

subcontracted worker in relation to his contractor. To conclude this point, wage differentials between men and women have fulfilled a two-fold purpose. Firstly, by maintaining women's wages lower than those of men, women constitute a reserve labour force which is used during times of economic crisis. Secondly, lower wages for women have prevented the majority of them from gaining economic autonomy.

The final contribution of this work is the examination of how these two factors—transferring of assembly plants to peripheral areas and incorporation of large groups of women into production—have deeply affected the way Juarez people live their lives. Fernandez-Kelly uses the method of participant observation to achieve an inside view of the maquiladoras and of the way maquiladora workers live. An ethnographic description of Zaragoza Street—a Juarez neighborhood where a large number of maquiladora workers live—is given in detail. From the data collected, various conclusions are drawn. Firstly, and most important of all, is that women in Ciudad Juarez joined the work force not as supplementary wage earners but as the main providers of stable and regular income for their families due to the weak employment status of the men and the generalized poverty in which people live. Secondly, although the maquiladora program has resulted in more employment opportunities, its instability and low salaries have forced people to combine their work at the assembly plants with other informal economic activities at the household, neighborhood and community level. Small grocery stores are important sources of credit, food and other essentials. Because these workers' wages continue to be lower than the cost of living, such exchanges are fundamental for subsistence. Thirdly, the maquiladora program has given women a kind of "emancipation" by allowing them to earn their own salaries that they spend on clothes, cosmetics, jewelry and entertainment in a manner very close to that of the American women.

To conclude, Fernandez-Kelly's interdisciplinary research is a valuable contribution to the study of the effects produced by international capital investment in a given peripheral area such as the Mexican-American border. In studying this case, the gender discrimination criterion used in employment recruitment procedures proves to be one of the most important characteristics of the phenomenon studied. The utilization of this criterion in the Border Industrialization Program is not a mere occurrence but rather a general feature of international capitalism when transferring production plants.

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Sex Stereotyping in Advertising. Alice E. Courtney and Thomas W. Whipple. *Toronto: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath and Company), 1983. Pp. 239.*

Sex stereotyping in advertising seems like an old, worn out topic. Women have been voicing complaints about the way they are portrayed in advertising for more than a decade. The complaints have usually focused on the stereotypic, limiting and demeaning ways in which they are portrayed. In Canada this has led to investigation of the issues by women's groups, by researchers, by the advertising industry, and finally by the government. Among those who have written in this area are Alice Courtney and Thomas Whipple, who have been working in the field since the early 1970's, and who are probably best known for their study for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, *Canadian Perspectives on Sex Stereotyping in Advertising* (1978). Those who believe that everything has been said about this issue will be pleasantly surprised by their new book.

This book expands and updates the work in the CACSW publication. Literature from a large number of fields is reviewed and analyzed. It is

intended to “be of interest to scholars and practitioners in a wide variety of fields: marketing, advertising, women’s studies, mass communications, psychology and sociology” (p. xiv). This breadth is both a strength and a weakness of the book.

Those who dislike advertising (people whom the authors describe as having a high irritation level) will not be enamored with discussions of advertising effectiveness. Those who are not familiar with research may be put off by terms such as Latin-square design, analysis of covariance and multiple discriminant analysis. And non-industry people may be unfamiliar with terms such as focus groups, playback and convenience sample. But these should not militate against reading the book because it contains valuable information for all possible users.

Section one is called “The Problem” and contains an extremely thorough review of the literature on the ways in which women and men are portrayed in advertisements (both print and television). The not surprising conclusion is that the portrayal is indeed inaccurate and stereotyped—reflecting traditional sex role attitudes. A chapter on research on attitudes towards sex stereotypes in advertising cites numerous studies which show that both critics and the general public are critical of the way the sexes are portrayed. The final chapter in this section is an excellent and extremely useful review of research on the effects of sex stereotyping. The societal impact is clear: advertising is a major influence on the way children and adults view their sex roles.

The second section is called “Advertising Effectiveness.” In it they review a large number of studies, most very recent, on sex-role stereotyping and effective advertising strategies. After presenting research on topics ranging from buyer behaviour and the “new market” to the use of sex, humor and female voices in advertising, they conclude that it is possible to improve

portrayal of the sexes and maintain or even increase communication effectiveness.

The third section is called “Strategies for Change.” Included are chapters on the role of research and research needs, regulatory mechanisms, and the need for education and attitude change within the advertising industry. The authors are clearly opposed to government regulation but they believe that self-regulation can and will help. Ultimately, re-education is seen as the most important variable since any sort of regulation will, at best, lead to the elimination of only the most offensive and sexist ads. It is impossible to disagree that re-education is necessary and desirable, but some of us may be too impatient to wait for such a slow process and be more inclined to favor some sort of regulation in the meantime.

There are a number of important issues which receive only slight attention: aging women, minority women, violence against women (which seems to be more and more prevalent in advertising) and sexist language. Each of these issues is at least briefly acknowledged by the authors, the problem is that there is little research on these issues. Another problem, which they also acknowledge, is that the focus has been almost exclusively on television and print (magazine) advertising. There is little research on radio and local newspaper advertising, for example, not to mention trade magazines and highly targeted magazines (those which appeal to a specialized segment of the population such as computer magazines, for example).

Women’s groups which have been working on the issues of sexism in the media in Canada are also overlooked, although they do acknowledge that complaints usually come from “organized feminist groups.” Given that the U.S. based National Organization of Women is discussed, one might have expected them to mention the National Action Committee on the Status of Women or the Canadian Coalition against Media

Pornography, and most especially, Media Watch. In general, feminists tend to be treated with kid gloves. For example, at one point they state, "While it is true that feminists (although not a lunatic fringe) are often among the most critical of advertising, this fact does not negate the validity of their complaints. Moreover, they often express views which have been shown by research to be much more widely shared by society" (p. 197). But in another context, discussing a particular study, they say, "However tentative these findings, though, the researchers' cautions are worth heeding: feminists' demands may exceed the requirements of women customers" (p. 79).

It is impossible to describe all of the fascinating insights gleaned from reading the book, but worthwhile to share a few. One telling revelation is the use of military analogies in the language of marketing and advertising:

A marketer or advertiser speaks of a *target* audience of consumers to be researched, of marketing *strategy and tactics*, of *attacking* markets, and of *fighting* for share of market against *competition*. Thus, it seems appropriate to discuss the role of research as *ammunition* in a series of *battles* in the *war* to reduce sex stereotyping in advertising" (p. 157, emphasis added).

Other interesting topics include: the discussion of research on humor, suggesting gender differences in humor appreciation (men find hostile humor and sexual humor funnier than do women); the discussion of research on the use of sexy models, suggesting women generally dislike female nudity while men evaluate it more positively, it may interfere with "brand recall"; and the discussion of research on voices, suggesting that both women and men perceive female voices as equally effective to male voices (so why do male voiceovers predominate so heavily?).

The book contains a few typographical errors which are very minor. More importantly, the

book contains an error of fact which I feel compelled to comment on since I have been personally involved. Their discussion of the CRTC Task Force on Sex Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media contains no reference to the Task Force Report, *Images of Women* (1982), a serious omission in a discussion of the work of the Task Force. Instead the authors appear to rely on information provided by the advertising industry. They state:

From the first the CRTC Task Force had a stormy history. Unlike the more understanding atmosphere of the self-regulatory group (the Canadian Advertising Advisory Board task force), the government-established committee was composed of few industry people and was dominated by strong feminists unsympathetic to the advertising-effectiveness issues that concerned industry" (p. 176).

While the first sentence is indeed true, the second is incorrect. Out of a total of nineteen members, nine were "industry" representatives (five from broadcasting, four from advertising), four were from the CRTC, and only six were "public members" (i.e. the feminists, of which I was one). It is therefore clearly untrue to say that there were "few" industry people; whether or not it is true to say that the feminists dominated the Task Force depends on the particular meaning attached to "dominated"—at best that's a matter of opinion.

One more thing simply must be criticized. While the cover of the actual book is fine, the dust cover can only be described as offensive. It encompasses the very technique which the authors criticize in their section on using sex to sell. The word "Sex" is printed in letters which are four centimeters high, while underneath, "Stereotyping in Advertising" is printed in letters which are only one centimeter high! That's enough to make many avoid the book entirely.

However, in general the book appears to be well worth reading for a number of groups. Those who are in marketing or advertising will find more than enough evidence of the "problem" (for those who are still doubters), along with evidence of the effects of stereotyped and sexist advertising (that it is "harmful to our society...also harmful to advertising practice," p. 198). As well, they will find useful suggested changes which can be implemented without compromising advertising "effectiveness."

Those of us who are researchers will find the chapter on the role of research filled with ideas for needed research, and will find the 23 page bibliography, probably the most comprehensive available, to be extremely useful.

Those of us who are feminist activists will find two aspects of the book particularly useful: (1) the overwhelming documentation of "the problem" and its effects will provide all the evidence we could possibly need, and (2) the section on resistance to change which outlines the industry defenses, will help clarify what we're up against and how to counter the typical (false) arguments: advertising is a mirror of society, sexism sells, research does not indicate a problem, and protestors are not typical people.

The book is not radical and will certainly not please everyone. It is, however, well written, comprehensive and fair. As such, it is valuable and worthwhile.

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Women's Pictures; Feminism and Cinema Annette Kuhn. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (Toronto: Oxford University Press), 1982. Pp. 226.; **Forever Feminine; Women's Magazines and the Cult of Femininity.** Marjorie Ferguson. London: Heineman (The Book Society of Canada, Ltd.), 1983. Pp. 256; **The Widening Sphere;**

Women in Canada, 1870-1940. Jean L'Espérance. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services SA2-136/1982, 1982. Pp. 69. (Text in English and French)

Three excellent new books, two imported and the third a catalogue of the exhibition at the Public Archives in Ottawa, analyze the cultural and ideological content of "womanhood" in Europe and North America. While there are a number of previous attempts to chart women in film and in women's magazines, Kuhn's *Women's Pictures* and Ferguson's *Forever Feminine* are unique in that they provide us with a viable theoretical approach for the study of cultural artifacts. The writers agree furthermore that such an approach must combine insights gained from content analysis with information about production procedures, organizational setting and the economic viability of films and magazines. Both books are useful as texts in a variety of Women's Studies courses.

Annette Kuhn's *Women's Pictures: Feminism and the Cinema* is the most ambitious of the three books in that it scrutinizes feminist film studies as part of a larger body of work: feminist theory. The book develops a constructivist approach to using selected Marxist insights to fashion, a broad based "oppositional" feminist approach to cultural signification. Kuhn notes: "My basic objective in dealing with both feminist film theory and feminist film production, is to suggest some way in which the two are interconnected, either explicitly in their politics, or implicitly in the kinds of thinking that underlie them" (Preface X). The book is divided into four parts with the first surveying general writing in film theory and the second developing a feminist theory of film criticism and practice based on a gender specific "oppositional" approach to creating as well as reading film texts. Part III contains a historical account of feminist film theory as it has developed over the past ten years plus criticisms and suggestions based on a case study of two pornographic films: *L'amour violé* and