
Reviewed by: Walt Romanow, Communication Studies, University of Windsor.

By any textbook standard, Advertising: First Canadian Edition is a successful publication. The volume offers Canadian students of advertising the usual background knowledge of the advertising industry, its operative strategies, its impact on society, and its rational for functioning. At the same time, the book provides this information from a Canadian perspective.

The "perspective" feature should be amplified. It is not, simply, a matter of substituting Canadian examples where United States examples might have served earlier editions of the work (the text has had five editions beginning in 1962 -- the text under discussion is the sixth overall edition, but serves as the first Canadian edition). The authors, in fact, produce a substantial Canadian textbook that is likely to find a warm and enthusiastic response on the part of students and instructors in this country.

A publication of this sort becomes readily possible because of the strong similarities (in broad framework, at least) between the advertising industries in the United States and in Canada. In a sense, then, Canadian readers of the text benefit in a way that their U. S. counterparts do not. For the Canadian reader, in many instances, the text is a comparative study where differences in the industry exist.

While this may be true of much of the book, it is not consistently so. For example, in Chapter 20, "Advertising and the Law," the text focuses only on Canadian legal restrictions on advertising practices and the roles that Federal and Provincial jurisdictions enjoy in regulation of the industry. While the absence of U. S. regulations in such a text may be a bit of a loss to the Canadian student -- a loss, incidentally, that may be readily remedied by a reference to almost any available North American text on the advertising industry -- and, there are dozens -- the benefits of having a concise, up-to-date compendium of Canadian regulations of the industry more than makes up for such an absence.

Incidentally, it is noteworthy that the chapter on advertising and the law is particularly well organized and readable in an area that is characterized by, as the authors aptly point out, "...new statutes appearing at an accelerating rate."
While they may be small when compared to the strengths of the book, two weaknesses need to be pointed out.

First, International Advertising (Chapter 21) as a separate and clearly defined dimension of the advertising industry is disappointingly overviewed -- disappointing in the sense that the growing importance of international advertising is underemphasized. For example, while the authors indicate that global advertising expenditures will reach $780 billion by the year 2000, they omit any references to the impact that such massive amounts of advertising are likely to create. Concerns about global advertising have already been expressed, with a great deal of emphasis, by those speaking on behalf of third world societies. In a recent report from UNESCO, Many Voices: One World (1980) -- the MacBride Report, the following underlies the increasing concerns:

...advertising is seen by many as a threat to the cultural identity and self-realization of many developing countries: it brings to many people alien ethical values; it may deviate consumer demands in developing countries to areas which can inhibit development priorities; it affects and can often deform ways of life and life styles. Moreover, the threat to withdraw advertising -- by private interests or by a government -- can jeopardize press freedom.

Such massive consequences of transnational advertising require more treatment that an explication of "how to" conduct advertising business beyond our shores -- particularly from authors who elsewhere in the text rightly indicate that the understanding of advertising "should be an integral part of the broad background needed for informed citizenship."

Second, and here the Canadian context should be underlined in a text which focuses its attention on the Canadian industry, a dimension which receives short shrift in advocacy advertising. And this in a society where the Federal Government has become, in a few short years, the largest advertising account in the country -- as the authors illustrate, the Federal Government in 1982 spent double the amount spent by Proctor and Gamble, Inc., the next largest advertiser. Rather than place their brief two-page discussion of advocacy advertising in a chapter that relates where advertising is headed, the authors might well have included even a briefly expanded discussion of the topic in their chapter which focuses on the role of advertising in society.

Advocacy advertising, after all, has received considerable public examination in this country. First, in 1977, the subject was the theme of a meeting sponsored by the Canadian Bar Association, the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto, and by the Task Force on Freedom Broadcasting Information, Canadian Radio-Television Commission. Second in 1981, the Public Affairs Division of the Conference Board of Canada convened a conference on advocacy advertising. As point-of-view adver-
tising which has one of its prime purposes the modification of policies in society, an extended examination of the subject is mandatory in any text which focuses on the advertising industry in Canada.

One might ask, "How much more do you expect out of a text that already is 884 pages in length?" The answer is, of course, very little, since Advertising: First Canadian Edition is already an important and major contribution to the Canadian literature on advertising in the country. However, because it is intended for Canadian consumption, and Canada might be both, an outstanding example of how advocacy advertising has become a significant dimension in the industry, and because Canada might also be one of the "third world" societies which is being subjected to alien ethical values, the treatment of the two subjects in a Canadian text might have been enhanced.

All of the above said, it must be underscored, finally, that the text is an invaluable instructional resource, and well deserves consideration by those who instruct advertising in Canadian post secondary institutions.