

ROCKETING INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE: *LIFE* MAGAZINE, THE POSTWAR
ADVERTISING REVOLUTION, AND THE SELLING OF THE UNITED STATES
SPACE PROGRAM, 1957-1966

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ABSTRACT

From 1957 to 1966, *Life* magazine had significantly more advertisements with space imagery than *Ladies Home Journal*, *Reader's Digest*, or *Popular Science* magazines. These advertisements were placed in *Life* magazine instead of others because Henry Luce, creator and editor, used his magazine to support the Cold War. Luce's adamant views inspired NASA to promote the space program in *Life's* pages, which in turn, stirred public support for governmental officials who supported the space program, all of which convinced advertisers that *Life* magazine was the most effective medium for the placement of advertisements that used space imagery. The data was collected by looking at all issues of *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Popular Science* from 1957 through 1966.

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INTRODUCTION

“Rocketing into your daily life”, aptly describes the impact of both advertising and the space race in the late 1950s and early 1960s. That tagline was used by the makers of Corning to advertise Pyroceram, a new, space age material for their cookware.¹ This was one of many advertisements from 1957 to 1966 that employed images of the space program to sell their products. This thesis examines the rationale behind the placement of these ads. Advertisements have long been an indicator of societal values and interests. They are an important material culture source and are studied to understand what kinds of consumer goods were sold and how they were marketed to the American people. Advertisements are especially important to study during times of elevated consumer spending, like during the 1950s and early 1960s. This thesis documented the frequency of advertisements in *Life* magazine from the years of 1957 to 1966 and explains why there were a much larger number of space advertisements in *Life* magazine than in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Reader’s Digest*, or *Popular Science* at the same time. This time period was chosen because 1957 was the beginning of the space race, and the era of general interest magazines was waning by the mid 1960s, which forced the magazines to reevaluate their messages and in many cases overhaul their entire operation. The advertisements represent separate conscious efforts made by influential groups in both the government and private sectors to achieve certain goals that they believed would help America win the Cold War. These goals came together in *Life* magazine. Advertisements in *Life* magazine using space imagery during the years from 1957 to 1966 were a result of the efforts of *Life* founder and editor Henry Luce to help win the Cold War, NASA to earn popular support and continued federal funding, and the federal government to promote the popularity of the space program and promote consumerism as a technique to win the Cold War. Advertisers were aware of these groups and their objectives

¹ *Life*, September 28 1959, 84-85.

and placed advertisements using space imagery in *Life* magazine, instead of other popular magazines of the time.

The advertisements recorded for this thesis were those that used words or images that clearly referred to outer space, the space race, or the space program. These included images of rockets, planets, astronauts, as well as language that implied the use of space age technology, such as “rocket”, “orbit”, “satellite”, “outer space” and “space age”. Advertisements that had no direct relation to and were not the result of this new “space age technology” but still used the images to sell their products counted, and ads of all sizes and color palettes were included. There were no restrictions on the placement of the ad in the magazine or on the individual page. Advertisements that referenced other similar industrial and government progress of the time period, like new advances in jet air travel, were not recorded, even through they were numerous, looked similar, and could be mistaken for space advertisements if not examined closely. Propaganda or articles on the space program and astronauts were not part of this study.

The advertisement data for this thesis was collected from *Life* magazine, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Popular Science*, and *Reader’s Digest* from the years of 1957 through 1966. Each page of each of these issues was examined for large or small advertisements using space imagery. Advertisements were documented in a spreadsheet and were organized by magazine. Recorded information included the publishing date, location in the magazine, and short description.

There were more space advertisements in *Life* magazine than there were in *Reader’s Digest*. Because *Life* and *Reader’s Digest* were both general interest magazines, comparing their incidences of space ads proves that the number, frequency, and use of space images in *Life* magazine advertisements was an anomaly. Comparing advertisements in *Life* magazine to those in *Reader’s Digest* is relevant because *Reader’s Digest* was one of the few general interest

magazines to survive this time period and continue publication beyond the early 1970s. Most general interest magazines ceased during this time and were replaced by specific interest magazines. *Reader's Digest's* circulation increased and made the transition into the 1970s and the era of the specific interest magazines very successfully. These two magazines were similar in content and audience, so their advertisements should have been similar. As argued in this thesis, this large difference in the number of ads in comparable magazines was caused by numerous intersecting factors.

Different magazines of the time were also examined. *Ladies Home Journal* and *Popular Science* were surveyed and their numbers of space advertisements were recorded to prove that *Life* magazine had an unusually large number of space advertisements. This discrepancy could be explained by assuming that the increasing popularity in specific interest magazines would lead to an increase in their number of ads, but that is not an adequate explanation. This time period was still the age of general interest magazines. Magazine publishers in this time period started using surveys to understand and accumulate specific demographic data about their audiences. Advertisers used similar methods, as well as new psychological theories, to create ads that targeted certain audiences. They used these techniques to create certain ads for general interest magazines and completely different ads for women's or scientific magazines. It would seem that because *Ladies Home Journal* and *Popular Science* had such different audiences, their advertisements should have been drastically different in number and content than *Life* magazine. It is not surprising that *Ladies Home Journal* did not have very many space advertisements. It was a magazine aimed at women in the home, and it would seem that advertisements proclaiming "space age" materials and rocket technology would not lend themselves to household objects. However, there were products that used this technology. It was not difficult

for advertisers to creatively promote their products using this language. It is compelling to understand why this did not happen in this particular magazine.

It is also important to understand why this was not the case in *Popular Science* either. *Popular Science*, more than *Ladies Home Journal*, had an audience that appreciated advertisements that used images of the space program. Again, because advertisers had access to specific demographic data, it is reasonable to believe that consumers of *Popular Science* were those who were educated about, interested in, and probably supportive of, the space program. However, there were few advertisements using space imagery in *Popular Science*. There were more than in *Reader's Digest* and *Ladies Home Journal*, but still half as many as in *Life* magazine. This makes even less sense considering *Popular Science* also had an exclusive “space program” contract, theirs with Werner von Braun, to write a monthly column. Again, the fact that there were significantly more space advertisements in *Life* magazine must be explained by other interconnected factors.

While trying to accumulate data on space advertisements, a variety of periodicals were surveyed in order to compare data from magazines that were popular at a transitional period of time in magazine publishing history. In order to understand whether the number of space advertisements in *Life* magazine was unusually high, it was necessary to compare that data with data from at least one general interest magazine, and some specific interest magazines. It was not relevant to look at many general interest magazines because most of them ceased publication around this time and therefore were not stable sources of data. Instead, one general interest magazine, *Reader's Digest*, that was stable and still exists today, and two specific interest magazines that were indicative of the magazine world at this time were examined. Surveying advertisements in publications with diverse audiences provides greater insight.

Authors have thoroughly examined the subjects of Cold War culture, advertising theory and its evolution, presidential and governmental interest in the space program, NASA and its influence on America, and the media's coverage of the space program. These books and their arguments about the different agendas of various organizations create the framework that allows for the analysis of the creation and intent of these space advertisements.

Elaine Tyler May, in *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, argues that lingering anxiety from the Great Depression and World War II influenced Americans to focus their time and money on their homes and families and create their own kind of “contained space”, safe from what they perceived as imminent outside threats.² Lizabeth Cohen, in *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*, argues that in the postwar years, numerous groups including politicians, policymakers, business and special interest groups were committed to emphasizing the importance of mass consumerism in order to promote democratic values and help stimulate the economy.³ These historians establish the importance of consumer culture to Americans and how easily they were influenced by authority figures and advertisements to buy certain products. These books create the framework for this thesis and help create an understanding of the environment in which American consumers functioned. They support the theory that Americans were swayed by authority figures and were also encouraged to buy products, both of which are further examined in this thesis. The role of authority figures in promoting consumerism is an essential part of this thesis. Not only were advertisers dependent on sales, but Presidents also promoted consumerism as well. Their motives intersected while promoting the space program.

² Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1988).

³ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003).

Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* revolutionized the opinions held by Americans about the advertising industry.⁴ He exposed the advertising industry's use of psychological and subliminal methods to sell products. Martin Mayer wrote *Madison Avenue, USA*, an in-depth look at the advertising world in New York City during the 1950s.⁵ He examined and explained the various theories and strategies used by numerous successful advertising agencies during the Cold War. These influential works were supported by primary source research, much of it done by Alfred Politz, Inc. for *Life* and other popular magazines. These works prove conclusively that advertising agencies of this time period amassed an overwhelming mass of detailed information about their consumers and potential consumers, from basic information like age and gender to the breakdown of grocery store purchases by readers of certain magazines. The research on consumers, as well as the theories used by agencies to sell products, prove that they were well aware of the interests of consumers of certain magazines and understood which advertisements to use in which magazines in order to ensure the biggest sales. *Life* magazine used the most up-to-date market research and advertising techniques in their magazines. *Life* had audience supportive of the space program due to their exposure to massive amounts of promotional information given exclusively to *Life* and published because of Henry Luce's interest in winning the Cold War and using his magazines as a platform for his agenda.

John Logsdon, in *The Decision to go to the Moon: Project Apollo and the National Interest*, argues that the national government used the Apollo project to promote its national policy of competing with the Russians and eventually winning the space race as a method of winning the Cold War.⁶ This was significantly different from Eisenhower's view that the space program should be supported based on its potential technological and military uses. Kennedy's

⁴ Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1957).

⁵ Martin Mayer, *Madison Avenue, USA* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958).

⁶ John Logsdon, *The Decision to go to the Moon* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970).

advisors told him that his best chance for creating political success based on space program success was landing a manned mission on the moon. Walter McDougall, in his book, ...*The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age*, argues that in response to *Sputnik*, the American government focused on attaining technical superiority as a way to prove overall superiority and the government became a “technocracy” with the space program as its flagship.⁷ These books show that the government, especially under President Kennedy, was very concerned with creating widespread American support for the space program as a clear symbol of American superiority over Communism. Kennedy worked with various agencies and organizations, including *Life* magazine, to promote NASA’s programming. *Life* was an ideal partner for NASA, again because of Luce’s views. With Kennedy’s interest in promoting NASA and Luce’s interest in promoting NASA and therefore the Cold War, advertisers knew how and where to again promote government interests.

Michael Smith argues in “Selling the Moon: The U.S. Manned Space Program and the Triumph of Commodity Scientism”, that the publicity and marketing of the manned lunar mission was the most elaborate advertising campaign ever devised.⁸ He examines the methods of presentation used by the space program and its advertisers to portray the program in a positive, non-threatening light. This was known as “commodity scientism”; the use of science as a saleable entity. The space program created new images of rockets, astronauts, and missiles, which could be used, and were used by advertisers, to promote the space program as an extension of the national purpose. In *Space in the American Imagination*, Howard McCurdy argues that advocates of the space program, those that make public policy and include Congress,

⁷ Walter A. McDougall, ...*The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age* (New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1985).

⁸ Michael Smith, “Selling the Moon: The U.S. Manned Space Program and the Triumph of Commodity Scientism” in TJ Jackson Lears and Richard Wightman Fox, ed., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).

politicians, military officials, and NASA, all worked to create a vision of space travel that was promoted to the public as exciting and entertaining, in order to solidify public opinion about the necessity of space travel.⁹ The creation of this dream and its promises have proved very hard to reconcile with the realities of modern uses for space travel and budgetary problems. Americans refuse to give up the dream of the possibilities of space travel that was created for them and is ingrained in their knowledge of the space program itself. NASA from the beginning was preoccupied with self-promotion. At the time, it was a relatively new program, with untried, potentially dangerous, somewhat daunting goals of space exploration. During the early years, they promoted their astronauts and their personalities as faces of the program. This was apparent in their exclusive deal with *Life* magazine. These articles, while true, were carefully polished to present ideal portraits of American heroes. The increased popularity of the space program and its heroes made it necessary for NASA to establish strict rules for the use of NASA images in advertisements, create the Technology Utilization Program, which promoted household uses of space program products and an entire magazine, *Spinoff* devoted to sharing the many uses of products “spun-off” from the program and its many missions.¹⁰

Loudon Wainwright worked for *Life* from 1949 until it stopped publication in 1972. He was a former editor and was assigned to cover the astronauts’ stories.¹¹ He contends in *The Great American Magazine: An Inside History of Life*, that *Life* waged an aggressive campaign to buy the rights to the Mercury astronauts’ stories. They were prepared to pay almost any amount and made efforts to protect their exclusive contract once it was established. These efforts at protection included portraying the astronauts in an almost entirely positive light. Wainwright claims that this protective journalism was not required by editors, but was still common among

⁹ Howard E. McCurdy, *Space and the American Imagination* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997).

¹⁰ Sanford, David. “Admen in Orbit”. *The New Republic*. Vol. 155, Issue 25, (December 17, 1966), 13.

¹¹ Loudon Wainwright, *The Great American Magazine: An Inside History of Life* (New York: Knopf, 1986).

those covering the space program. The journalists who investigated the astronauts and their stories felt privileged to be so close to such an important story, but were also influenced by the patriotic atmosphere that existed at Time, Inc headquarters and was a creation of Henry Luce. James Kauffman, in *Selling Outer Space: Kennedy, the Media and Funding for Project Apollo, 1961-1963*, argues that President Kennedy worked in collusion with the media, specifically with *Life* magazine, to promote the Apollo program to the American public.¹² Many other publications attest to Henry Luce's patriotism and his willingness to help America win the Cold War using his personal influence and his publications. Advertisers, aware of so many aspects of consumers' lives, were well aware of a public figure's views and potential biases. With the government and NASA also wanting to promote the space program, and *Life* magazine promoting the space program as well, *Life* was the ideal place for agencies to use advertisements with space imagery. *Life*, more than other magazines, provided not only an audience that was bombarded with promotional articles about the space program, but was guided by a founder with an agenda and assisted by the government. Although *Popular Science* had an audience that was interested in scientific issues long before the creation of NASA, and *Readers Digest* was one of the few magazines that continued publication long after this time period and was therefore a more stable venue to place advertisements, there were significantly more space advertisements in *Life* magazine, which must be explained by other interrelated factors.

Historians have not examined magazine advertisements that used space imagery. Historians of the Cold War, American culture, the space program, the history of periodicals, and advertising history discuss the creation of the Cold War culture and the consumer republic, the production of space toys, the impact of the space race, the rise and fall of general interest

¹² James L Kauffman, *Selling Outer Space: Kennedy, the Media, and Funding for Project Apollo (1961-1963)*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1994).

magazines, the evolution of advertising theory, and other advertisement trends, like portrayal of gender and race, but they do not examine space ads. The space race was a defining story in the postwar era, during the same time period when advertising theory was evolving dramatically, so it is important to look at how these two influential American institutions intersected, as well as how they were influenced by important people and governmental institutions.

Advertisers used space imagery to sell their products in *Life* magazine, and the space program was sold through advertisements for consumer products as well. It was a mutually beneficial relationship. Advertisers felt confident using images of space in their ads because the government was concerned with promoting the space program as a consumer friendly, non-threatening, useful, federal project. This notion was linked to beliefs held by Americans that being a consumer was their duty and could help America win the Cold War. Many people and organizations persuaded them that winning the Cold War was imperative, and that they could play a role. These included Henry Luce, NASA, the federal government and presidents, and advertisers for household products. Luce, founder and publisher of *Life* magazine, made it his personal mission to use his magazines to help win the Cold War. NASA's existence was a result of the Cold War and was one of its most well known symbols, but public support was necessary to ensure its continued existence, technological improvements, and financial government support. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson told Americans it was their responsibility to buy consumer products and support the space program to defeat Communism and win the Cold War. Advertisers realized the agendas of these various groups, and used them to achieve their own objectives, by giving consumers the products to buy, and promoting them using space imagery in *Life* magazine.

CHAPTER ONE: COLD WAR CULTURE

The early years of the Cold War were a very unusual time in history and were influential in shaping America in the second half of the twentieth century. The world had gone through dramatic changes from the 1930s through the late 1940s and into the 1950s, creating a world of uncertainty. American lives were severely disrupted by World War II, which made many people frightened about the possibility of future world wars and anxious to find jobs for returning veterans in order to prevent another Depression.¹³ After the war, Americans were afraid that these events would occur. Coupled with the newly tested atomic power and its capabilities for destruction, as well as the constant threat of the Soviets and communism, Americans felt nervous about numerous economic, technological and political issues.

Many Americans chose to focus on areas of their lives that they could control, instead of concerning themselves with events outside their control. One of the main areas of concentration was the home. Women created and maintained the ideal home, which made them feel that they were creating a safe haven from all of these outside threats.¹⁴ Many men were concerned with owning their own house for their families. Part of this emphasis on the home included buying large quantities of goods to furnish and improve it. Because consumers had money to spend on goods for the home, advertisers updated their techniques to take advantage of this new market. These factors and experiences coincided and created a unique time. This is when advertising practice and theory were refined. This was also the same period when the space race had a very significant impact on the world. The particular culture that created and influenced both of these must be identified and examined before any advertisements are examined or their importance is

¹³ May, 3.

¹⁴ For more information, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*.

analyzed. It cannot be debated that during these years, the Cold War dominated everyday American life and created the culture that produced advertisements that used space imagery.

The lives of Americans in the post war era were defined by two trends: the baby boom and the drastic increase in consumer spending. The population of the United States grew from 132 million in 1940 to 179 million in 1960.¹⁵ There were 3.6 million children born in 1950, but by 1960, that number had risen to 4.3 million.¹⁶ This increase in population coincided with the rise in consumer spending. The median family income rose from \$3,083 per year in 1950 to \$5,976 in 1960.¹⁷ Five years after World War II ended, the amount spent on household furnishings rose by 240 percent.¹⁸ The 1950s marked the beginning of mass consumption.¹⁹

This trend toward mass consumerism was slow in arriving. Many Americans still felt the lingering effects of both the lean years of the Depression and the rationing and sacrifice of the World War II years. Many Americans were nervous about the possible effects on the economy created by the end of the war. Not only were they apprehensive because the United States had been in The Great Depression before the war, but there was another economic recession in the years immediately following the war too. Although this recession, lasting only from 1945-1946, was not as severe as the Great Depression, it suggested that another Great Depression was a possibility. Prosperity, common at the end of a war was not guaranteed, which many Americans had learned during the depression that followed World War I.²⁰ There were also thousands of veterans returning to their homes and hopefully their jobs. Their families were concerned that there might not be enough jobs available to employ all of the veterans. They were conditioned

¹⁵ William H Young with Nancy K Young, *The 1950s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 3.

¹⁶ Young, 7.

¹⁷ Young, 5.

¹⁸ Eugenia Kaledin, *Daily Life: The United States, 1940-1959 Shifting Worlds* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 122.

¹⁹ Samuel Lawrence, *Brought to You By: Postwar Television Advertising and the American Dream* (Austin, TX: University of Austin Press, 2001), xi.

²⁰ May, 11.

that excess spending on credit, a popular practice during the Roaring Twenties, led to the Great Depression and that this kind of behavior was to be avoided. Americans were not able to transition immediately into a consumer-driven economy. The federal government helped ease this transition by offering low interest loans for home ownership through the GI Bill.

The Cold War was a total conflict at home and abroad. Therefore, what people did in their homes was evaluated by how it fit into the war ethic. Interests that traditionally had been defined as private activities and concerns could not be separated from the government's definition of public activities. All personal activities were expected to contribute to the American effort to win the Cold War and were therefore considered public activities subject to the same patriotic expectations.²¹ This applied to the objects that people bought as well. Advertisers played upon this patriotism by using government programs like the space program in their advertisements.

Americans in this time period defined themselves by what and how much they consumed. Since there was an opportunity to consume goods in large quantities, and compelling patriotic and personal reasons to do so, Americans compared themselves to others using consumer goods as a measurement. In this context, large items like cars and houses sent a message to other consumers, but so did smaller, common items like types of food and clothing. Class differences became more defined with the increased opportunity to buy things. Credit card use also increased in popularity during this time, making consumer products much easier to obtain for all Americans. Although Americans were leery of credit card use because of its contribution to the causes of the Great Depression, the advent of the Diners Club card in 1950 made it easier for

²¹ Nathan Abrams and Julie Hughes, ed., *Containing America: Cultural Production and Consumption in Fifties America* (Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham Press, 2000), 189.

Americans to justify using credit cards.²² When combined with the ability and the means to finally spend money, the barrage of advertisements from various media reinforcing spending, and the hundreds of new products available on the market, it was difficult to resist buying new products.

Consumer products were marketed to Americans in very specific and calculated ways. Vance Packard, a critic of advertising theory writing in the 1950s, argued that some advertisers attempted to use subliminal messaging in their ads.²³ This did not include actual hidden physical messages, but instead the use of psychological theory to advertise to the subconscious thoughts and desires of the American people. Packard's objection to this type of advertising was that it was used peoples' thoughts and private feelings and manipulating them for profit. The advertisements played on anxieties held by consumers because of the current political and economic atmosphere and in some cases inflamed those anxieties to increase sales. They also presented the goods as projections of certain images; buying certain products actually meant buying certain personal qualities, those that the consumers felt they were lacking and could be purchased as suggested to them in advertisements. Packard's problems with the new advertising techniques were due to the subversive methods [in his opinion] that they were beginning to use. For example, researchers found that working women and housewives had completely different reactions to laborsaving devices for the home. Working women accepted the devices and the benefits for their lives. The housewives felt threatened by them, and felt that their abilities as wives and mothers were being criticized. In order to avoid the resentment of the housewives, advertisers adapted their ads so that instead of making the women feel guilty, for example, the

²² Stephen Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 71.

²³ Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders*.

ads told women that these appliances would give them more quality time to spend with their children.²⁴

The idea of consumer goods as representations of patriotism and status symbols culminated and was exemplified at the debate with Vice President Richard Nixon and Premier Nikita Khrushchev at the 1959 United States Exhibition in Moscow about which country's domestic system was superior. Nixon claimed the United States was better because American consumers products were better, and there were more available choices. This implied that because the United States could provide their citizens with domestic stability and boundless consumer products, the country's economic and political structure was superior as well. These products also supposedly reduced the amount of time needed to do chores. Women could complete chores with little more than a push of a button, emphasizing that Americans were ahead in their technology as well. Nixon conceded that even though the Russians had a slight advantage in rockets, he believed that Americans were far ahead in technology that was useful on a daily basis. This made the United States far superior, because these were things that mattered to the people in their daily lives, unlike rocket technology. However, it was only a matter of time before these considerable skills were aimed at rocket technology as well.

The animosity against the Soviet Union was mostly a reaction to their communist government. The theory of containment, first explained and named by George Kennan, a State Department analyst of Soviet Russia, argued that communism must be contained to those countries which already were communist, and prevented from spreading further to other countries. Kennan believed that certain countries would be more susceptible to the ideals of communism, especially those countries with economic problems and discontent among the people. If even one of these countries became communist, then it might spread quickly to other

²⁴ Vance Packard, "The Ad and the Id", *Reader's Digest*, 71 (427) (November 1957), 119.

countries, in a domino effect. Preventing this from happening by containing communism was the dominant foreign policy during the Cold War. President Truman formally designated it in 1947 in his Truman Doctrine, pledging money for countries dedicated to preventing communism.²⁵

Thwarting communism and creating animosity towards the Soviet Union was not limited to governmental tactics. It was also pursued by the private sector and in the entertainment and consumer industries. Countless studies have examined books, movies, and television created in this time period and their subtle use of fear and Cold War imagery. They have found many examples of this portrayal of American people as heroes, and those from other nations, especially the Soviet Union, as villains.²⁶ The children's cartoon series *Rocky and Bullwinkle* includes characters Boris and Natasha as evil Russian villains. One of the most recognized examples is James Bond, a character created in novels by Ian Fleming. Although Bond is British, he is fighting for the same ideals and against the same evils as Americans, making him a figure easily identifiable to the American people. James Bond also fits the rigid male stereotype that was emphasized and encouraged at this time. Women and men were supposed to fit certain roles in the home and in their careers. Bond fit the ideal of the extremely masculine man, capable in any situation, always finishing his assigned mission, while saving the civilized world from communist and atomic threats. While it is unclear how much the policies and practices of the federal government actually shaped the lives of American consumers, it did not stop Hollywood from taking on the government's message and attempting to create movies about issues like the atomic threat and communism. Whether they actually impacted the mindsets of the moviegoer

²⁵ For more information, see John Lewis Gaddis *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1972) and Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

²⁶ For more information, see Stephen Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*.

matters less than their appearance at the movie theater. While movies like *The Red Menace* and *It Came from Outer Space*, based on their low box office popularity, did not appeal to many moviegoers, they prove that fears of other cultures did exist and were influential enough to be the subject of numerous movies.²⁷

During this period, the United States also competed with the Soviets in an arms race. Four years after the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Japan and the subsequent end of World War II, Russia announced that they had completed their first successful atomic bomb test. Truman responded by funding the development of the hydrogen bomb, more deadly than the atomic bomb. The arms race also influenced the psyche of the American people. Prior to World War II, the technology for massive destruction was not available. Less than twenty years after World War II began, there were two kinds of weapons capable of eradicating entire cities. The threat of possible destruction at the touch of a button was also reinforced in schools and by the government.²⁸ It would be difficult to overestimate the impact of the atomic threat on the lives of people living during this time. Information about how to survive nuclear fallout was common in magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and books during the early 1950s. Families were instructed that to escape from the effects of a bomb, they could simply lay in a ditch.

Many American families had their own bomb shelters, and there were others in communities. These home shelters were widely promoted by the government, and by private businesses. Advertisements for personal shelters appeared in popular magazines. *Life* magazine published a letter from President Kennedy in 1961, explaining how important it was for the American people to build their own.²⁹ The letter was followed by do-it-yourself instructions to

²⁷ Whitfield, 133.

²⁸ For more information, see Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light* (New York: Pantheon, 1985).

²⁹ President John F. Kennedy, "Fallout Shelters: A New Urgency, Big Things to Do- and What You Must Learn," *Life* volume 49, no 11 (September 17, 1961): 95.

ensure compete safety. *Life* magazine also profiled a newlywed couple that spent their honeymoon in their bomb shelter. This article included numerous pictures of the couple and showed them going down the ladder under the ground, as well as a picture of their supplies.³⁰ The Federal Civil Defense Administration promoted the typical country kitchen as a model for mother to use when organizing and compiling their supplies. Bomb shelters were supposed to be well equipped, complete with canned goods, candles, first aid kits, and other emergency supplies. Women were supposed to maintain the shelter, and accustom their children to the possibility of its use, sometimes by making a game out of it: “Playing Civil Defense.”³¹ Children were taught how to “protect” themselves in schools during nuclear drills. Short films were shown in schools to teach children the proper behavior.

The reactions of the American public to the space program were similar to their reactions to atomic power. While many people accepted the atomic bomb as a step in the natural American tradition of American progress and technology and preferred to be optimist about its creation, other people questioned the seemingly permanent place that the atomic bomb was given in American culture.³² Like the space program, the atomic bomb forced people to think about not just the potential good that could come from new technological discoveries, but also the great harm that it could bring as well.³³

Veterans returning from the war were given funding under the GI Bill, which enabled them to buy homes. Many families wanted to move away from cities, and the easy availability of automobiles without gas rationing allowed many citizens to own one. From 1950 to 1980, the suburbs gained 60 million people, and by 1970, for the first time ever, there were more people

³⁰ “Modern Living”, *Life* (August 10, 1959): 51.

³¹ Peter Kuznick, *Rethinking Cold War Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 161.

³² Margot A Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove’s America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), xxi.

³³ May, 22.

living in suburbs than in cities.³⁴ The ability to move away from cities created a demand for cheaper housing. This cheaper housing came in developments like Levittown, and others created in its image.³⁵ Neighborhoods of small ranch-style houses with small yards were common. Many Americans were able to buy these houses, with over 63 percent of Americans owning a house in 1960, up from 47 percent in 1946.³⁶

More Americans owned cars at this time than any time before. These cars were necessary to commute to jobs in the cities from homes in the suburbs, but also made it possible to use these cars to vacation. The increase in the number of cars owned by Americans and their financial ability to use these cars frequently, changed the American landscape and culture dramatically and permanently. In this time period, cars were a very important status symbol. Because this was a time when most Americans owned a car, wanted to own a car, or were shopping for the newest models, advertisers created many advertising campaigns for cars. These campaigns frequently, perhaps more consistently than other consumer products, used space related language and images in their advertisements.

Popular culture in the 1950s was very different than what came before or after. According to the *National Survey of Television Sets*, in May of 1959, six out of seven households, or 86 percent, in the United States had television sets.³⁷ This was nearly 44.5 million. Television advertising was very limited in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It was a new technology and advertisers were not entirely supportive. There were only three major networks at the time. They were supported, as were their shows, by commercial sponsors. These sponsors

³⁴ David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), 142.

³⁵ For more information, see Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1985) and Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen, *Picture Windows: How the Suburbs Happened* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000).

³⁶ Kuznick, 66.

³⁷ A.J Van Zuilen, *The Life Cycle of Magazines: A Historical Study of the Decline and Fall of the General Interest Mass Magazine in the United States During the Period 1946-1972* (Uithoorn: Graduate Press, 1977) Thesis- Vrij Universiteit, Amsterdam, 139

were very invested in the content and programming of the shows. Popular shows included *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet* and *Leave it to Beaver*, which were essentially about perfect white nuclear families where all family members fit particular gender roles.³⁸ The ideal families shown in television and movies were the model for the portrayal of astronauts in publications and interviews. Writers, especially those from *Life*, were told to spin their information so that the astronauts and their families were seen as mirror images of popular families and characters on television and other popular culture, regardless of how truthful that depiction was.³⁹

More common however, were movies that offered consumers an escape from their everyday lives. Walt Disney in particular, fought against the Communist menace, as he saw it, but managed to do it in a way that was consumer friendly. Through films like *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*, *Davy Crockett*, and *The Swiss Family Robinson*, he promoted ideal Americans: hardworking, individualistic, progressive, and patriotic. His theme park, Disneyland, was an idealized environment. He claimed in 1948 that he believed “this is a good time to get acquainted with, or renew acquaintance with, the American breed of robust, cheerful, energetic, and representative folk heroes.”⁴⁰ While the viewer did probably not detect the patriotic undertones, it is compelling that such a popular filmmaker understood the anxieties of the era and made an attempt to alleviate some of these anxieties by subtly promoting American ideals in his movies.

In this time period, whether the messages were overt did not matter. There was a demand for this type of movie, or television show, or book. Television shows and movies about ideal family units living well in beautiful neighborhoods were extremely popular. Creating these

³⁸ Halberstam, 510-512.

³⁹ Wainwright, 232.

⁴⁰ Kuznick, 165.

ideals in suburban neighborhoods became the new goal for Americans.⁴¹ However, this goal was not always as easy to reach as it seemed in movies and on television. People tried to achieve ideals during these years, but were easily troubled when those ideals proved difficult to achieve. During this time church attendance reached an all-time high in 1957.⁴² One third of prescriptions were for tranquilizers, filled by women.⁴³

The emphasis on traditional gender roles was seen clearly in the popularity of certain movies, television shows, and music. For example, John Wayne was the most admired man by American men according to polls done throughout the 1950s and 1960s.⁴⁴ Most men watched football, a particularly masculine contact sport, especially compared with baseball, a more graceful and contemplative pastime. *Playboy*, first published in 1953, epitomized the emphasis on extremely masculine popular culture created and popularized during the 1950s. The first issue of *Playboy* was published by Hugh Hefner. He did not number the first issue of the magazine, which featured Marilyn Monroe on the cover, because he was unsure about the success of the venture. However, the magazine quickly became popular among men, who used it as an escape from their personal lives where they were expected to fulfill rigid roles, including that of a parent attached permanently to a strict domestic structure. Reading *Playboy* offered a temporary respite, unlike any other, from this potentially restrictive lifestyle. These ideals were exactly those that were used when depicting the astronauts in their contract with Life magazine. Although the astronauts were not all overly masculine, and some had problems with their

⁴¹ For more information about television's role in promoting idyllic domesticity, see Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), Ella Taylor, *Prime-Time Families: Television Culture in Postwar America* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), and "Sitcoms and Suburbs: Positioning the 1950s Homemaker" in Lynn Spigel and Denise Mann, eds., *Private Screenings: Television and the Female Consumer* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

⁴² Kuznick, 166.

⁴³ Kuznick, 166.

⁴⁴ Kuznick, 162.

personal lives, the writers of *Life* and the image makers at NASA were very careful to depict the astronauts as flawless, masculine men.

The Cold War also created an atmosphere where men were required to be masculine in most ways. Politicians of the time emphasized the importance of virility in maintaining America's world position. President Kennedy claimed in 1963 in *Sports Illustrated*, "it was physical hardihood that helped Americans in two world wars to defeat strong and tenacious foes."⁴⁵ At events like the Olympics of 1956 and 1960, the Russians defeated the Americans.⁴⁶ This caused many people to emphasize and promote the creation of "tougher" Americans. This was linked to the fears of homosexuality of the time and the tendency to portray enemies, especially Soviets, as effeminate.⁴⁷ The emphasis on extreme masculinity was echoed in the marketing of the astronauts and explains why NASA used certain strategies to describe the astronauts, and why astronauts were a common feature of advertisements, especially in *Life* magazine.

There was an impulse by manufacturers, in keeping with trends in production, to invent products for the household that reduced the amount of time for women to spend doing duties. Women were defined by appearances, both of their houses and of themselves. Advertisements in magazines were aimed mostly to those effects. These included products to attain the perfect household. While there has been research done that shows that these new improvements did not actually decrease the amount of time spent doing chores, these appliances were heavily marketed with that particular promise. This promise to reduce chore time led to an emphasis on creating

⁴⁵ Kuznick, 160

⁴⁶ Kuznick, 161

⁴⁷ For more information about homosexuality during the Cold War, see John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983) and "The Homosexual Menace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America" in Kathy Lee Peiss and Christina Simmons, eds., *Passion and Power: Sexuality in History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

more leisure time that could be enjoyed by the entire family. At the same time that women were provided the possibility of leisure time to fill however they wished, society required that they continue filling the same roles as mother and wife that had been previously expected from them. Women were not allowed to find independence or another sense of identity outside the home. This created a sense of anxiety and shame in women who were not completely fulfilled by such structured roles, a phenomenon that was quite common but not discussed until the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963.⁴⁸ Promotion of the typical mother role was also prevalent in magazines like *Ladies Home Journal*, *McCall's* and *Good Housekeeping*, with articles like “The Business of Running a Home” and “Femininity begins at Home.”⁴⁹ The number of female college students dropped from 47 percent in 1920 to 35 percent in 1958 and over half of them quit before graduation to support their husbands.⁵⁰ The fact that there was such an emphasis on buying consumer goods and goods for women to use in the home shows that advertisers specifically targeted women, using any possible means to sell their products. The type of society in which they lived meant that they were expected to purchase consumer goods and would be influenced by products being advertised in ways that also supported winning the Cold War, for example using images of the space program.

Children's lives changed too during the Cold War era. In part, families moved to suburbia to provide extra space to enjoy their newfound leisure time. Postwar families had significantly more leisure time than they did previously. They wanted to use this leisure time for a variety of activities. The creation of a recreation room in a typical family house was first

⁴⁸ Marty Jezer, *The Dark Ages: Life in the United States, 1945-1960*, (Boston: South End Press, 1982), 227-228.

⁴⁹ Jezer, 229.

⁵⁰ Jezer, 230.

exhibited in 1939.⁵¹ It was voted most popular at the 1939 Queens World's Fair and by the 1950s, was very common in suburbia.⁵² Manufacturers of appliances that were sized specifically for them also advertised to children. These were designed to prepare children for their gender-specific roles later in life. They included kitchen appliances, doctor's kits, and other adult career-related activities.⁵³ The shows on television that were space fantasy themed had an agenda- they were not purely for entertainment. Shows like Captain Midnight, Tom Corbett, Rocky Jones, and Captain Video were used to mold young minds that would later carry on the fight against communism. They embodied American idealism and were models of justice, truth, value and the American way.⁵⁴ These shows can be examined to understand the impact of the Cold War on children. These characters were often accompanied by children who helped them achieve their missions of protecting justice and preventing oppression.⁵⁵ These villains often used technology to thwart the heroes, further convincing children that scientific progress was the best way for them to win the battle for freedom. These shows made science and space exploration exciting and appealing at a time when education and scientific dominance were politically important to the United States.⁵⁶

In this time that the space program captured the attention of the American people. While its popularity grew slowly at first, due to anxieties about the state of the world, the American people eventually supported the space program wholeheartedly. With the progress of the American space program in the 1950s and early 1960s, some advertisers used the new technology of the space program in their ads to increase sales. Americans were interested in the

⁵¹ Beatriz Colomina, Annemarie Brennan and Jeannie Kim, ed., *Cold War, Hothouses: Inventing Postwar Culture from Cockpit to Playboy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 129

⁵² Colomina, 129

⁵³ Colomina, 127.

⁵⁴ Molly Weaver, *Cold War Culture, Television, and America's Youth: Space Fantasy Television Programming During the 1950s*, Master's of Arts Thesis- Bowling Green State University, 2004, 4.

⁵⁵ Weaver, 64.

⁵⁶ Weaver, 69.

space program, but were apprehensive about it in light of the recent end of World War II and the Soviet threat.

These threats made Americans turn their energies homeward. They created ideal homes, protected from harmful outside influences, yet outfitted with modern technology. This emphasis was promoted by advertisements, some using images of the space race. These advertisements had a particular impact and were created by this specific culture, which has to be examined in order to understand how and why these advertisements are important.

CHAPTER TWO: ADVERTISING THEORY AND PRACTICE DURING THE COLD WAR

The business of advertising is always evolving, but was revolutionized in the 1950s and 1960s. The advertising industry helped create the large increase in consumer spending, advocated by businesses as well as the government. They also needed to ensure that the spending continued. By using new research and methods, advertisers were able to target consumers more specifically by their personal interest than ever before. Using this information, as well as understanding that there were numerous other individuals and organizations that would help with promotion of the space program, advertisers realized that *Life* magazine was the ideal venue for advertising using space imagery. Advertisers, who frequently claimed that technological advances improved their products, found the perfect channel for selling products through ads with images of space and space age technology.

Advertisements serve historians as a valuable research tool. Recollections, both oral and written, are subject to the fallibility of memory and other agendas. Advertisements are a “written record of American civilization.”⁵⁷ This is especially true in the case of magazines that are aimed at that “largest segment of the buying public”, the middle class, like *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Look*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*.

With all of the new media available in the 1950s, including the television, advertisers had increased choices about where to place their ads. Magazines held 9 percent of advertising dollars in 1950, but only 7.7 percent by 1960.⁵⁸ There was a significant trend in the late fifties to spread advertising dollars to the few top magazines, usually, *Life*, *Look*, and the *Post*. With so many new products to choose from, and the competition of magazines, radio, and now television to display ads, advertisers had to persuade the consumer that their products were “more

⁵⁷ Bruce Brown, *Images of Family Life in Magazine Advertising: 1920-1978*. New York : Praeger Publishers, 1981), 14.

⁵⁸ Young, 147.

convenient,' 'easier to use,' 'stronger,' 'neater,' 'cleaner,' 'fresher,' 'extra dry' (or extra moist), or possessed any of a hundred other 'improvements.'⁵⁹

Television also did not reduce print advertising revenue as much as might be expected. From 1946 to 1954, *Collier's*, *Life*, *Look* and the *Saturday Evening Post* increased publication by 33 percent. Magazine sales peaked in 1960, a year when 90 percent of homes had televisions.⁶⁰ Also, television in this time period was still overwhelmingly in black and white.⁶¹ Magazines emphasized their ability to provide color ads, and in *Life's* case, stunning photography.

Advertisements have not always been a necessary, or even a desired part of the magazine in the eyes of the publishers. Advertising at the turn of the century was infrequent and expensive. Individual advertisements were very small. Magazine circulation was too low for advertising to have much impact on sales. Mass production allowed for not only cheaper rates and consequently larger subscriptions to the magazines, but the advertisements became easier to design and cheaper to implement. Another result of the increase in mass production was the sheer number of new products flooding the market that needed to reach an audience. Magazines also provided an audience for them. By the mid twentieth century, advertisements were extremely important. Magazine staff realized that losing a customer subscription was irrelevant to the bottom line, but losing an advertising campaign could seriously damage a magazine.

Advertising spending tripled between World War II and 1959, when eleven billion dollars were spent.⁶² The advertising industry was created in its present form during this time. Advertising agencies were responsible for creating "wants that previously did not exist", according to John Kenneth Galbraith in his 1958 book, *The Affluent Society*, but they were also

⁵⁹ Young, 41.

⁶⁰ James Baughman, "Who read *Life*?" Erika Doss, *Looking at Life Magazine* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 44.

⁶¹ Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), 37.

⁶² Cohen, 301.

“integral to ...the whole postwar projection increasing private production and consumption to increase natural prosperity.”⁶³

Advertising during the Cold War era underwent rapid changes. The change in media popularity had the biggest influence. The rapid increase in televisions changed the way that advertisements were created. In order to compete in this market, advertisers had to think creatively. They used both obvious and subtle changes in order to interest readers. Details such as the size of ads, the number of illustrations, the colors in the ads, the type used, the position of these elements in the ad, the position of the ads on the page and in the magazine itself, were all taken into consideration.⁶⁴

Cold War era advertisers were working in a unique time. Images of the Cold War in magazines regularly appeared next to innocuous articles about celebrities and new fads. Advertisers did this effectively as well. Historian Nathan Abrams has shown how “freedom imagery” was used in advertisements for popular household objects. The newest swimsuit of the time was named the “bikini” after the Bikini Atoll, a site for nuclear tests.⁶⁵ GI Joes, introduced in 1964 were advertised as soldiers, a role that is important in American history.⁶⁶ These soldiers were responsible for the protection of the new world created at the beginning of the Cold War. Coming at the end of World War II, such imagery and rhetoric was especially powerful. The heightened emotions of the time made it easy, and relatively natural, for independent advertisers to play on the fears of the Cold War era to sell their products. It was done successfully with other products, and continued to be an effective policy. These examples deal with private

⁶³ Cohen, 301.

⁶⁴ David Carter, *The Changing Face of Magazine Advertisements*. Master’s of Science Thesis- Graduate School of Journalism at Ohio University, 1967, 2-3.

⁶⁵ Nathan Abrams, “Advertising Freedom: *Commentary Magazine* and the Cultural Cold War” in *Studies in the Social Sciences: The Impact of the Cold War on American Popular Culture*, Elaine McClarnand and Steve Goodson, ed., Vol. XXXVI (Carrollton GA: University of West Georgia, 1999), 65-80.

⁶⁶ Roger Chapman, “From Vietnam to the New World Order: The GI Joe Action Figure as Cold War Artifact”, in McClarnand and Goodson, 47.

businesses, without even mentioning the roles played by groups like the Advertising Council, created in 1942 specifically to create and nurture public support for governmental policies as well to influence public opinion to support the economy.⁶⁷

Advertisers during the Cold War were also given opportunities to manipulate information and the fears of American people to sell products. It was common to find traces of World War II era rhetoric using “visions of super-powered domesticity” to encourage spending in order to undermine Communism.⁶⁸ These groups were vital in the creation of a Cold War consensus and although “many have depicted that consensus as emerging, almost deterministically, from broad historical forces, including consumerism, mass culture, and an exhaustion of ideology. It did not arise spontaneously. National leaders looked to the effective domestic propaganda structure of World War II as a model for their postwar programs to direct public opinion.”⁶⁹

The government instructed consumers that buying products was a way to win the Cold War, and some producers told consumers that certain products were necessary to protect their homes. Advertisers even used images of frightening Cold War technology to increase sales. This can be seen clearly in the marketing of bomb shelters to the American family. The marketing was very clever, and although it could not hide the reason for their existence, it depicted consumer society as progressive and optimistic.⁷⁰ It was, after all, promoting a product that was necessary only in the event of worldwide destruction. Advertisers carefully marketed it as an extension of the perfect home of the Cold War era. This advertising tied in to the already saturated market for other new and improved home products. Part of this connection was

⁶⁷ Daniel Lykins, *From Total War to Total Diplomacy* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 2.

⁶⁸ Cynthia Henthorn, *From Submarines to Suburbs: Selling a Better America, 1939-1959* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2006), 17.

⁶⁹ Lykins, 1.

⁷⁰ Janna Jones, “Living with the Bomb: The Retreat to the Suburban Bomb Shelter” in *Studies in the Social Sciences: The Impact of the Cold War on American Popular Culture*, Elaine McClarnand and Steve Goodson, ed., vol. XXXVI, (Carrollton GA: University of West Georgia, 1999), 1.

achieved by proclaiming the potential for upscale shelters and by making the bomb shelter essentially a miniature home. By 1962, over 200,000 families had built fully stocked shelters.⁷¹ The advertising for the bomb shelter epitomized the issues of the time period: fears about outside threats used to create a consumer culture.

One of the basic rules for successful advertising is that the consumers must be able to identify with a particular ad. The point of advertising was appealing to the largest possible audience, and understanding the values of the largest segment of the buying public, the middle class.⁷² If advertisements appealed to only a small number of the population, they were quickly pulled from circulation. While advertisements frequently depicted ideal situations and idealized people, the magazines also appealed to what they thought the consumers wanted, as well as what consumers already had. Some of the least effective advertisements were those that did not speak to or offended the consumer values.

With the baby boom, the emergence of a mass consumer culture, and the rapid increase in popularity of the television, advertising changed very quickly in a short period of time. Advances in advertising were analyzed at the time in two significant books, Martin Mayer's *Madison Avenue, USA* and Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*.⁷³ These books evaluated the basic rules for advertising that were known and applied at the time.

Mayer explains a concept known as the "USP", or Unique Selling Proposition. In order to sell a product, the three rules of the USP must be followed. First, the ad must explain the benefit of the particular product. Second, it must offer a unique benefit, one not offered by the competition, and third, it must make an impression and sell the product to the consumer. Once an item has a USP, it can use that USP indefinitely. The USP is linked permanently with the

⁷¹ Jones, 1.

⁷² Brown, 12.

⁷³ Martin Mayer, *Madison Avenue, USA*, 1958 and Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders*, 1957.

product, and all of the later advertising revolves around it. The consumer knows about the product and why it is special, and different advertising tactics, like the use of space imagery in ads, can be added later.

This concept of using the same ads for a long period of time was another common advertising technique of the 1950s and according to one advertising executive of the time, “when the client first begins to tire of an ad, you know it’s beginning to catch on with the public.”⁷⁴ One chairman of the board of a large advertising campaign claimed that given similar budgets and products, his less than brilliant campaign that ran for ten years would beat new, brilliant campaigns that were introduced every six months, simply because he worked hard on adding new material to the already existing USP. Oldsmobile used this particular strategy. It built on their recognition as technologically advanced automaker and introduced an element of the space program that they exploited for years.

The goal in advertising was to convince the consumer that they wanted what the company was selling. This is done in two parts: catching the readers’ attention, and then winning their belief.⁷⁵ While images and rhetoric of the space program was not as useful in the latter part, it was very useful in the former. The space program and the language associated with it lent itself very well to attention gathering. Phrases like “Space-Age”, and words like “rocket” implied new and vastly improved products due to fantastic technological advances. These kinds of words in most cases were not in any way actually associated with the product but were included specifically to gain the attention of the audience.

The place where the ad appeared also affected its creation. Cosmetic ads aimed at women might promote the same product differently in *Vogue* and *Seventeen*. The medium was

⁷⁴ Mayer, 52.

⁷⁵ Mayer, 126.

also related to the market. In the 1950s, advertising agencies researched their audiences and discovered differences based on class, geography, age and common interests. The varying amount of interest in the different media outlets entertaining the markets provided the opportunity for more market research. There were the standard newspapers, magazines, radio, and billboards, as well as new and exciting television. *Life* magazine received more advertising sales than any other magazines and most television networks except for CBS and NBC. *Life* received \$130 million in revenue, which was less than NBC's \$170 million, but much more than all of the other media, none of which earned more than \$100 million.⁷⁶

One very important trend in the advertising industry during this time was the discovery of segmented markets. Advertisers were worried that because the large middle class was buying so many products, soon they would run out of items to spend their money on. Producers of goods created a system of promoting the newest models in order to convince consumers that they needed to buy the new products. This strategy was supported by the soon outdated theory that there was a large middle class that was interested in similar products and had similar tastes. This "Populuxe" theory was soon replaced with the discovery of market segmentation.⁷⁷ Market segmentation revolutionized the advertising industry, and on a related note, contributed to the demise of mass-market publications like *Life* magazine. This theory was somewhat known before the 1950s, but the industry gave credit to Wendell Smith in 1956, and marketing director Pierre Martineau in 1958.⁷⁸ They realized that for many companies, their "core" market had been saturated, but attention to advertising to fringe markets might be able to create some profits as well. This segmentation meant that advertisers began to create products, and more

⁷⁶ Mayer, 142.

⁷⁷ Cohen, 293.

⁷⁸ Cohen, 295.

importantly for this study, advertisements for certain segmented markets. In certain cases, this new direction took many years to take hold. In other cases though, it was adopted quickly.

This interest in segmentation was fueled by other studies that were done at the time. America's increase in buying power led advertisers and producers to examine the reasons for purchases. In time, they moved away from asking who was buying products, and began focusing more on *why* consumers were buying certain products. The discovery of segmented markets meant that advertisements were necessary in order to create sophisticated ads that could influence such a diverse range of consumers.

One of the segmented markets was the male consumer. For many years the role of buyer in the household was filled quite completely by the women of the house. Beginning in the mid 1940s, there was a decrease in the number of ads aimed at women and trade journals were advocating strategies like "Appealing to Men Customers."⁷⁹ The knowledge that men were also responsible for buying objects meant that advertisements for products were tailored to the family member most likely to purchase them; for example, advertising campaigns for automobiles, or filter cigarettes had a "new man-sized flavor".⁸⁰

One of the great debates in the world of advertising concerns whether the advertisements create the culture that then buys the products or whether the advertisements merely reflect the already existing culture. Advertisements promote an ideal culture, but they do not reflect reality. This means that the advertisers are showing consumers what they want to have and they use tactics such as celebrity (astronauts) and new technology (space program), to convince them.

The space program was an important part of life in America in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Space imagery provided the perfect theme for advertisers in the 1950s. One of the

⁷⁹ Cohen, 312.

⁸⁰ Cohen, 315.

earliest tactics in advertising was the promise that new products were the result of advanced technology and therefore offered better results. Outer space and the technology from the space race provided an unparalleled example of this type of advertising.

Advertising agencies used at least three different strategies to sell the space program to the American people. Among them were unveiling, transitivity, and “helmsmanship.” The unveiling technique “dramatized the introduction of new products, often obscuring the product itself with lavish backdrops or innovative secret ingredients...Techniques of transitivity fostered the illusion of transferring the purported attributes from the product to the consumer.”⁸¹ Helmsmanship was the concept of using heroic figures to sell certain products. An example of the most well known helmsman was the Marlboro Man. In a similar vein, advertisers later used certain astronauts, like Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, to sell their products.⁸²

Advertisers realized that their campaigns for the atomic bomb and other shelters produced two separate audience perceptions. Consumers understood that there was a tangible item for sale, but they were also creating their own particular image of the item.⁸³ What was more important to the advertisers was what an image conveyed. In this case, the atomic bomb itself was frightening, but the image it conveyed was also one of security and protection from outside threats. For advertisers, the atomic bomb became more important as a symbol of America’s superiority than it was as an actually weapon. This insight was useful when the space program was created. The astronauts and other space images became symbols of an unknown and potentially alarming technology, and created support for the program as well for the products in the ads.

⁸¹ Smith, 184.

⁸² Smith, 208-209.

⁸³ Smith, 189.

CHAPTER THREE: THE INFLUENCE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Elected officials had a vested interest in promoting governmental programs in the years of the Cold War. The space program was a less frightening governmental program than the atomic bomb, and it also created support for their administrations. The elected officials who supported the space program and increased its popularity with the general public included Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson. For President Eisenhower, the space program was not a top priority, and he focused more on other military ventures instead of propelling the United States into a full-fledged space race with the Soviets. President Kennedy had a different view and ran for president on a platform that included increased spending on NASA programs. He believed that the space race was very important and that one of the best ways to win the Cold War and prove American superiority was to win the race to the moon. Kennedy, who was in office for the most important and influential years of the space race, was extremely supportive of NASA. Kennedy was impressed by the possibilities of the space program, and used it as a platform to create support for his administration. His support for the space program created public interest. Kennedy also had a relationship with *Life* magazine to publish positive articles on the space program, reinforcing the belief of advertisers that placing ads using space imagery in *Life* magazine would be an effective strategy. The interest taken by the government, and their working with *Life* magazine, also created an environment that encouraged advertisers to use space imagery in their advertisements in *Life* magazine above other popular general interest and specific interest magazines at the time. President Johnson also supported the space program, even before he became president.

Advisors to Presidents Truman and Eisenhower were concerned about the ability of the American people to focus on the task at hand and support their country in its effort to win the

Cold War. After their sacrifices and efforts during the War, the American public rebounded in the opposite direction, becoming interested in consumer products. According to studies done by the government after World War II, Americans were lazy and materialistic.⁸⁴ Americans in peacetime were vastly different from Americans in wartime. This belief, held by Henry Stimson, John Foster Dulles, and George Kennan, was imparted to President Truman.⁸⁵ Truman implemented a “new Cold War civil ethic” in 1950 to combat this problem.”⁸⁶

During the Eisenhower presidency, this new ethic was redefined. As a general concept, they attempted to rally the American people around the need for atomic weaponry in order to increase support for the government. Most of the government’s propaganda, much of it published in popular magazines like *Colliers*, was complete fabrication. These articles advised people to remain in their cars, and to wash their hands with soap and water to remove radioactive residue after it was safe to emerge after detonation. This was a failure, in part because the public learned about the destructive power of atomic weapons after the failed containment of the Bikini Atoll testing in 1954.⁸⁷ These attempts to convince people to support the bomb failed. NASA and the space race provided a viable, and less threatening governmental agency for the government to focus their attention, and therefore the attention of the American people. The space program, while still scary as an unknown technology, provided a more consumer friendly Cold War weapon.

During the years of World War II, advertising was regulated by two different organizations: the War Advertising Council and the Office of War Information.⁸⁸ The War

⁸⁴ Janelle Warren-Findley, NASA History, “The Collier as Commemoration: The Project Mercury Astronauts and the Collier Trophy,” June 27 2007, < www.history.nasa.gov/SP-4219/Chapter7.html>.

⁸⁵ Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 30.

⁸⁶ Oakes, 31.

⁸⁷ Oakes, 60.

⁸⁸ Lykins, 89.

Advertising Council (WAC) was created by businesses that were afraid of governmental control and “New Deal” policies. The WAC sidestepped these concerns by working with the government to ensure that the government could not place restrictions on advertising that might not deal with the war effort. Instead, they advertised the war effort, but usually only if it helped their bottom line. They gave ideas for war-related advertising and how to advertise government campaigns and policies, like rationing, war bonds, and salvage drives, as well as their own products. The federal government created the Office of War Information (OWI) in order to guide the media in similar endeavors. The OWI was restricted somewhat by the freedom of speech, and could only make suggestions about what could be conveyed in the messages. The two organizations worked together, but after the war, the OWI was disbanded. This allowed WAC to continue their campaign to create advertising for the government, but with more of an emphasis on what was important to them.

During the Cold War, according to historian Robert Haddow, “economic reforms were accompanied by psychological strategists who learned their trade in the advertising profession, or during World War II under Nelson Rockefeller in the Office of War Information. Industrial designers, economists, and advertising professionals offered their talent to the US government through organizations like the Advertising Council, corporations like the Container Corporation of America, or Time, Inc.’s *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune*, and *Architectural Forum*.”⁸⁹ This led the way to a continued blurring of the line between government programming and support of big business. It also indicates that Henry Luce had a long, direct involvement with the government and understood how the government used advertising to promote their views using conventional

⁸⁹ Robert Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 10.

advertising methods. It also shows that the government chose to associate with Time, Inc. instead of other publishing companies.

The Advertising Council created propaganda that swayed public opinion to support the government and certain businesses that created Cold War policies.⁹⁰ Eisenhower in particular used advertising in the Cold War. In fact, the Advertising Council supported and promoted Eisenhower's administration. They held round-table discussions on important issues, and invited influential business leader and publishers to share their ideas.⁹¹ Similar to Nixon's views in the Kitchen Debate, Eisenhower believed that promoting free trade, and advertising the newest consumer goods would help win the Cold War. Although the Advertising Council was created in World War II to promote war bonds as well as other wartime propaganda, it had its uses after the war too. The United States Information Service worked with the Advertising Council to create a book called *Advertising: A New Weapon in the World-Wide Fight for Freedom*.⁹² Although it was marketed towards advertising used in other countries, its principles were applied in America as well.

Advocates for the space program used a carefully constructed mixture of fear and sense of adventure to gain the public's interest. In November of 1957, nearly 25 percent of Americans believed that Russians science was superior to American.⁹³ There was a debate at the beginning of the space race, during Eisenhower's presidency, that the space program should be created specifically for military and scientific purposes. The idea of the space program as a political strategy gained more support later. Eisenhower was in favor of a more practical, low-cost space

⁹⁰ Lykins, 7.

⁹¹ Haddow, 15.

⁹² Lykins, 25.

⁹³ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, *Satellites, Surveys, and the Public: A Report of a National Survey on the Public Impact of Early Satellite Launchings...for the National Association of Science Writers and NYU*. University of Michigan, 1959, 38.

program, instead of grand visions of massive space exploration. Both before and after *Sputnik*, Eisenhower was in favor of a scaled-down space program. This worked well with the public's view that although they wanted a manned space program to land on the moon, they did not want large amounts of government spending to place them there.⁹⁴ President Dwight Eisenhower was nervous about creating a technocratic government and entering into the "space race" with the Soviet Union.⁹⁵ From the beginning, his administration was not as supportive of the space program as it might have been. It was well known that Vanguard was relegated to secondary status behind other defense programs, and was not allowed to interfere with other military projects, which delayed its progress and its funding.⁹⁶

After the *Sputnik* launch, politicians from both sides accused the Eisenhower Administration of being unsupportive, short-sighted, financially restrictive, and apathetic about the importance of science in America's future.⁹⁷ The space program began during Eisenhower's term as president, but he was not influenced by either the Sputnik launches or other Soviet space achievements to make the space program a national, government priority.⁹⁸ After 1957, other political factions used the *Sputnik* launches to increase public support for an ambitious program of "large space stations, lunar bases, sophisticated spacecraft and voyages to nearby orbs."⁹⁹

During his presidential campaign in 1960, Senator John F. Kennedy claimed that the control of space was linked irrefutably with control of the earth. Winning the space race was the key to dominating earth, or at least preventing the Soviets from dominating. Kennedy used Eisenhower's failure to close the "missile gap" with the Soviets to gain support for his

⁹⁴ McCurdy, 58.

⁹⁵ Kauffman, 2.

⁹⁶ Constance McLaughlin Green and Milton Lomask, *Vanguard: A History* (Washington, D.C.: NASA, 1970) 253.

⁹⁷ Green, 188.

⁹⁸ Cass Schichtle, *The National Space Program from the Fifties into the Eighties* (Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1983), 56.

⁹⁹ McCurdy, 54.

campaign.¹⁰⁰ The gap was nonexistent, but created public anxiety, and therefore, support for Kennedy's platform. Many Americans were afraid that because the Soviets had more missiles than the United States, it would be possible for the Soviets to use future outposts in space to attack America. These fears, inflamed by Kennedy's staff, made it nearly impossible for Eisenhower to defend any of his positions on the space program. The White House under Eisenhower was nicknamed "the tomb of the well-known soldier" because of his inability to revive popular support.¹⁰¹

President Kennedy believed that the success of the space program was linked with national prestige and were an integral part of winning the Cold War.¹⁰² He reached this conclusion after consulting with advisors and personally analyzing events like the Gargarin flight. Kennedy argued that it was imperative that the United States win the space race. He claimed, "control of space will be decided in the next decade. If the Soviets control space, they can control earth, as in past centuries the nation that controlled the seas dominated the continents...we cannot run second in this vital race. To insure peace and freedom, we must be first."¹⁰³

The federal government, including President Kennedy, was very aware of the importance of the success of NASA programming and its ability to create positive public support for the administration. It was believed that if the public trusted the astronauts, their trust would continue through to NASA and the entire government.¹⁰⁴ The faith placed by Americans in the government was especially important in light of the turmoil and protests within the United States by various minority groups.

¹⁰⁰ McCurdy, 76.

¹⁰¹ McCurdy, 76.

¹⁰² Logsdon, 134.

¹⁰³ McCurdy, 75.

¹⁰⁴ McCurdy, 92.

The American people were stirred by the words of the charismatic President Kennedy, who asked them to “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to ensure the survival and success of liberty.”¹⁰⁵ Kennedy proposed landing a man on the moon only four months after taking office. On May 25, 1961, he spoke before Congress, asking them to appropriate billions of dollars to make a moon landing within a decade.¹⁰⁶ This address is considered by many people to be the actual beginning of the space program.

¹⁰⁵ Elaine McClarnand and Steve Goodson, ed., *Studies in the Social Sciences: The Impact of the Cold War on American Popular Culture*, Vol. XXXVI (Carrollton GA: University of West Georgia, 1999), vi.

¹⁰⁶ Kauffman, 13.

Kennedy made clear his support for the space program. As soon as he became president, he adopted the space program as the symbol of his presidency. Kennedy's continued use of frontier vocabulary to describe and evoke the space program created an image that was appealing to the American people. Americans were traditionally inspired by frontier myths. Television programs and movies with western themes were popular during this era for the same reason. He wanted to evoke patriotism and remind Americans of their history. Most people learned at a young age about the exploration of America and the bravery of the pioneers. Kennedy clearly referenced the Turner Thesis, which stated, "the existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development."¹⁰⁷ Although the frontier within America was settled, Kennedy told Americans that there was an opportunity for them to fulfill the Turner Thesis yet again, and become an influential part of American development. By using the frontier analogy, Kennedy made it difficult for Americans to disagree with his policies. Rejecting outer space as the new frontier would have been tantamount to rejecting an essential part of their own history.

Frontier stories traditionally have four elements: an unexplored geographic location that is potentially hazardous, a dangerous foe, and a heroic adventurer.¹⁰⁸ Outer space had all of these elements, and the astronauts became modern day cowboys, facing the same threats as the cowboys of Hollywood and television.¹⁰⁹ Kauffman argued that Kennedy's use of the frontier myth to promote the Apollo manned space program was so incredibly successful that the Apollo program was virtually never challenged, which it probably would have been if it had been examined purely on scientific merits. It also tied NASA to promoting manned missions when

¹⁰⁷ George Rogers Taylor, ed. *The Turner Thesis Concerning the Role of the Frontier in American History*. (Boston, Heath and Company, 1965), i.

¹⁰⁸ Kauffman, 34.

¹⁰⁹ McCurdy, 90.

perhaps the use of unmanned missions would have been more technologically progressive. Tom Wolfe also agreed with this thesis in his book, *The Right Stuff*. Wolfe examined how the Mercury program was originally presented as a purely technological undertaking, but quickly dissolved into a massive public relations creation.¹¹⁰ He pointed out that the astronauts were not the perfect heroes as they were portrayed, but were essentially just normal Americans. He also wrote, echoing many historians, that the emphasis on the Mercury program and the men who exemplified it made it nearly impossible to cancel it, even if that was a sound technological decision.¹¹¹

President Kennedy collaborated with the media, specifically *Life* magazine, to promote the space program. He believed that Time-Life, Inc., which published *Life* magazine, “was the most influential instrument in the country.”¹¹² Kennedy did not view the media as an unbiased source of information about the space program. In fact, he saw it more as another source for creating public support of a program that he had chosen as an important part of his presidency. Instead of just informing the public, the Kennedy administration felt that the media was not “a neutral conduit of information to the public but as a valuable ally in establishing a domestic policy priority”.¹¹³

Kennedy increased NASA’s budget dramatically in the early 1960s. In 1962, its budget was \$1.7 billion; in 1963, \$3.7 billion, and in 1964 it reached \$5.1 billion.¹¹⁴ The increase in spending, and therefore in programming, was partly because of Kennedy’s support of the program. In the end, the Mercury program cost \$392 million, Gemini cost \$1.3 billion, and the

¹¹⁰ William Atwill, *Fire and Power: The American Space Program as Postmodern Narrative* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994), 101.

¹¹¹ Atwill, 100.

¹¹² Kaufman, 73.

¹¹³ Kauffman, 9.

¹¹⁴ Kaufmann, 2.

Apollo program \$25 billion.¹¹⁵ In 1960, the space program was allotted .5 percent of the federal budget. By 1965, after Kennedy announced the moon-landing goal, the space program was given 4.5 percent of the federal budget, which was the largest percent that it was ever allotted.¹¹⁶ This drastic increase that helped NASA achieve the goals that Kennedy had spoken about in his speeches, also showed how much importance he placed on the space program.

Kennedy also showed his support for the space program in his choice of administrators and his dependence on their views of the space program. James Webb, his NASA administrator, worked tirelessly to promote NASA. Lyndon Johnson had long been a supporter of the space program, and while he was obviously not picked for Vice-President based on those opinions, Kennedy did listen to Johnson's opinion on the space program, and encouraged both him and Webb to speak publicly about NASA programming.

While Johnson was Senate majority leader in 1958, he told the Democratic Conference that space policy was a top priority of the Senate agenda, stating, "control of space means control of the world, far more certainly, far more totally, than any control that had ever or could ever be achieved by weapons, or troops of occupation...Whoever gains that ultimate position gains control, total control, over the earth, for purposes of tyranny or for the services of freedom."¹¹⁷

When Johnson became president, he continued his support of the space program. He was considered the "Father of the Space Act."¹¹⁸ He was also afraid of losing the support of the public if he drastically cut funding, or abandoned the goal of a lunar landing.¹¹⁹ Johnson continued Kennedy's plans, and expanded NASA programming. He deflected criticism for

¹¹⁵ Schichtle, 63.

¹¹⁶ Mark Erickson, *Into the Unknown Together: The DOD, NASA, and Early Spaceflight* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2005), 525.

¹¹⁷ McCurdy, 75.

¹¹⁸ Schichtle, 66.

¹¹⁹ McCurdy, 98.

Apollo's high price tag by claiming that Americans spent more on cigarettes, alcohol, and recreation than they did on space.¹²⁰ By Johnson's second term, however, the developments at home with the Civil Rights movement and with the Vietnam War made him reevaluate priorities and slash the budget for the space program. By the mid 1960s, President Johnson was asked repeatedly to reduce space program funding. At this time, over \$5 billion per year was allotted to NASA, more than any other government program. Johnson believed that the space program was essential and compromised by cutting funding after Project Apollo, but kept Apollo's funding intact.¹²¹

The space race also became more important to the government in the tumultuous years of the 1960s. With all of the riots and protest that occurred, the government felt that it needed to further promote the space program. The government wanted to keep the public's trust, and felt that the space program, with its record of support and potential for inspirational achievements, best fit that need. While Americans made progress in space, they did not need to fear what was happening in their backyards.

¹²⁰ Kauffman, 26.

¹²¹ McCurdy, 98-99.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the years of the space race, especially the early years from 1957 to 1966, NASA and its advocates were concerned with creating as much support for the program as possible. NASA was a fairly new program and needed positive publicity in order to continue receiving federal funds. They occupied much of their time with creating a heroic public image of the astronauts and the program in order to gain the interest and support of the American people as well as the support of the federal government. They realized that one of the best ways to reach the American people was to create astronauts with patriotic and heroic personalities and sell them to the public through various avenues. This included a much publicized and controversial decision to sell the stories exclusively to *Life* magazine. This relationship established *Life* magazine as the publication for news about the space program, a continuation of Luce's pro-American stance. The popularity of the space program was created in part by the articles in *Life* magazine, and led to an interest in the use of NASA and their symbols to promote various products. NASA created a separate division devoted to publicizing products of the space program and licensing images of the space program. This symbiotic relationship with *Life* magazine and NASA influenced American public opinion, government officials, and advertising agencies and their views of the space program, initiating the numerous advertisements using space imagery in *Life* magazine instead of in the other publications of the time.

The space race began on October 4, 1957, when the Russians launched the first *Sputnik*. The successful launch of *Sputnik* changed the world, and even though the project failed twenty-three days after its launch, its impact on the country lasted much longer.¹²² *Sputnik* created a mixture of feelings in the minds of the American people; a mixture of surprise, awe, chagrin and

¹²² Green, 168.

fear.¹²³ The American government also reacted in a variety of ways. Many were not as concerned with the potential threat from the Soviets, but were concerned with American beginning the space race so far behind.

Soon after, on November 3, the Soviets launched the second *Sputnik*. The Americans attempted to launch their own satellite, *Vanguard I*, on December 6, 1957. It failed completely, and was nicknamed “Flopnik,” “Kaputnik,” and “Stayputnik” by the media.¹²⁴ America launched its first satellite, *Explorer I* on January 31, 1958. By the end of 1958, the Soviets were still winning the space race, but the Americans entered the race and were determined to make quick progress.

Eisenhower kept the space program under the jurisdiction of other already existing military and governmental organizations instead of creating an independent organization. Dr. James R. Killian in February 1958, Eisenhower’s Science Advisor, believed that the space program should be under the control of NACA (National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics).¹²⁵ NACA, which was created in 1915, was the best-equipped aeronautical research organization, with the smallest space program budget.¹²⁶ However, NACA’s administration was still not designed to handle ambitious projects like satellite launches. To prevent the reorganization of an existing program, NASA was founded in July 1958 and became operational on October 1, 1958. NASA was designed to focus on scientific endeavors, while the Department of Defense would oversee any potential military operations.¹²⁷

¹²³ Green, 188.

¹²⁴ Lynn Spigel, *Welcome to the Dreamhouse: Popular Media and Postwar Suburbs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), I, 112.

¹²⁵ Schichtle, 47.

¹²⁶ McDougall, 165.

¹²⁷ Schichtle, 53.

Americans panicked about the perceived technological gap between the United States and the Soviet Union. Many public opinion polls were completed in order to assess the impact of the *Sputnik* launch. One poll from 1959 compared the results of two surveys: one completed six months before *Sputnik*, with one from a year later.¹²⁸ Before *Sputnik*, 46 percent had heard of satellites and 54 percent had heard nothing, compared to after *Sputnik*, when 91 percent had heard of satellites and only 8 percent had heard nothing.¹²⁹ In general, education about satellites was fairly widespread. When surveyed about the purpose of an Earth Satellite, only 1 percent before believed it would be used for competition with the Russians as opposed to 20 percent who believed so after.¹³⁰ Before, virtually no one believed that it had future possibilities, compared to after *Sputnik*, when 17 percent believed that it could be used for future endeavors.¹³¹ Also, after *Sputnik*, 23 percent of those ages 23 to 29 believed that there were “future possibilities” regarding the Earth Satellite Purpose, as opposed to 9 percent of those over age 60.¹³² Advertisers heavily targeted this group because they were starting their own homes and buying many consumer goods very.

These statistics show that American consumers were not only more aware of the space program after *Sputnik*, but they were optimistic about its future uses. However, Americans still thought that Russian science was generally better than American science. Before *Sputnik*, 18 percent believed that Russian science was better in some areas, not in others, and 21 percent believed that American science was greatly superior.¹³³ This can be compared to results from

¹²⁸ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, i.

¹²⁹ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 1.

¹³⁰ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 2.

¹³¹ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 2.

¹³² Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 5.

¹³³ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 38.

after *Sputnik*, when 33 percent believed that Russian science was better in some areas, not in others, and 21 percent believed that American science was greatly superior.¹³⁴

These results changed dramatically after the launch of the American *Explorer* on January 31, 1958. In November of 1957, 1 in 4 Americans thought Russian science was superior, but by May of 1958, only one in 12 (8 percent) thought Russian science was better.¹³⁵ By May of 1958, those that believed that Russian and US science were about the same stood at 28 percent, compared to 16 percent in November of 1957.¹³⁶

The *Sputnik* launches had a significant negative impact on the American morale. According to historian Walter McDougall, “*Sputnik* challenged the assumptions of American military and fiscal policy, and thus seems to have scary implications for American security and prosperity. It involved a romantic but eerie enterprise- space travel- that Americans had come to associate, thanks to Hollywood and science fiction, with sudden and irresistible horrors.”¹³⁷ Lyndon Johnson, then the Senate Majority leader, equated the *Sputnik* launches with a technological Pearl Harbor.¹³⁸ During the early 1960s, the public possessed an insatiable appetite for news about space science and technology. Sensing this interest, television networks and print journalists went to elaborate lengths to inform the public about the details of space flight.¹³⁹ In light of these results, that the Americans either believed that the Russians were superior, or did not think that space exploration was a priority, it was important to generate understanding, interest, and the support of the American people in order to create a successful and superior space program.

¹³⁴ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 38.

¹³⁵ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 38.

¹³⁶ Survey Research Center- Institute for Social Research, 38.

¹³⁷ McDougall, 142.

¹³⁸ McDougall, 152.

¹³⁹ McCurdy, 94.

The determination to win the space race was compounded by the successful in space flight of the first man, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, on April 12, 1961. On May 5, 1961, the United States achieved a comparable feat, and sent Alan Shepard into space on the first Mercury flight. This flight was a success. It was at the end of the month that Kennedy made his famous speech to Congress asking them to commit to the challenge of landing a manned mission on the moon within the next decade. Shepard's completed flight inspired the United States to make a manned moon landing the next goal, and if achieved before the Russians, added the benefits of restoring confidence in America's technological superiority and restoring its image.¹⁴⁰ The program's goals included "completion of the Mercury Program of suborbital and earth orbital flights; initiation of the Gemini Program of Earth orbital flights for developing skills in rendezvous and docking between two ships, developing expertise in extravehicular activity, and extending knowledge of man's space endurance; [and] commencement of the Apollo Program, following Gemini, to first achieve orbit and then land Americans on the moon."¹⁴¹ The American space program continued throughout the 1960s, although spending peaked in 1965. There were many successful launches, and a few disasters and close calls.

At first, NASA had a difficult time promoting their agency to the American public. Because it was descended from NACA, NASA was closely tied with technological and military operations that most people felt had little impact on their daily lives. NASA developed a series of solutions to this problem. One was the creation of Public Affairs Offices, one at each space center, to handle media relations.¹⁴² They were very concerned with how their projects were represented in the media. NASA also created books of detailed answers to potential questions and justifications for various programs to ensure that their public officials would have answers

¹⁴⁰ Schichtle, 62.

¹⁴¹ Schichtle, 62.

¹⁴² Kauffman, 13.

that echoed each other.¹⁴³ They felt that it was easier to sell the space program and its technology because, compared to technology discovered during wartime, the space program offered the potential for much good with potentially little harm.¹⁴⁴

As a new government organization, it was necessary for NASA to create strong public support as quickly as possible. Because NASA chose to focus on manned space flight rather than the unmanned section, they were heavily invested in the personas of the astronauts. The images of the seven astronauts as virtuous, masculine ideals were carefully constructed and maintained by NASA and the press.¹⁴⁵

NASA used the astronauts to promote the space program, and took them to Washington, D.C. to the White House and Capitol Hill.¹⁴⁶ According to James Kaufmann, the fact that John Glenn's flight took place one week before House Committee on Science and Astronautics met to debate on NASA's budget was not just a coincidence.¹⁴⁷ John Glenn also addressed joint sessions of Congress. NASA scheduled appearances by many of their astronauts at Congressional debates on funding for NASA programs, and also scheduled flights shortly before sessions regarding funding.¹⁴⁸ One bill reached Congress hours before the second American man orbited the earth. The bill was approved unanimously in NASA's favor. Another example was the scheduling of Gordon Cooper's flight on the anniversary of Charles Lindbergh's flight. NASA administrators were excited about the positive response to scheduled activities, and planned others, acknowledging that they wanted to show Congress the strength of public support.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ Kauffman, 14.

¹⁴⁴ McCurdy, 211.

¹⁴⁵ McCurdy, 88.

¹⁴⁶ McCurdy, 91.

¹⁴⁷ Kauffman, 16.

¹⁴⁸ Kauffman, 17.

¹⁴⁹ Kauffman, 17.

NASA set strict guidelines their spokespeople. They prepped officials with scripted answers. These officials were coached for both public appearances and congressional hearing that determined NASA's budgets. NASA sent their highest officers and supporters, like James Webb, on speaking tours. Webb gave 49 speeches in 1962. In 1963, when NASA received more criticism, Webb gave 42 speeches in the first half of the year.¹⁵⁰ NASA invited President Kennedy to make public appearances on their behalf. He presented the NASA Distinguished Service Medal to Alan Shepard, John Glenn, and Gordon Cooper in a special ceremony at the White House.¹⁵¹ He also went on a tour of the space facilities in 1962 to fight criticism.¹⁵²

This selling of spin-offs also became a justification for the space program. NASA was compelled to create and promote these items before the space program began because corporations promised the creation of new products if they were allowed to invest in new technologies. The space program was the most interesting of these new technologies, and if companies showed "spin-offs from space", it benefited their bottom line and NASA's image.¹⁵³ Products like Teflon and Tang were held up as great achievements, even though Teflon cost \$23 billion to produce and Tang was actually invented before the space race started.¹⁵⁴ According to Administrator Daniel Goldin, "Every time someone operates a computer, makes a long-distance call, watches television, or uses an automatic teller machine, the benefits of space are being felt."¹⁵⁵ NASA created the Technology Utilization Program in 1962, whose main goal was to promote potential household uses for products originally developed for use in space. They published *Tech Briefs* to inform the scientific community about these developments. They later

¹⁵⁰ Kauffman, 14.

¹⁵¹ Kauffman, 15.

¹⁵² Kauffman, 15.

¹⁵³ McCurdy, 211.

¹⁵⁴ McCurdy, 211.

¹⁵⁵ McCurdy, 212.

wrote “Technology Utilization Program Reports” to present at congressional budget hearing. These briefs were so frequently requested by the public that NASA decided to create a new publication. They published the first *Spinoff* magazine in 1976.

Spinoff is still published today, with the same goals as it had when it was founded. It is available to the general public, and is also sent to politicians, the media, and academics. *Spinoff*'s objective is to “foster a greater awareness of the proactive benefits resulting from the investment in aerospace research and development.”¹⁵⁶

NASA also distinguished between the various innovative and useful products that benefit the public. Over 1,500 NASA products since 1976 have impacted America.¹⁵⁷ They have spin-offs, successes, and products that gained publicity through their association with the space program. Spinoffs are commercialized products that incorporate NASA technology and benefit the public.¹⁵⁸ A NASA success is a technology that is not available to the public but still benefits the public. Memory foam was actually developed in the 1970s to improve seat cushioning and airplane crash protection and is therefore considered a Spinoff. Examples of products commonly associate with the space program are Tang, Teflon, and Velcro. Tang was developed by General Foods in 1957 and was first sold in 1959. It gained its association with NASA in 1962 when it was chosen as one of the products to be taken in orbit, and became more popular when John Glenn drank it in space. DuPont invented Teflon in 1938, but it became popular when NASA used it to protect various things from heat. Velcro was used during the Apollo missions, which produced many other new technologies. The Apollo program introduced such products as cool suits now used for race car drivers, cordless power tools, metallic-colored lining inside candy

¹⁵⁶ NASA Spinoff website. May 25, 2007. <www.sti.nasa.gov/tto/>.

¹⁵⁷ NASA Spinoff website.

¹⁵⁸ NASA Spinoff website.

bars and other products, water purification techniques, and freeze dried foods.¹⁵⁹ The space program promised revolutionary changes, both social and economic, and spin-offs of governmental technology available for the home contributed to the creation of the 1950s consumer society.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ NASA Spinoff website.

¹⁶⁰ McCurdy, 207.

CHAPTER FIVE: *LIFE* MAGAZINE AND OTHER RELEVANT MAGAZINE INFORMATION

Life magazine was one of the most important magazines of the twentieth century. It was popular, had a large circulation, and also had significant advertising revenue. *Life* was an accurate indicator of American life and values. *Life* magazine also promoted the personal and political agenda of Henry Luce, its founder, publisher, and guiding force.

For such an influential magazine, *Life* has been the subject of very little academic research. Much was written about Henry Luce and *Life's* photographers, but little about the actual content of the magazine. *Life* was the subject of a conference held in Colorado in 1995.¹⁶¹ The conference dealt with *Life's* innovative uses of photography and the content of articles on a few select subjects, for example, articles on religion, segregation, and gender issues.¹⁶² There have been several books written by former employees of *Life* magazine, as well as some biographies and collected works of Henry Luce.

The increase in mass consumption influenced the advertising world, and the instruments that it used. Magazines were an important part of life in the 1950s. Television was becoming the dominant source of information, but at the beginning of the 1960s, television was still in its infancy. In 1953, only half of all American families owned a television set.¹⁶³ This meant that the other half of America relied on other sources like magazines to give them information. The increase in television programming meant that consumers had more forms of entertainment to fill their leisure hours. They were more careful about their choice of magazine subscriptions, which caused a ripple effect in the industry, putting many magazines, small and large, out of business.

¹⁶¹ Doss, Erika, ed., *Looking at Life Magazine* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), xiii.

¹⁶² Doss.

¹⁶³ Whitfield, 153.

For example, the *Saturday Evening Post* stopped circulation in 1962, and *Collier's* and *Look* magazines also closed.

Even with the introduction and quick growth of television as part of the American home, magazines were still dominant. The field of magazine publications was led by *Life* magazine, a weekly magazine published from 1936 to 1972. Henry Luce, the founder of *Time*, also founded *Life*. Henry Luce talked with the American Association of Advertising Agencies to convince them to advertise in *Life*, saying “here today I make application not for a few incidental pennies; I ask that you appropriate over the next ten critical years no less than one hundred million dollars for the publication of a magazine called *Life*”.¹⁶⁴ Advertisers bought full pages at a rate of \$1,500 per page, \$800 per half page, and \$2,500 for a page of inside color.¹⁶⁵ The campaigns were successful, and the end of the summer of 1936, they had sold over \$1 million worth of space.¹⁶⁶ This amount seemed large at the time, but during its first twenty years, advertisers spent more than one billion dollars in *Life's* pages.¹⁶⁷ Roy Larsen, second in command after Henry Luce, wanted *Life's* staff of advertising salespeople to be the most “informed, most aggressive, resourceful and enthusiastic”, which they achieved and continued for many years.¹⁶⁸ One issue of *Life* in October of 1961 brought in advertising revenues of over five millions dollars.¹⁶⁹ A November 1961 issue brought in over 5.2 million dollars.¹⁷⁰ Renting the back cover of *Life* for advertising at this time cost \$45,000.¹⁷¹ Magazines could lose millions of

¹⁶⁴ Wainwright, 94.

¹⁶⁵ Wainwright, 41.

¹⁶⁶ Wainwright, 41.

¹⁶⁷ Wainwright, 94.

¹⁶⁸ Wainwright, 101

¹⁶⁹ Peterson, 23.

¹⁷⁰ Peterson, 23.

¹⁷¹ Mayer, 44.

dollars by selling their magazines below production costs, but could make up their losses and earn profits by selling advertising space.¹⁷²

Life was physically larger than most magazines, at thirteen and a half inches by twenty-one inches when opened. It averaged approximately 120 pages per issue. By 1956, *Life* had a large staff, including 251 editorial staffers, 28 international bureaus, 317 part-time correspondents, and three editions.¹⁷³ *Life* was the best-selling weekly magazine from 1958-1960.¹⁷⁴ In January through December of 1957, its advertising revenue totaled \$137,522,494, which put it in first place, ahead of the *Saturday Evening Post*, with \$90,899,031 and *Time*, *Look*, and *Ladies Home Journal*.¹⁷⁵ According to Heiskell, *Life*'s publisher, "advertisers continue to invest more dollars in *Life* than in any other magazine."¹⁷⁶ Its sales slowed from 1960-1963, partly because of competition from television, but it remained one of the top five best selling magazines in the country. Six to seven million copies sold each week, and market researchers estimated that each of those copies was read by an additional five people.¹⁷⁷ A promotional ad from 1949 showed that there were 5.2 million copies sold each week, which was 36 percent of all US families, as well as a pass along rate of 12 million men, 10 million women.¹⁷⁸

Life magazine and its editors were supporters of the presidency at least since 1945. When Truman gave his speech on August 9th, 1945, outlining the Truman Doctrine, *Life* published an editorial claiming that this new policy would give America the power and the opportunity to create a peaceful world and promote justice throughout the world.¹⁷⁹ *Life* magazine promoted

¹⁷² Peterson, 25.

¹⁷³ Dora Jane Hamblin, *That was the Life* (New York: Norton, 1977), 34.

¹⁷⁴ Kauffman, 73.

¹⁷⁵ "Life Advertisement," *New York Times*, March 6, 1958, 45.

¹⁷⁶ Wainwright, 174.

¹⁷⁷ Kaufmann, 73.

¹⁷⁸ Wainwright, 174.

¹⁷⁹ *Life*, August 20, 1945, 32.

the belief that the United States was the only country that could create this sense of peace.

According to an editorial one week after

V- E Day, the United States was to remake the world in the image of progress and help move the world in a direction where “life was better.”¹⁸⁰ They also believed that the best way and the most effective way for the United States to do this was to use their considerable economic power and help foreign countries. According to many Cold War historians, like Lisle Abbott Rose, Henry Luce, with his magazine trifecta of *Life*, *Time* and *Fortune* “came the closest to dominating and shaping the national dialogue and perspective. With his mass circulation news and business weeklies, *Life*, *Time*, and *Fortune*... Luce had been the country’s preeminent tutor in public affairs since at least the midthirties.”¹⁸¹ That Luce was very heavily involved in the messages written in his magazine is an established fact, and as editor, he was responsible for and read every word of each important story or editorial in his magazines.¹⁸² He very carefully placed his views and opinions in these magazines disguised as “thoughtful news articles”.¹⁸³

In 1960, partly in response to Sputnik, Eisenhower launched the Commission on National Goals. The president, along with conservatives and liberals, feared that America was not ready to fight the Cold War. Henry Luce, as a concerned citizen committed to winning the Cold War, contributed to the effort by commissioning an essay on “The National Purpose”, published in *Life* magazine in 1960.¹⁸⁴ This essay, along with Luce’s views on America’s role in the world and his patriotism made his image as “probably the best-known crusader of the cold war era”.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ *Life*, May 14 1945, 40.

¹⁸¹ Lisle Abbott Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street: America in 1950* (Lawrence KS: The University Press of Kansas, 1999), 12.

¹⁸² SL Harrison, *Twentieth-Century Journalists: America’s Opinionmakers* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 2002), 167.

¹⁸³ George Seldes, *The People Don’t Know: The American Press and the Cold War* (New York: Gaer Associates, 1949), 12.

¹⁸⁴ Henry Luce and John K. Jessup, ed., *The Ideas of Henry Luce* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 131

¹⁸⁵ Haddow, 26.

One perfect example of this, during the Cold War, *Life* and *Fortune* promoted the spread of liberal capitalism, hoping that “consumer demand would fuel the growth of democracy.”¹⁸⁶

Life magazine retained the influence of Henry Luce and his opinions throughout most of its existence. His control essentially waned, and according to an extensive study of the rise and fall of popular magazines, even “during the 1960s, Time Inc.’s management structure had been altered to give the magazine publishers more autonomy, it still remained a benevolent and indulgent monarchy because Henry Luce retained, until his death in 1967, all final authority.”¹⁸⁷

Life and its photographic format were products of new technology of the 1930s. Smaller cameras and color printing made it easier for photographers and editors to capture and publish large numbers of images. The large number of photographs was one of the most desired aspects of *Life* magazine. Magazines in general are read differently than books. Books are read generally from cover to cover. Magazines are read out of order, with readers flipping through, looking for particular essays or stopping at pictures that catch their eye. *Life* was so dependent on visuals that effective advertisements had to be more visually stimulating than the surrounding material.

Life magazine commissioned a study in 1950 to examine exactly how many people were reading issues of *Life*. Previous magazine studies only examined the average number of readers for the publication. This study focused on the number of different people reached, as well as the number and habits of repeat readers, the kinds of people that read *Life*, and how often they read it.¹⁸⁸ Subjects for this study were interviewed three times about their readership of thirteen separate issues. During the first and second interviews, they were asked questions about four

¹⁸⁶ Haddow, 26.

¹⁸⁷ Van Zuilen, 125

¹⁸⁸ Alfred Politz Research, *A Study of the Accumulative Audience of Life* (New York: Alfred Politz Research, 1950), 1.

issues. During the third interview, they were asked about five different issues. The results of the survey were organized by age, sex, education, socio-economic status, geographic region, urban-rural areas, time lived in the home, and size of household. They discovered that 53.1 percent of the population was reached at least once by thirteen issues of *Life*.¹⁸⁹

Life magazine became the leader in media research.¹⁹⁰ They commissioned numerous studies to determine as many reader characteristics as possible. According to a study on the rise and fall of general interest magazines, “*Life* magazine led the way in the very concept of defining and measuring the readership of a magazine”.¹⁹¹ *Life* commissioned the most magazine research done by the leader of audience surveys, Alfred Politz. This clearly shows that *Life* was aware of virtually every bit of demographic information that could be gathered at the time. Advertisers who chose to place ads with Time, Inc. companies had access to this data and understood the exact nature of their audience. The fact that people paid attention to the mass communication that they agreed with, approved of, or liked, meant that the readers of *Life* were supportive of the content of their magazine, which included substantial coverage of the space program.¹⁹²

Therefore, the fact that more space advertisements appeared in *Life* magazine than other comparable magazines of the time period because advertising agencies *chose Life* as the best venue for these particular ads. One compelling reason for this was that Luce, and therefore *Life*, was such a supportive atmosphere for such ads and was likely to create interest in a technology that advertisers selected for their ads.

While *Life* did reach a larger audience than most magazines, its audience demographic was not particularly broad. *Life* referred to itself as the American magazine, yet the pictures it

¹⁸⁹ Alfred Politz Research, *A Study of the Accumulative Audience of Life*, 57.

¹⁹⁰ Alfred Politz Research, *A Study of the Accumulative Audience of Life*, 1.

¹⁹¹ Van Zuilen 152

¹⁹² Klapper, Joseph. *The Effects of Mass Communication*, (Glencoe Ill: The Free Press, 1960), 19.

showed were limited and conveyed a particular ideal of the family (the nuclear family). One historian examined the consequences of narrating the news with these pictures, “promoting ideals about home and private life, public issues, social identities, and ultimately, the nation itself”.¹⁹³ Many people in lower income brackets did not have the extra money or the time to frequently read general interest magazines. *Life*’s audience was made up more of middle to upper middle class Americans with professional or skilled labor jobs, and higher education levels. In this respect, perhaps the advertisements did not reach the lower income brackets, but they did reach those with more discretionary income. Therefore, advertisers could associate their advertising with editorial content of a magazine. If they were advertising household detergent, they chose a magazine catering to housewives.¹⁹⁴ The advertisements ended up influencing those with the higher incomes and more money to spend on a wide variety of products.

Life in the postwar period had specific aims: “Particularly in the postwar period, *Life*’s style of “corporate modernism” aimed at a synthesis of seeing with belief, combining visuality with consumerism and nationalism, and attempting to diffuse, or efface, the tensions of class, race, and social conflict in America.”¹⁹⁵ The goal of using mass media as mass instruction was very successful during this time and through the 1950s.¹⁹⁶

For example, the coverage of atomic testing was interspersed with regular *Life* content in order to accustom Americans to the constant presence of atomic weaponry in their lives. Pictures and articles about the tests were placed next to advertisements and other text. This served to domesticate the idea of nuclear power. It might seem that these juxtapositions were just the result of decisions made when laying out each issues, but according to one of the few

¹⁹³ Wendy Kozol, *Life’s America: Family and Nation in Postwar Journalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), ix.

¹⁹⁴ Norman Jacobs, ed., *Culture for the Millions?* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1959), 90.

¹⁹⁵ Doss, 11.

¹⁹⁶ Doss, 15.

historians that studies *Life*, “the circumstances that brought these conjunctions ranged from pure chance to a highly complex and orchestrated program of sequencing watched over by the editors and approved by advertisers”.¹⁹⁷ In some cases, the advertisers had specific contracts determining where their ads would be placed in order to create maximum exposure. Also, colored ads and colored pictures were the first things permanently placed when deciding layouts. The rest of the advertisements were placed around them. In some cases, the juxtaposition was jarring. In one case, from 1945, *Life* editors placed an ad for Campbell’s soups, one of their bigger advertisers, next to a picture of a Japanese man on fire. In another case from 1952, they placed a picture from one of their lead articles, showing victims of the bombing, next to an ad for shoe polish. These choices were made deliberately by the layout editors as well as members of the advertising staff in order to ensure that ads were still effective. Placing the ads amidst the articles was a typical strategy in *Life* and other modern media, making the separation of editorial and advertising content unclear.¹⁹⁸

Life used these same techniques to insert images of the space race into daily life as well. The space race was the subject of many articles in the magazine. It was also the subject of advertisements. *Life* tried to “insert the atomic age into everyday life”, as well as presenting it as one of many concerns for the family, which included domestic, national, and global concerns.¹⁹⁹ It is possible that this shift from fear of atomic weapons to acceptance as well as fear, was a techniques also used for the space program. There were fewer ads and the beginning of the space program, but as the number of ads increased, so did the support of the program. The

¹⁹⁷ Peter Bacon Hales, “Imagining the Atomic Age”, in Erika Doss, *Looking at Life Magazine* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 115.

¹⁹⁸ Doss, 10.

¹⁹⁹ Hales, 117.

change from the mushroom cloud as an emotional symbol to a historical object can partly be explained by its placement in advertising.

Henry Luce believed that his magazine would have a national purpose, which included two goals: winning the cold war and creating a better America.²⁰⁰ The space program was an ideal partner with *Life* for two reasons: first, it was an ideal project for *Life*'s photograph based format, and the astronauts' stories could be a potential weapon in winning the Cold War. He also believed that visual images were essential to telling new stories and he mandated that *Life* use compelling photographs to illustrate their points. He believed that images were as powerful as the articles. *Life* became famous later because of their photographers and the images that they took. Their deliberate use of interesting pictures made *Life* a more effective magazine than others like *Time* or *Newsweek*. This use of photographs to create a certain viewpoint for a story was well suited for covering the space program. Not only was it a new technology and photographs of it were novel to the average consumer, but they were also an exciting technology to photograph. Pictures of the training programs were unlike those seen before. Astronauts underwent rigorous and innovative, training for their missions. And few events were more awe inspiring, dramatic, and potentially dangerous (and therefore compelling) than launches. *Life* used its combination of brilliant innovative photography and exclusive contacts with those who were influential at NASA to create a magazine that thoroughly affected that way that their readers saw the space program.

According to historian James Kaufmann, "certain magazines provided little negative coverage throughout the space program. Rarely does one find an article critical of the manned space effort in *Life*, *Popular Science*, or *Popular Mechanic*."²⁰¹ *Life* magazine was organized in

²⁰⁰ Kaufmann, 69.

²⁰¹ Kaufmann, 52.

a photographic essay format. The photographs took precedence, and the narrative was written to support the pictures. Luce understood how important the photograph was in relaying certain opinions of an event, and he used this to his advantage in regards to the space program. *Life* magazine's importance was also realized by John F. Kennedy, who viewed it as "the most influential instrument in the country", thereby explaining his attempts to persuade it to cover the space program.²⁰² The magazine was arranged as a photographic and trustworthy news source, even though Luce was actually less concerned with the magazine's accuracy than he was with its portrayal of certain current events. *Life* also had the appearance of being an objective new magazine.

Life magazine often adopted a human-interest angle in its pieces. This included numerous profiles of the astronauts and their families. *Life* had a contract with the government, which gave them the rights to exclusive stories and personal accounts. They bought the exclusive rights to the coverage of the space program from the beginning in 1958 through the Mercury Projects in 1963, for \$500,000.²⁰³ The first time the astronauts sold their stories, in 1959; there was media coverage, but not many public opinions in favor or against such an arrangement. However, the second contract, signed in late 1962, garnered much negative publicity. *Newsweek* magazine in particular, as well as editorials in the *New York Times*, criticized both the government for allowing the astronauts to make money at the taxpayer's expense, and *Life*, for its biased portrayal of the astronauts.

Before the astronauts had even gone on a mission, they had already been on the cover 3 times and had been the focus of over 80 pages.²⁰⁴ From their first appearance on April 20, 1959 to May 31, 1963, the astronauts or their wives were on the cover of *Life* twelve times. During

²⁰² Kaufmann, 73.

²⁰³ Kaufmann, 72.

²⁰⁴ Kaufmann, 74.

this period, *Life* also published seventy articles on the astronauts and their wives.²⁰⁵ Historians still debate whether this media interest was biased, or whether it was impartial. Either way, they were a significant influence on the perceptions of the American people, especially *Life*, whose “coverage of the manned moon mission, and the forum it provided the astronauts to tell their “personal stories,” helped publicize the program, if not to influence readers’ perceptions positively.”²⁰⁶ The astronauts quickly became media darlings, as well as their wives and children. Many publications, like *Newsweek*, had difficulty deciding exactly what their role was in the continuing space saga. In general, the press offered both negative and positive coverage of the space program. However, the press did have a slight bias towards support of a manned space flight.²⁰⁷

Between the years of 1959 and 1963, twenty-eight stories on the astronauts ran in *Life* magazine. The Mercury astronauts signed an exclusive contract, which also gave them control of the image of them that was portrayed in the magazine. Instead of journalistic ethics and a devotion to the entire truth, *Life* agreed to allow not only the astronauts to approve of their stories, but by NASA’s public affairs officer and “whomever happened to be in charge at the moment in Washington.”²⁰⁸ Any indiscretions, small or large, committed by the astronauts, did not find their way into the articles. These included problems in the marriages, including some on the verge of divorce, some womanizing, and drinking. A reporter for *Life* claimed that although there was no explicit agreement between *Life* and NASA, their deal “created a strong bias towards the ‘Boy Scout’ image.”²⁰⁹ According to James Kaufmann, who studied the relationship between *Life* and the government, “*Life* went well beyond cheerleading to become little more

²⁰⁵ Kaufmann, 74.

²⁰⁶ Kaufmann, 91.

²⁰⁷ Kaufmann, 53.

²⁰⁸ McCurdy, 90.

²⁰⁹ McCurdy, 90.

than an arm of NASA's public relations."²¹⁰ Their presentation of the Mercury Seven was "a personification of the clean-cut, all-American boys whose mythical lives popularize family-oriented television programs during the 1950s and 1960s", which helped satisfy the public, who wanted as many personal details about the astronauts as possible.²¹¹

Life magazine continued their support of the manned space program throughout the 1960s, even when there was debate over the merits of such a program as opposed to an unmanned expedition. Numerous editorials proclaimed that NASA needed to put a man in space to improve America's image and to acquire certain byproducts that were a result of the new technology and discoveries. They also promoted the space program as a vehicle of national defense.

The magazine also used "frontier" rhetoric frequently to describe the astronauts. They were compared with pioneers and Columbus, relying on great Americans myths that idolized the great explorers and adventurers. The magazine promoted the space program in frontier terms, claiming that it explored a unique geographical location that was possibly dangerous, especially if inhabited by unknown creatures, and could only be explored by heroes.

Not only did *Life* capitalize on the astronauts' stories and portray them as heroes of the modern age, they also claimed the rights to the stories of astronauts' wives. Their images were as well crafted as their husband's personas. The wives supported their husbands' stories and those told by NASA. They were never worried about the safety of the mission, and were in fact quite proud that their husbands were part of such important missions. Many of these women had families of small children and the fact that they were not frightened for their husbands' lives lent extra credibility to the image of NASA. Also using the women and their families to support the

²¹⁰ Kauffman, 133.

²¹¹ McCurdy, 90.

space program influenced the opinion of another demographic that read *Life* magazine, but perhaps was not scrutinizing the coverage of the space program: women. Many women read *Life* magazine, but the technical descriptions of the space flights might have proven slightly less interesting. However, the editors of *Life* magazine were experts at creating human-interest pieces that appealed to audiences of all demographics. *Life* magazine was so effective that in 1962, *Life* wrote to NASA Administrator James Webb to renew the contract. Webb did, and wrote that he did so because *Life* had done “an outstanding job in providing a basis for public understanding and acceptance of our national space program.”²¹² *Life*’s exclusive contract with the astronauts did not end until 1970.²¹³

The fact that advertisements using space imagery appeared in *Life* magazine granted them extra impact with the audience. Consumers reading articles in *Life* that wholly supported the space program and its astronauts would be given a certain positive impression of NASA. This meant that ads that featured such images would first, be more noticeable to the audience whose minds were already thinking about the benefits and news regarding the space program and second, would be more likely to be persuaded to buy a product that was connected with a program that they read about and was portrayed in nothing but glowing and positive language. Again, *Life* magazine was the perfect vehicle for such advertisements. It was also the only logical choice for advertisers attempting to use this new technology to sell their products. There would be no point in advertising with space images extensively in other magazines when there was a support base for the images in the ads in the magazine already.

The astronauts were not the only people connected with NASA to sign a deal with a popular magazine. Werner von Braun signed a deal with *Popular Science* to write a monthly

²¹² Kaufmann, 91.

²¹³ Kaufmann, 92.

column in 1963.²¹⁴ Although *Popular Science* was a scientific and technological magazine, with what one could reasonably assume was an audience that was very interested in programs like NASA, and with the added benefit of a well-known personality like von Braun writing a column, one would expect *Popular Science* to also have a larger number of advertisements using space images. This, however, was not the case. Again, this is because there were a number of factors that came together that resulted in the large number of advertisements in *Life* magazine. Having two factors: a frequent NASA-related contributor and an audience that liked technology, was not enough to interest advertisers to use space images in their magazine. Having the government working specifically with one magazine, as well as an editor that had such a specific agenda, made a significant difference.

Life magazine, like most general interest magazines of this time period, went out of business in the postwar years. There were many reasons why general interest magazines were phased out at this time. Television did contribute to the demise of *Life* magazine, but it was only one of many factors. *Life*'s popularity as a general subject magazine inspired the market for niche-magazines. The drive to create magazines like *Sports Illustrated*, *People*, and *Money*, split *Life*'s audience. The internal structure of *Life*'s managers and the lofty goal of the magazine also played a part. Because the editors wanted to present a particular story to the public, usually an idealized picture of middle class life, they tended to severely limit the pictures used in their stories. This kind of control over artistic expression frustrated *Life*'s photographers. However, even in 1972, the last year *Life* was published, it still had a "pass along" rate of 4.63, which meant that for every person that bought the magazine, it was "passed along" to another 4.63.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Kauffman, 18.

²¹⁵ Wainwright, 174.

While this rate was decreased significantly from its high of 17.3 in 1938 (or another higher one), the magazine still had a weekly audience of twenty-five million people.²¹⁶

Many general interest magazines began to have difficulties in the late 1960s. To summarize the fall of general interest magazines, according to an extensive study on the subject, the publishers believed that only higher circulation numbers would combat the appeal of the exciting new television. They tried to obtain these higher circulation numbers by offering subscriptions at drastically reduced prices. When the advertisers refused to follow suit, and began to take their dollars elsewhere, the general interest magazines began to hemorrhage money. The loss of badly needed advertising revenue, incited a vicious cycle and combine with the other market factors, spelled the fall of the general interest mass magazines.²¹⁷

Although the era of general interest magazines came to an end around the time of the moon landing, there is no denying the important role that they, especially *Life*, played in the creation of public support for the space program. Thanks to upbeat coverage and circulation to millions of American viewers who learned from magazines, *Life* was able to promote the space program in accordance with Henry Luce's views and influence the opinions of millions of Americans. This overwhelming support for NASA and its programs led advertisers to place certain advertisements, those using space imagery, in front of an audience that was inundated with information that stressed the positives and ignored the negatives of that program. Along with the known demographic data, and the supportive editorial structure, it was clear that the logical choice for where to place advertisements for consumer goods that used space imagery was in *Life* magazine, above other general or specific interest magazines of the time.

²¹⁶ Baughman, "Who read *Life*?", 43.

²¹⁷ Van Zuilen, 4.

CHAPTER SIX: ADVERTISING DATA FROM *LIFE*, *LADIES' HOME JOURNAL*, *READERS DIGEST* AND *POPULAR SCIENCE* FROM 1957 TO 1966

Advertisements are an indication of the values and interests of the time. They are also indicators of what advertisers thought was desired by their potential consumers. Examining advertisements during the years of the space race is particularly valuable. The extremely high consumer spending inspired a revolution in advertising theory and research, and gave agencies access to an enormous amount of personal information about their customers. They used this information to create ads that would sell products, and placed those ads in particular venues where they would have the most influence on the audience. Many advertisements used space imagery and rhetoric to sell their products. These space related advertisements were placed most frequently in *Life* magazine.

For this study, four magazines were examined. From the years of 1957 through 1966, *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Popular Science*, and *Reader's Digest* were studied, and their incidences of space related advertisements were carefully recorded. There were more advertisements in *Life* magazine than in any other. There were about half as many ads in *Popular Science* than in *Life*, and fewer in *Reader's Digest* and *Ladies Home Journal* than in *Popular Science*. For example, in *Life* in 1961, the first year of the Mercury launches, there were 62 space ads, compared to 20 in *Popular Science*, 14 in *Reader's Digest*, and 2 in *Ladies Home Journal*. While there was only, on average, one space advertisement in *Life* magazine per week, *Life* was a weekly magazine. Therefore for each monthly magazine [like *Ladies Home Journal*, *Popular Science*, and *Reader's Digest*] that was delivered to the home each month, there were four *Life* magazines. *Life's* advertisements were also seen by a larger audience, since market research

determined each *Life* magazine that was the result of a subscription was passed along to more readers [i.e.- neighbors, friends, relatives, customers, etc], than any other magazine of the time.

The number of these advertisements in *Life* magazine averaged one per week, which seems like a small number; however, the dispersion of these ads was calculated. There were many ads in one month, or in one week, and then very few ads for the next month or week. Instead of a steady and consistently arranged series of ads, the ads were published in clusters where they made more impact.

In the years from 1957 to 1966, there were 544 ads in *Life* magazine that used some type of space imagery. They averaged 4.5 ads per month, and 1 per magazine. The largest number per year was 78, in 1959, and the largest number for any three-month period was in 1966, from January through March, when there were 27.²¹⁸

In this same time period, there were 255 ads in *Popular Science* magazine that used some kind of space imagery. The largest number per year was 1965, when there were 42. The largest number for any month was also in January through March 1965, when there were 13.²¹⁹

From 1957 to 1966, there were 161 ads in *Reader's Digest* magazine that used some kind of space imagery. The largest number per year was 1963, when there were 27. The largest number for any month was also in January through March 1963, and October through December 1965 when there were 11.²²⁰

There were 39 ads in *Ladies Home Journal* magazine that used some kind of space imagery from 1957 through 1966. The largest number per year was 1966, when there were 9.

²¹⁸ See appendix of compiled data

²¹⁹ See appendix of compiled data

²²⁰ See appendix of compiled data

The largest number for any month was 3, which happened in October through December 1964, April through June 1966, and July through September 1966.²²¹

There were differences in the types of products advertised in each magazine. The products advertised in *Life* magazine and *Readers Digest* were the most similar. They were for a wide variety of products, from clocks and telephone systems, to spark plugs, televisions, hammers, encyclopedias, and of course, many, many cars. This is in contrast to *Popular Science's* ads, which were usually for technical colleges and institutes, scientific catalogs, and the Air Force. Advertisements in *Ladies Home Journal* were overwhelmingly for products oriented towards women, specifically mothers. They often advertised makeup, kitchenware, and products for children.

The only products that were regularly advertised in all of the magazines were for cars, usually for Oldsmobiles. Car companies benefited from their association with rockets. The design style of the 1950s and early 1960s used “fins” on the car, which made them look like miniature rockets. Their aerodynamic style suggested that they were as powerful as the rockets sent into outer space. This advertising ploy was used not just in design and advertisements, but also in the names given to the new cars. For example, the (Ford) Thunderbird and Galaxie; (Hudson) Jet and Super Jet; and (Oldsmobile) Rocket 88 and 98 evoked images of rocket launches and referred to their aerodynamics and speed.²²²

This was an important time in American military technology. At the beginning of the Atomic Age, there was an increase in jet travel. This technology was also used in ads but was not recorded in this thesis. In general, if the ad used the word ‘jet’, it was excluded. If ‘rocket’

²²¹ See appendix of compiled data

²²² Young, 257.

was used, that was recorded as a space ad, assuming that rockets evoked thoughts of outer space and not jet planes.

The definition of space ads for this study is very specific. The ad must use pictures or words that are readily identifiable with the space program. Words like “rocket”, “orbit”, “satellite”, “outer space” and “space age” are accepted. Pictures frequently found were of space ships, satellite, and rockets. Occasionally, there were pictures of astronauts. Also included were ads that claimed an association with the new world of outer space that was imaginatively within reach of the American people. Words like comet, meteor, mercury and galaxy (usually spelled galaxie) were especially common. There are of course, numerous ads that used direct parallels to outer space to promote their products. Phrases like “space age” “out of this world” and “satellite” were common. There was a mix of ads that were clearly noticeable, and those that were less obvious. The ads ranged in size from a few inches to one page, to numerous pages.

The images and language of the space program were used to sell a variety of products. Some, like most of the cars, just looked similar to shuttles. A few had a valid connection to the space program. There were frequent ads for products that had no direct relation and were not the result of this new “space age technology” but still used the images to sell their products- items like cookies or bathroom fixtures or pens. Some products had no link to the space program, but attempted to create one.

Car ads usually employed language rather than images. The most frequent ads that used the space program were for Oldsmobile cars. They used taglines as brief as “Rocket Engines” and phrases like “Oldsmobility...the pleasurable way of going places in the Rocket Age!” and “all-new REGULAR ROCKET Engine...delivers Rocket 'Go!'”²²³ The only image used consistently was a silhouette of a rocket that symbolized the Rocket Engine. According to market

²²³ *Life*, April 7 1958, 105.

research, the public saw Oldsmobiles as the car for the adventurous middle-aged man, and an exciting and technologically advanced car.²²⁴ This was the image Oldsmobile wanted to convey. This explains why Oldsmobile, more than any other car manufacturer, used the language of the space program in their ads. They consistently advertised their “Rocket” engines, and used small pictures of rocket silhouettes in the ads to reinforce the association. (Figure 1a²²⁵)

The other car company that frequently used language was Ford, which advertised its Ford Galaxie. They named it after something that explicitly evokes outer space, although advertising executives introduced a new spelling of the word. (Figures 1b²²⁶, 2a²²⁷, and 2b²²⁸)

²²⁴ Mayer, 112.

²²⁵ *Life*, January 26, 62.

²²⁶ *Life*, June 1 1959, 124.

²²⁷ *Life*, November 2 1959, 78-79.

²²⁸ *Life*, May 24 1963, 54-55.



Figure 1a. Oldsmobile Rocket Engine

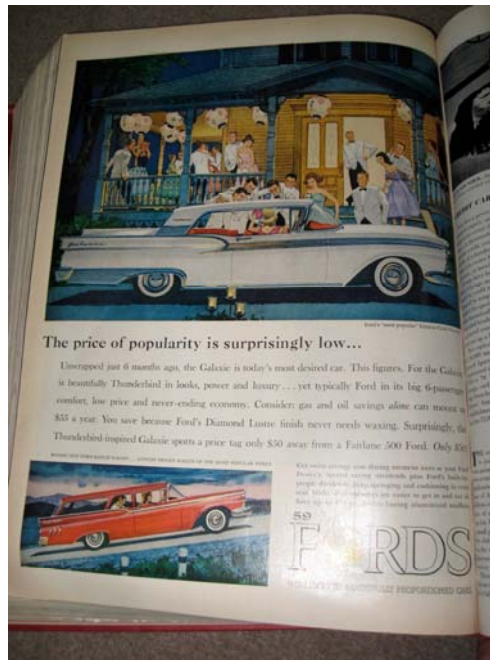


Figure 1b. Ford Galaxie



Figure 2a. Ford Galaxie



Figure 2b. Ford Galaxie

Some ads used images of the space program in a blatant manner. These ads were for a very wide variety of products. For example, ads for Alphabits that claimed to be "out of this world for energy", set you "in orbit", and featured a picture of children, one wearing a space helmet and holding a space shuttle. (Figure 3a²²⁹)

One product that used space images on several occasions was the Scripto Satellite pen. The pen itself was named Satellite, a direct homage to the space race and its triumphs. One pen celebrated the 1957-1958 International Geophysical Year in a two-page ad showing a pen orbiting earth. The names for the satellite pens were also very deliberate. They were made of a "lightweight lustrous Satellite metal ...in brilliant Atomic red, Stratosphere blue, Dawn grey, Jet black or Jade green." And according to the ad, "This year, you can be the first to give the first really new pen of the Atomic Age- the sleek, stunning, Scripto Satellite!" (Figures 3b²³⁰ and 4a²³¹)

McGregor clothing also used space imagery for some of their ads. These included "Meteor Fabric- reserved on this planet especially for McGregor", and featured outer space in the background. Other McGregor ads included the Meteor Sport Coat and Frat Slacks, a "new cotton called Meteor ", and Meteorlite Sparks authentic button down short sleeve sport shirts.²³² These ads asked, "What will America's first spaceman wear?" and that "space flight research yields...coat. They also included a picture of a space shuttle. (Figure 4b²³³)

²²⁹ *Life*, March 6 1959, 70.

²³⁰ *Life*, May 20 1957, 124-125.

²³¹ *Life*, September 16, 1957, 18-19.

²³² *Life* May 4 1959, 149.

²³³ *Life*, September 21 1959, 8.



Figure 3a. Alphabits Cereal

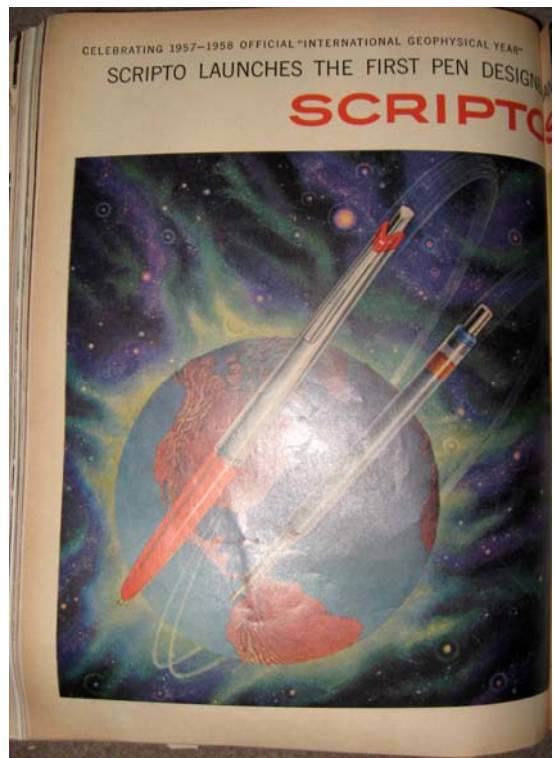


Figure 3b. Scripto Satellite Pen



Figure 4a. Scripto Satellite Pen



Figure 4b. McGregor Meteor Fabric

The Hoover Constellation vacuum cleaner, with its name, and its design, evoked space exploration.²³⁴ It was a small round vacuum, which became visually striking when placed in an ad next to taller, more conventionally shaped vacuums. The Constellation looked like the planet Saturn, with a ring around the middle, or like a space satellite. (Figure 5a²³⁵)

Corning used the space race in its ads, which created an interesting dichotomy since they were advertizing dinner dishes. Their phrasing of “Rocketing into your Daily Life!” was very direct and much less subtle than most ads. This ad was also visually striking. The background was pink, with a peaceful domestic setting of a table, with Corning ware place settings. In the upper corner, inset in a small box, is a picture of the missile. The ad further claimed that this new material was “a new missile material”, and was therefore much sturdier than previous products that were not innovations of the space age. (Figure 5b²³⁶)

²³⁴ *Life*, December 14 1959, 57; October 13 1961, 13.

²³⁵ Henthorn, 230.

²³⁶ *Life*, September 28 1959, 84-85.



Figure 5a. Hoover Constellation Vacuum

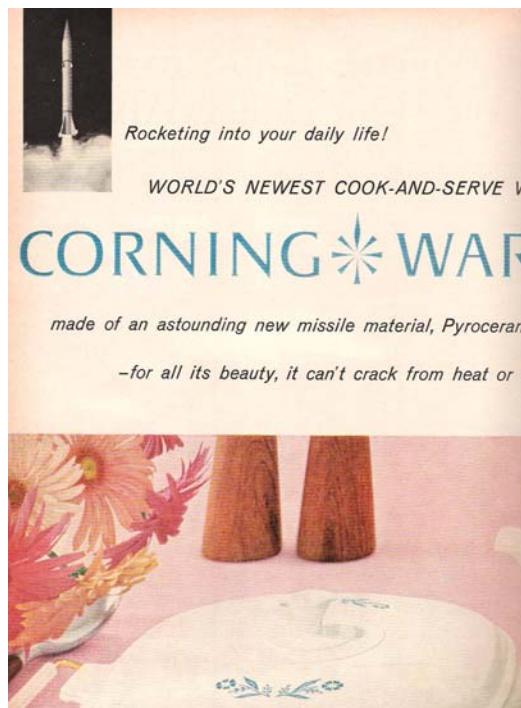


Figure 5b. Corning Pyroceram Dinnerware

There were also various industrial products that created ads with specific and very direct connections between their products and the space race. In most cases, these connections implied a link with the space program that did not actually exist. For example, an ad for Pennzoil Motor Oil with the headline: "The day the missile-man almost blasted into orbit!"²³⁷ It showed a space scientist and gas attendant arguing; the space scientist says, "my car had less power than a missile-fizzle!" He says he won't take anything less because it "makes your car run rocket smooth all the time." An ad for D-X Motor oils claimed that they were the "motor oils of the space age". Shell gasoline proclaimed, "G is for... Galaxy, "Shell's UMF rocket fuel sends a needle-nosed giant from Earth towards the stars. Today, gasoline in your car carries you far- comfortably and economically. Tomorrow, a Shell fuel will take you and your family- where?" Both AC Spark Plugs and Sinclair Gasoline showed rockets. In the spark plug ad, it became a rocket, and in the Sinclair Gasoline ad, a rocket in outer space reinforced their claim of space-age research. (Figure 6a²³⁸, 6b²³⁹, 7a²⁴⁰ and 7b²⁴¹)

²³⁷ *Life*, June 22 1959, 124.

²³⁸ *Life*, August 25 1958, 67.

²³⁹ *Life*, August 12 1957, 72-73.

²⁴⁰ *Life*, October 26 1962, 57.

²⁴¹ *Life*, March 23 1959, 42.



Figure 6a. D-X Motor Oil



Figure 6b. Shell Gasoline

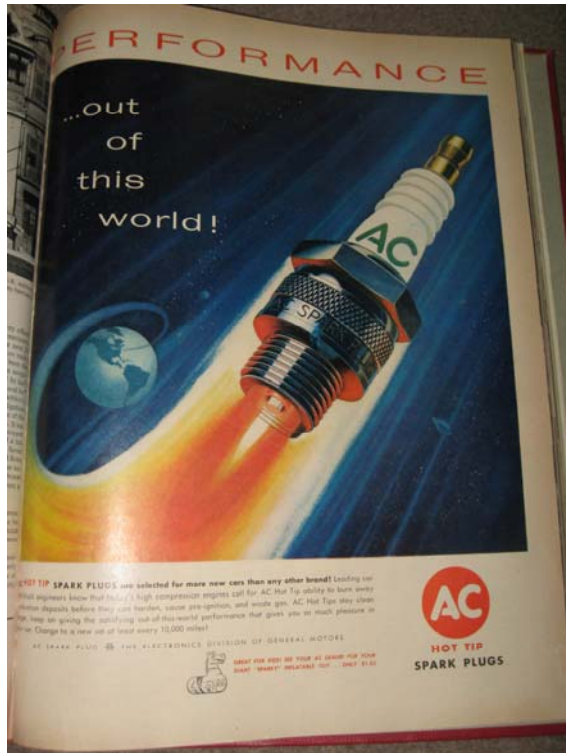


Figure 7a. AC Spark Plugs



Figure 7b. Sinclair Gasoline

Cigarettes also used the space program in their ads. Some were fairly unobtrusive, with images in the background, like the Viceroy cigarettes that presented “the man who thinks for himself”, and showed a picture of a rugged looking man looking contemplatively at the viewer, with a space shuttle launch pad in the background. Again, this evokes the helmsmanship theory of advertising, telling the consumer that if they think for themselves, and pick Viceroy's, they were another type of American hero, who, according to the ad, probably smoked Viceroy's, too. (Figure 8a²⁴² and 8b²⁴³)

Others, like Lucky Strike, again created a connection between the space program and their product. In this case, they sponsored a television program. Their ad showed a picture of the actor in astronaut suit who was star of Lucky Strike's "authentic new series" *Men into Space*, which "captures all the human drama, the excitement, the suspense of man's struggle to conquer outer space. Never before has a TV series attempted to tell the true and thrilling story of man's plunge into outer space. Every episode is a dramatic portrayal of adventures and experiments actually taking place today and planned for tomorrow. Lucky Strike is proud to bring this amazing and compelling show into your home." This ad has seven pictures of shuttles in outer space. (Figure 9²⁴⁴)

²⁴² *Life*, July 6 1959, 106.

²⁴³ *Life*, August 4 1958, 0.

²⁴⁴ *Life*, October 19, 1959, back cover.

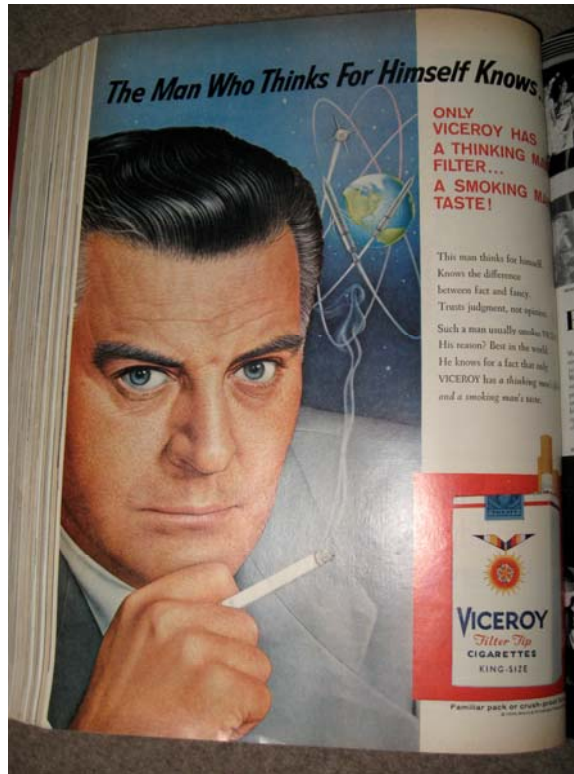


Figure 8a. Viceroy Cigarettes

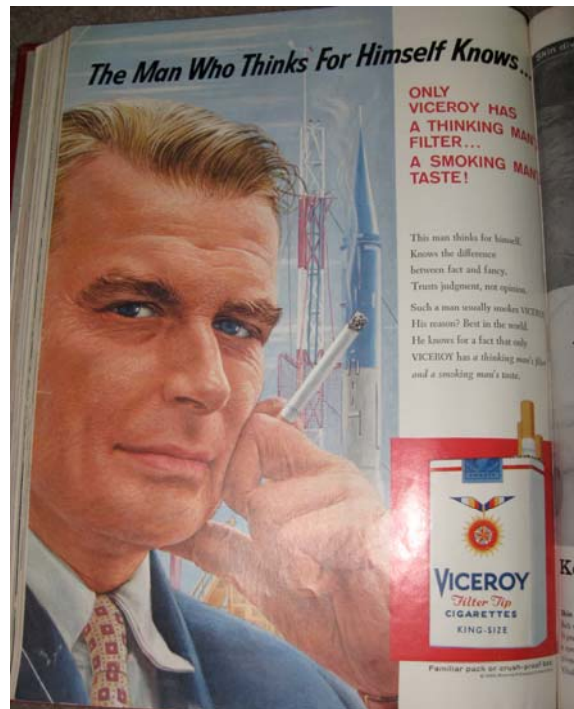


Figure 8b. Viceroy Cigarettes

"MEN INTO SPACE," Lucky Strike's authentic new series (Wednesday nights on CBS) captures all the human drama, the excitement, the suspense of man's struggle to conquer outer space.

Never before has a film-TV series attempted to tell the true and thrilling story of man's plunge into outer space. Every episode is a dramatic portrayal of adventures and experiments actually taking place today and planned for tomorrow. Lucky Strike is proud to bring this amazing and compelling show into your home.

BILL LUNDIGAN
star of
"MEN INTO SPACE"

A MAN'S HORIZONS may change overnight. His tastes don't. The man who wants the honest taste of fine tobacco finds it in a Lucky Strike—and he always will. This is the cigarette that made fine tobacco famous... the one with the taste no other cigarette can touch. Remember how great cigarettes used to taste? Luckies still do!

**Get the honest taste
of a LUCKY STRIKE**

Product of The American Tobacco Company—Salem, N.C.

Figure 9. Lucky Strike Cigarettes

Some companies worked for the space program and used that connection to sell their products. Their ads made their contributions seem imperative to the space race, and made the space race central to national security. Bell Telephone frequently employed this strategy. "The Bell system is ready right now to move fast on a communication stream using satellites in outer space." They also asked, "Who is at work on a satellite system for global telephone and TV transmission?" "Who is girdling the globe with communications for America's first man into space?" "Who used the moon for two-way conversation across the country?" "Pioneering in outer space to improve communications on earth". (Figures 10a²⁴⁵, 10b²⁴⁶ and 12²⁴⁷)

Some car companies also had connections to the space program. Since cars and industrial products had design similarity to the space program, they used it to their advantage. Chrysler took it one step further. Instead of just implying that their products were similar to space shuttles by naming the new engines "Rockets", like Oldsmobile, Chrysler went straight to the company's connection to outer space. In their ad from May 12, 1961, their company name was placed prominently beneath pictures of rockets, with the headline "America's first family of Rockets and Missiles". (Figure 11a²⁴⁸ and 11b²⁴⁹)

²⁴⁵ *Life* February 23 1959, 1.

²⁴⁶ *Life* March 24, 1961, 107.

²⁴⁷ *Life*, March 17 1961, 1.

²⁴⁸ *Life*, May 12 1961, 115.

²⁴⁹ *Life*, October 12 1959, 157.



Figure 10a. Bell Telephone System



Figure 10b. Bell Telephone System



Figure 11a. Chrysler Corporation



Figure 11a. Chrysler Corporation

WHO is at work on a satellite system for global telephone and TV transmission?

WHO provides the communications channels for America's missile defenses?

WHO is girdling the globe with communications for America's first man into space?

WHO tapped the sun for electric power by inventing the Solar Battery?

WHO used the moon for two-way conversations across the country?

who?

WHO guided Tiros and Echo into accurate orbit?

WHO made your pocket radio possible by inventing the Transistor?

WHO maintains the world's largest, finest industrial research facilities?

WHO supplies the most and the best telephone service in the world?

WHO has the UNIVERSAL communications organization?

THERE'S ONLY ONE ANSWER TO ALL TEN QUESTIONS

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Pioneering in outer space to improve communications on earth




Figure 12. Bell Telephone System

There were some advertisements that used humorous images and made dramatic claims about their products' connection with the space program. An ad for the Investor Owned Light and Power Company wanted consumers to believe that family vacations in the near future would include traveling to the destination in a Jetsons-like spacecraft. One of these was the Frigidaire. It showed women in space suits, with space helmets and goggles, gesturing to Frigidaire's new battery, which was enclosed in a bubble that resembled a satellite. Another ad even advertised a prize of a free trip to the moon. Although that did add the caveat that return transportation was not included. (Figures 13a²⁵⁰, 13b²⁵¹, and 14a²⁵²)

The first Tang ad that used space imagery was not until the January 7, 1966 issue of *Life* magazine. There were ads for Tang in earlier issues, but none that had any hint of a connection with NASA. Of all products and advertisements associated with the space program and remembered by Americans, Tang is one of the most popular. The Tang/NASA campaign is frequently cited in modern Cold War culture scholarship. For example, in Howard McCurdy's book, *Space and the American Imagination*, he claimed, "Even Madison Avenue joined the bandwagon, using public interest in space technology to market products such as Tang, a powdered orange drink supplied to the astronauts for their voyages into space".²⁵³ However, there were no advertisements for Tang in *Life* (or in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Reader's Digest* or *Popular Science*) that used space imagery until seven years after NASA's creation. The typical Tang ads in the late 1950s and early 1960s referred to its energy boosting abilities and instructed consumers to "Wake up to Tang!". It was not until 1966 that there was a frequent ad that claimed, "Tang was chosen for the Gemini astronauts...and for the Ryans. [The family that was

²⁵⁰ *Life*, July 9 1965, 65.

²⁵¹ *Life*, November 19 1965, 48.

²⁵² *Ladies Home Journal*, June 1963, R4.

²⁵³ McCurdy, 94.

pictured at the bottom of the ad] On every American space flight since Gemini IV, the astronauts drank Tang", and they all included the same large picture of a satellite in space.²⁵⁴ This particular ad was used 6 times, bringing the total number of Tang space ads during the entire ten year period to 7. There is a discrepancy between the perception of frequent Tang ads and the reality that they were absent from most major publications until the late 1960s. It also raises the question of where these historians are finding their data on the popularity of Tang ads that used space images. Perhaps the Tang ads were infrequent but extremely effective, thereby solidifying their place in the collective consumer memory. However, this seems unlikely because the Tang ads were not more compelling or sensational as far as their depictions of the space program than any other advertisements. There were many other advertisements with large space images and many that depicted bizarre images in their eagerness to connect their products to the space race. In this context, the Tang ads were merely ordinary. Or perhaps Tang ads using space imagery were prevalent, but not until the late 1960s. It is quite possible that the hype surrounding the moon landing created more of a market for ads using space imagery. However, during the timeline of this thesis, Tang ads using space imagery were practically nonexistent. (Figure 14b²⁵⁵)

²⁵⁴ *Life*, September 30, 1966, 31.

²⁵⁵ *Life*, January 7 1966, 2.

Today, electrical service is making things possible in ways never before.

Wherever you look today, electric service makes good things possible.

Flying models concept of the future now be electric powered - plugging into any electric outlet for recharging.

Imagine what it'll do for you tomorrow.

It's your desires and dreams that spur us on. That spirit has always been at the heart of our business. It's helped us keep the average unit price paid for electric service coming steadily down over the years. And with your continued help we'll keep electric service one of the best household bargains you can get. So go ahead and dream! You'll never outdream your possibilities, with more than 300 investor-owned power companies working for you across the land.

Electric and good ideas go together. Get your service from
INVESTOR-OWNED ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER COMPANIES*

*Member of electric utilities industry group, Edison Electric Institute

Figure 13a. Electric Light and Power Company

FRIGIDAIRE ANNOUNCES SPACE AGE REFRIGERATION!

the **POWER CAPSULE**... revolutionary space age successor to the old-fashioned compressor... new power for more space, new features... now in the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

Refrigerators have been getting bigger. Bigger, in fact, than ever before. There are no more compromises, but there are still big new ideas... the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

Power Capsule... revolutionary space age successor to the old-fashioned compressor... new power for more space, new features... now in the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

More Space... more space for your food, more space for your family. The new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators have more space than ever before. They're bigger, in fact, than ever before. There are no more compromises, but there are still big new ideas... the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

More Features... more features, more space, more power. The new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators have more features than ever before. They're bigger, in fact, than ever before. There are no more compromises, but there are still big new ideas... the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

More Power... more power, more space, more features. The new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators have more power than ever before. They're bigger, in fact, than ever before. There are no more compromises, but there are still big new ideas... the new Frigidaire Frost Proof refrigerators.

FRIGIDAIRE

Figure 13b. Frigidaire



Figure 14a. Texize Trip to the Moon



Figure 14b. Tang

CONCLUSION

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Cold War affected the lives of people throughout the world. The space race between the United States and the Soviet Union symbolized the Cold War. This international contest began on October 4, 1957, when the Russians launched their satellite, *Sputnik I*. Consumer spending and the baby boom also influenced Cold War culture, but the American experience was tinged with fear about atomic weapons, communism, and lingering anxiety from the Great Depression and World War II.²⁵⁶ Americans worried about outside threats, perceived and real, turned attention to their homes and their personal lives, and attempted to allay their anxieties by spending money on anything that made their personal space seem more perfect and therefore, safer.²⁵⁷

The advertising industry in the late 1950s and early 1960s responded to this increase in available consumer capital. For the first time since before the economic hardship of the Great Depression and the forced rationing during World War II, consumers had money and were free to spend it as they wished. Advertisers honed their skills selling the war effort during the early 1940s, and switched their focus in the 1950s to promoting goods for the home instead of war bonds. In order to compete in an expanding market, advertising agencies used tools like precise demographic data, intensive audience surveys, and new psychological theory, to create different advertising campaigns for certain demographic groups. Advertisers selected phrases and images in particular ads, and placed these ads in carefully selected venues according to which audience they were attempting to influence. They were acutely aware of the audiences for certain media, and what interested their consumer. This gave them ample information that they used to target audiences with their advertising campaigns.

²⁵⁶ May.

²⁵⁷ May.

Many Americans feared that Sputnik would allow the Russians to spy on their personal activities and government meetings, but they also worried that the Russians possessed the capability to launch weapons into orbit to any point in the United States. President Dwight Eisenhower responded to the space race by creating NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in 1958. However, Eisenhower was not a very enthusiastic supporter of the space program as a vehicle to win the Cold War. He focused on it more as a potential means for scientific and military advancement. He believed that the technological advancements made during research for the space program were more important for their potential usefulness to the military and the applicability to science. This strategy was not particularly effective politically, because many groups promoted the space program as the most effective and quickest way to win the Cold War. When John F. Kennedy became president, the United States focused steadily on surpassing the Russians in space technology. Kennedy ran for president using “The New Frontier” as his platform. In his presidential nomination speech, Kennedy claimed, “We stand today on the edge of a new frontier- the frontier of the 1960s- a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils- a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats”.²⁵⁸ The “New Frontier” represented many possibilities, but most likely the space race.²⁵⁹ Kennedy realized, because of public reaction to Russian progress and discussion with other politicians, that it was beneficial to align his administration with a program that inspired widespread public support. Americans were won over by his plans for the future and his interest in sending a manned mission to the moon. Kennedy used new technology, like television, and older instruments, specifically *Life* magazine, to promote his agenda. President Lyndon B. Johnson was also concerned with winning the space race, and he promoted it as one of the best ways to win the Cold War. His

²⁵⁸ Kauffman, 3.

²⁵⁹ McDougall, 221.

support of the space race was established when he was a Senator, long before he became president.

NASA was concerned from its inception with winning the space race. They needed to make quick progress in order to ensure continued federal funding. One way to gain funding was inspiring public support for their program, something they courted by promoting the astronauts of their manned space program as American heroes. The promotions made the astronauts inseparable from NASA, and their identities as ideal American men gained widespread public admiration. At a time when men were expected to be exceptionally masculine, Americans found it easy to support men represented this ideal in the press. NASA also spent a significant amount of time and money and publicized the use of spin-offs from the space program in the American home. At a time when consumer spending was very high, if Americans learned how the space program contributed directly to their home, they would support the program that created them. This promotion of space products was done directly when advertisers were allowed to use images from the space program in advertisements for unrelated products.

Advertisers wanted to use the most effective medium to sell their products. In the late 1950s, magazines like *Life*, *Saturday Evening Post* and *Look*, known as general interest magazines, were still a very popular method of entertainment and information. By 1962, television was available in 92 percent of homes. However, according to an extensive study done on the effects of watching television in children, it did not significantly affect the consumption of other media that were news sources. The popularity of television, combined with public opinion surveys indicating interest in magazines that discussed specific topics, led magazine editors to tailor their information to better satisfy their readers. However, during much of the twentieth century, general interest magazines were how many Americans received information about

current events. Some of these magazines, such as *Life*, *Time*, *Look*, and *Fortune*, are considered American institutions and were the idea of Henry Luce. Luce created these magazines but never pretended that he was producing unbiased journalism in *Life* magazine. He used *Life* as an instrument to present his opinions on the Cold War. Luce believed in the superiority of American values and institutions. He held that America and any methods the nation used to win the Cold War were appropriate and necessary. Henry Luce advocated his views through editorials and articles, particularly one series called “National Purpose”, published in *Life* in 1960. Luce argued his view of the National Purpose before Senator Henry Jackson’s Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery on June 28, 1960.²⁶⁰ His National Purpose was that America should win the Cold War and the sooner the better. In order to do this, America had to, at minimum, prevent Russian leaders from continuing their mission to spread communism throughout the world. Luce saw Communism, and specifically its Soviet manifestation as a serious threat that needed to be neutralized as quickly and efficiently as possible. One of the more effective ways to counteract the appeal of the Soviet Union was to defeat the Soviets in the one area where they were showing clear superiority to the United States: space technology. Henry Luce used *Life* magazine to promote propaganda for the American space program. By signing an exclusive contract with *Life*, NASA and the astronauts of the Mercury program showed that *Life* and Luce provided the most supportive atmosphere for media coverage of the space program. Luce exploited the contract skillfully during the Mercury program, placing the astronauts on the cover of the *Life* frequently, and commissioning numerous articles. These articles consistently promoted the space program as a positive organization, and focused on its progress and plans rather than critical news coverage. *Life* also helped create the image of the astronaut as American hero by emphasizing the lives of the

²⁶⁰ Luce, 132.

astronauts and portraying them as ideal family members chasing their version of the American Dream, one that coincidentally would help win the Cold War.

It is important to look at the incidences of ads with space images in the early years of the space race and explain why they were located more frequently in certain magazines than in others. The years from 1957 to 1966 represent the genesis of the space race. There were frequent advertisements in *Life* magazine that used images of the space race during this time, significantly more than in other popular magazines of the time. This is because certain organizations needed and wanted to promote the space race for their own benefit, and they recognized that *Life* magazine was an excellent forum to promote the space program.

Advertisements in *Life* magazine using space imagery during the years from 1957 to 1966 were a result of the efforts of *Life* founder and editor Henry Luce to help win the Cold War, NASA to earn popular support and continued federal funding, and the federal government to promote the popularity of the space program and promote consumerism as a technique to win the Cold War. Advertisers were aware of these groups and their objectives and placed advertisements using space imagery in *Life* magazine, instead of other popular magazines of the time.

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APPENDIX A: ALL MAGAZINES- COMPILED ADVERTISEMENT DATA

Space Missions	Time Period	Life # per issue	Life # per year	Popular Science # per issue	Popular Science # per year	Readers Digest # per issue	Readers Digest # per year	Ladies Home Journal # per issue	Ladies Home Journal # per year
	January-March 1957	6	43	6	14	0	7	0	0
	April-June 1957	17		4		3		0	
	July-September 1957	7		1		0		0	
<i>Sputnik</i>	October-December 1957	13		3		4		0	
<i>Explorer</i>	January-March 1958	12	61	8	24	3	7	0	0
	April-June 1958	13		6		1		0	
	July-September 1958	13		4		0		0	
	October-December 1958	23		6		3		0	
	January-March 1959	19	76	6	25	4	17	0	0
	April-June 1959	25		8		6		0	
	July-September 1959	8		6		3		0	
	October-December 1959	24		5		4		0	
	January-March 1960	6	46	5	23	4	11	0	2
	April-June 1960	16		8		4		1	
	July-September 1960	5		7		1		0	
	October-December 1960	19		3		2		1	

Space Missions	Time Period	Life # per issue	Life # per year		Popular Science # per issue	Popular Science # per year		Readers Digest # per issue	Readers Digest # per year		Ladies Home Journal # per issue	Ladies Home Journal # per year
<i>Mercury</i>	January-March 1961	18	60		5	20		6	14		1	3
<i>Mercury</i>	April-June 1961	18			8			1			0	
<i>Mercury</i>	July-September 1961	9			4			0			0	
<i>Mercury</i>	October-December 1961	15			3			7			2	
<i>Mercury</i>	January-March 1962	15	49		5	23		1	13		2	6
<i>Mercury</i>	April-June 1962	10			6			3			1	
<i>Mercury</i>	July-September 1962	6			5			1			1	
<i>Mercury</i>	October-December 1962	18			7			8			2	
<i>Mercury</i>	January-March 1963	6	36		5	22		11	27		1	5
<i>Mercury</i>	April-June 1963	15			5			7			2	
<i>Mercury</i>	July-September 1963	5			4			3			2	
<i>Mercury</i>	October-December 1963	10			8			6			0	
	January-March 1964	14	60		12	32		4	22		1	8
	April-June 1964	13			7			5			2	
	July-September 1964	8			7			2			2	
	October-December 1964	25			6			11			3	

Space Missions	Time Period	Life # per issue	Life # per year		Popular Science # per issue	Popular Science # per year		Readers Digest # per issue	Readers Digest # per year		Ladies Home Journal # per issue	Ladies Home Journal # per year
<i>Gemini</i>	January-March 1965	13	53		13	42		4	18		1	6
<i>Gemini</i>	April-June 1965	13			9			4			1	
<i>Gemini</i>	July-September 1965	2			11			4			2	
<i>Gemini</i>	October-December 1965	25			9			6			2	
<i>Gemini</i>	January-March 1966	27	60		7	30		10	25		1	9
<i>Gemini</i>	April-June 1966	18			7			7			3	
<i>Gemini</i>	July-September 1966	8			10			1			3	
<i>Gemini</i>	October-December 1966	7			6			7			2	
	Total per magazine		544			255			161			39
	Total in all magazines	999										