analysis of over 2,000 network television commercials aired in 1990 indicated

that although TV commercials often portray women in the ways encouraged by the women’s movement, these portrayals tend to be aired mostly during prime time, when women who work outside the home are in the audience. Daytime commercials still tend to portray women doing household chores, and weekend sports ads still frequently exploit images of women as objects of sexual desire (Craig, 1992).

So although feminism’s second wave did bring about some changes in the way women are portrayed in advertising, it was not in the way nor to the degree that the organizers of the movement had envisioned. As Diane Barthel (1988) has pointed out, "It is wrong to assert that corporate America has been unresponsive to feminism. On the contrary, it has responded in its own predictable fashion" (124).

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Notes

[1]Although it is difficult to underestimate the impact of Friedan's book on the momentum of the second wave, it should be noted that prior to its 1963 publication, many other important events in the history of the modern movement had already taken place. For a summary of these, see Carabillo, Meuli, & Csida,1993.

[2]In the decade following the 1963 publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan's popularity grew as an eloquent spokeswoman for the moderate wing of the new feminist movement. In 1966, she was elected founding president of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and five years later she became a co-founder of *Ms.* magazine (Hammel, 1966; Davis, 1991, pp. 52-55; New feminist magazine, 1971).

[3]I have found no evidence that such a debate ever took place.

[4]For a fuller description of how marketers and advertisers began to research and conceptualize the women's market in the early 1970's, see Bartos, 1982.

[5]In subsequent years, NOW continued to pressure the industry with even more sophisticated actions. In 1972, for example, the New York chapter filed a petition with the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) asking that ABC's New York station WABC-TV have its broadcast license revoked. According to NOW, the action was based on the station's "discrimination against women in employment, failure to ascertain women's needs and interests in programming, and violation of the FCC's Fairness Doctrine, which requires that both sides be presented in 'an issue of controversial public importance'" (Hennessee & Nicholson, 1972, 12).

[6]In 1973, for example, the *New York Times* identified seven women in New York who were heads of Madison Avenue advertising agencies (Klemesrud, 1973).

[7]Linda Scott (1993), in her critique of the feminist attack on advertising, points out that nearly all the founders of the major cosmetics companies were women and that cosmetics ads have traditionally been written by women (150).

[8]For other examples of advertising women speaking out during the 1970's, see: "Admen Must Reinvent," 1970; Bernstein, 1975; "Caldwell Urges Boycott," 1976; "Commercials Tend," 1972; "Detroit Pays Lip Service," 1971; "European Women," 1971; Kovacs, 1972, June 12; Kovacs, 1972, July 17; Kovacs, 1972, Dec 4; Santini, 1974; "Savvy Marketers," 1975; "Slow Improvement," 1976; Smith, 1979; "Women's Ad Guides," 1975; "Working Women," 1975.

[9] Slims was successful because its makers developed a clever and popular advertising campaign that co-opted the women's movement, but perhaps equally important were the subtleties of Virginia Slims' marketing strategy. The cigarette was, in fact, physically slimmer—only 23 mm in circumference, a "full" 2 mm thinner than regular "men's" cigarettes—and it was given a white package with a series of thin vertical lines. But the significance of the "slimness" concept went beyond the dimensions of the cigarette and its packaging. Tobacco companies have historically pitched cigarettes to women based on their real or imagined weight-control properties, and the young female fashion models who appeared in Virginia Slims' ads certainly suggested slimness (if not virginity). Barthel (1988, 130-133) describes the sordid history of tobacco advertising aimed at women, and the use of the weight-control pitch during the 1920's, including Lucky Strike's campaign "Reach for a Lucky Instead of a Sweet."

[10]Some feminists argue that compromise with advertising's promotion of consumerism "focuses on the symptoms rather than the causes of sexism and is characteristic of liberal, non-radical feminism" (McCracken, 1993, 279).

[11]For a contemporary apologia of this perspective, see Scott, 1993.