

The Globalization of American Advertising and Brand Management: A Brief History of the J. Walter Thompson Company, Procter and Gamble, and US Foreign Policy.

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Abstract:

Historically, prominent members of advertising and brand management leaders, the J. Walter Thompson Company and Procter and Gamble, envisioned an American-led global consumer order supported by advertising-based media, where advertising had precedence over the corporations that owned them and advertising, propaganda, public diplomacy, and public relations were indistinguishable. They saw advertising playing a central role in culture, education, government, religion and social norms. They have American brand-name products dominate national and international markets and advertising money support mass media. This study outlines how these pioneers sought to ensure that they became significant players in the global marketplace through relationships with the US federal government and national security agencies, and developing an infrastructure for the production of persuasive information that continues to define contemporary media. It highlights key moments, players, and relationships from the late 19th century into the 21st century, including The Ad Council, Radio Free Europe, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Presidents Reagan and G. W. Bush. It also explores their definition of free enterprise as a system based on the mass production and mass production of heavily advertised, brand name goods and services, promoted across all major media and supported by consumer credit and the brand management system.

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