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All-American Ads 1900-1919 (Midi S.)



Synopsis

A far cry from the aggressive ads we've become used to, American print advertisements from the first two decades of the 20th century were almost shockingly pleasant. Intricately designed and beautifully illustrated, often in the art nouveau style popular at the time, four-color, full-page magazine advertisements were welcome respites from the bland, text-filled pages among which they appeared. Sales pitches were earnest and friendly; beer, for example, was billed as "The Evening Glass of Cheer" and toothpaste was described as "Delicious Ribbon Dental Cream"; perhaps not the catchiest slogans, but they were on to something. The American consumerist boom of the 20th century was just beginning and advertising was getting its sea legs. From motorcars to hair tonics to steamship cruises to Coca-Cola ("After the theatre drink a glass; it relieves fatigue"), America was peddling its wares in style and setting an example of how to advertise in the modern age. This exhaustive compendium of ads from the period; many of which haven't been seen for over eight decades; is a fascinating reminder of surprisingly simpler times and a rediscovery of a forgotten age in advertising history.

Book Information

Series: Midi S.

Paperback: 638 pages

Publisher: Taschen; First edition (September 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 3822825123

ISBN-13: 978-3822825129

Product Dimensions: 8 x 1.6 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #222,283 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Graphic Design > Commercial > Advertising](#) #497 in [Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Advertising](#) #581 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > Art](#)

Customer Reviews

The editor: Jim Heimann is a resident of Los Angeles, a graphic designer, writer, historian, and instructor at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. He is Executive Editor for TASCHEN America and the author of numerous books on architecture, popular culture, and

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Steven Heller is the art director of The New York Times Book Review and co-chair of MFA Design at the School of Visual Arts. He has edited or authored over eighty books on design and popular culture including *Merz to Emigre* and *Beyond: Avant Garde Magazine Design of the 20th Century* and *Design Literacy Revised*. Jim Helmann is a resident of Los Angeles, a graphic designer, writer, historian, and instructor at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. He is Executive Editor for TASCHEN America and the author of numerous books on architecture, popular culture, and Hollywood history.

I haven't even gotten halfway through this book and the pages have already become detached from the spine of the book. It hasn't reached the point yet but it probably will that I will discard the covers, altogether. For what I paid, I'm very disappointed. The content of the book, as has been noted by other reviewers, is excellent and the quality of the paper is good. If you don't mind a book that falls apart, you'll probably be happy with this volume.

I own most of the collection, and love them all for different reasons. But this book has the most amazing artwork and brings back a time when beautiful illustrations said it all. If you want laughs, go for the 50s book, but if you want to see advertising when it was all about time, effort, and talent, this is the book. Actually, eventually you need them all...

This installment of *All-American Ads* covers the dawn of the 20th century and the beginning of sophisticated selling. The book follows the same format used in previous volumes covering magazine advertising in each decade of the last century. The book documents the rise of branded national advertising. While some of the ideas are dated-- there are a number of current campaign and tag lines that had their genesis in this time period. National magazine and newspaper advertising would grow into a tremendously potent medium in the '20's and '30's (both covered well by other books in this series) but, if like me, you are fascinated by what our ancestors bought and how it was sold to them-- this book is a good place to see what got them into stores.

great

Having bought previous titles in this Taschen series, I was delighted to find that this particular

volume is equally as spectacular. In fact, it's my favourite so far. I love viewing the past through the lens of popular advertising. Much is revealed of the hopes, wishes and concerns of the day. The graphics style of the ads is elegant, sometimes exotic and very colourful. Worth adding to your collection.

Thank you very much!

I love it

The ninth and final volume in this fascinating series of American advertising. If like me you have collected the set your bookcase is supporting just over six thousand pages, which contain at least fifteen thousand ads, all beautifully printed on quality paper. This last book, though is just on the fringes of my interest but it does have some lovely ad artwork. I was expecting to be overwhelmed by heavy Victorian style illustrations but there is some very refreshing work with a delicate touch, mostly for products like clothing, perfume or soap aimed at the female consumer. As with the other volumes the chapter on auto ads has the most ambitiously produced material, either as art or copy, page 162 has a 1914 Packard ad with the car outside a cathedral and just one line of text, 'Ask the man who owns one'. Adventurous stuff for the times considering that most ads were very text heavy. Unlike later decades consumer goods are scarcely visible though I was surprised to see on page 257 a 1919 Western Electric ad for their Dish-Washing Machine. Mostly the 'must have' items seem to be sewing machines, telephones, stoves or phonographs. This last product had a 1913 Columbia ad promoting their 78s as Double Disc Records. Music on both sides. Two records for a single price. Considering that photography had been around since the mid-1800s only two or three ads in the book use photos, the 1908 King Air Rifle has a clear photo of three kids dreaming about getting their own rifles and free targets, too. This thick book will interest social historians and also illustrators, there are some wonderful examples of graphic styling that really don't seem too dated even though many are just over a hundred years old. I think Taschen should be congratulated for publishing nearly ten decades of American ad creativity.

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