

## An assortment of advertisements

Friday, November 13, 2020 by Sophia Grande-Lawlor

Hi everyone, my name is Sophia. I am an MLIS student from Western University completing my co-op placement at the University of Waterloo's Special Collections & Archives (SCA) this term. I am incredibly excited to work with the team here at the SCA as a big fan of archives and local history in the Region of Waterloo.

During the various stages of lockdown, I found myself gravitating toward a show I could watch. I ended up watching *Mad Men*. There's something about the drama, business, and fashion choices of those marketing professionals at Sterling-Cooper that captures my attention. As I watched *Mad Men* on a streaming platform, I did note the irony of watching a show about advertising straight through with no commercials to break up the episode segments.

Watching the employees of Sterling-Cooper pitch and launch advertising campaigns, I realized I had an odd nostalgia for the days commercials and ads would break up my viewing experience. Whether we like it or not, most of us can recall a catchy jingle or iconic visual from some advertisement of our past.

Advertisements from the past have always interested me (and sometimes shocked me) when I encounter them. The fascination could lie with the strange thoughts companies once held about the consumers they were trying to sell to. Some advertisements are looked upon with interest or nostalgia, and some are recognized as highly problematic today. Ads were designed to be captivating to their audiences, and I think that only increases as time passes. Intentions and imagery can seem surreal years later.

It's interesting seeing popular trends represented in ads, it can tell you many things about the time period the product was made in. Whether it be fashion trends, societal expectations, or values, advertisements can communicate a lot through the images and wording they equip to persuade consumers. Going through the SCA's collections, I have encountered many interesting advertisements this term. I thought I would share some below.

Bendix Automatic Home Laundry, ca. 1946



**THE MAGIC  
"CLICK"**

**... THAT ENDS WASHDAY DRUDGERY**

Just set the control for the temperature of water you want to use . . . for the length of time you want to wash—and forget it! You simply put in clothes, set the control and add soap and you are through! Your wash, a big 9 pound load, is well on its way to being done . . . automatically . . . while you are away!

**THE MODERN LABOR SAVER  
FOR THE MODERN HOME**  
A Complete Automatic Home Laundry  
in 4 sq. feet of space

**A BENDIX DOES ALL THESE WASHDAY CHORES  
Automatically!**

**FILLS UP WITH WATER**—The magic click starts your washday—first by filling your Bendix with water . . . at the right temperature . . . and just the right amount.

**WASHES YOUR CLOTHES**—Gently yet thoroughly, the patented "tumble-action" of the Bendix washes your clothes, leaving them fresh and sanitary—free of germs and dirt.

**BLENDS YOUR COLORS**—No more "color bleed" . . . but dyes appear more in color, fresh, when each new washing uses the first intensive jet sprays, leaving your clothes brighter and clean.

**DAMP DRIES YOUR CLOTHES**—Out goes the water from the third row and the Bendix automatically speeds up to whirl your clothes damp dry . . . clean, fresh and ready for the line or dryer.

**DRIPPS AND CLEANS ITSELF**—Your Bendix ditches and cleans itself of all suds and dirt particles—and carries them down the drain, leaving itself sparkling clean and ready for the next wash.

**SHUTS ITSELF OFF**—Even when the Bendix is "backed" with the wash, you needn't hurry home or check it—when it's all done's ready the Bendix shuts itself off—automatically—as just the right time.

**YOUR HANDS NEED NEVER TOUCH WATER!**

**PATENTED "TUMBLE-ACTION"**  
A washing principle exclusive with Bendix . . . that clothes in and out of water all times in motion—more gently and more thoroughly than hand-washing ever did.

So magical is the Bendix washday performance, that it sounds like a "push-over" prospect—like a device still in the blueprint or experimental stage—*it isn't!* The BENDIX automatic Home Laundry was an actual work-saving reality before the war in many hundreds of thousands of homes . . . and again is the first choice of millions of women.

**BENDIX automatic Home Laundry**

GA384: File 8, Item 3: Bendix Automatic Home Laundry Pamphlet

This brochure from the [Women's domestic work advertisements collection](#) comes from Bendix. Bendix was an American company that produced several items, including one of the early automatic washing machines for domestic use. The brochure advertises its automatic home laundry product around the time of the Second World War. The ad details the steps the machine takes to complete the laundry process previously completed mostly by hand. I bet it makes you grateful for your own machine!

Besides the technological aspect, the brochure is interesting for its choice to market to women with various roles. During this period, women were taking on jobs and tasks previously unavailable to them in large numbers due to gaps in the workforce as men went off to war. The decision to market toward women with different jobs demonstrates an acknowledgement of a growing demographic that altered societal expectations and norms during this era.

## Seagram's V. O., 198-

**Are you sure your rye is the world's best-seller?**

Some people would have you believe the rye they drink is the best selling and most-appreciated the world over.

In point of fact, the world's best selling and most-appreciated rye whisky is Seagram's V.O.

Taste the incomparable smoothness of Seagram's V.O. and we believe you'll understand why.

**Seagram's V.O.**

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GA104A: Series 2.5, File 144: Products: V.O.

In 1857, William Hespeler and George Randall established the Granite Mills and Waterloo Distillery. A few years later in 1864, a local bookkeeper and manager in the local milling industry named Joseph Emm Seagram was hired to supervise Hespeler's interest in the company. Seagram went on to buy out Hespeler, Randall, and Roos over the years until he was the sole owner of the company in 1883. After being acquired by the Bronfman family in 1928, Seagram's grew in notoriety as it became a popular choice during the

prohibition era. Seagram's developed a strong brand to sell its products that lives on today.

Created in 1913 to celebrate the marriage of Thomas Seagram, Seagram's V.O. was one of the many beverages created and marketed by the company. The advertisement above is one of several in the [Seagram collection](#) promoting V.O. as a popular and worldly Canadian beverage in the 1980s. As a product still on the market today, the V.O. has been marketed numerous ways over generations. Take a look at the Seagram collection to trace the brand legacy of one of Canada's famous distilleries.

### Kaufman Foamtreads, 1984



**When the world's hard on his head,  
something should be soft on his feet.**

As if working all day wasn't enough, he has to contend with rising prices, bills, shortages, bills, pollution, bills.

Take some of the load off his mind by putting something soft on his feet. Like Kaufman Foamtreads.

Foamtreads have helped soothe more weary soles over the years than just about anyone.

Because we at Kaufman make Foamtreads with one thing in mind: Comfort. We make the insides warm and soft. The outsides colourful and smart. And we make the undersides of Foamtreads slip-resistant with a leather sole.

Admittedly, Foamtreads can't solve all his worldly problems, but they're a step in the right direction.

**Foamtreads by Kaufman**

Kaufman Rubber Co. was founded in Berlin (now Kitchener) by Jacob Ratz Kaufman in 1907. In its early years, the company began producing rubber footwear. After Kaufman's death in 1920, his son A.R. Kaufman became the president, a position he held until 1964. Eventually, the company moved to manufacturing various types of footwear outside of its solely rubber origins. As their line of footwear expanded, so did their marketing efforts! The [Kaufman Footwear fonds](#) houses several great advertisements from the company's past.

The featured ad above portrays the popular Foamtreads, a slipper manufactured by the company beginning in 1953. The company continued manufacturing several shoe brands until it declared bankruptcy in 2000. The Sorel boot, another Kaufman product, was acquired by Columbia Sportswear and lives on today. For more about fun Kaufman Footwear ads, check out the [Stranger Shoes blog post!](#)