

First Oral History Interview

with

HILARY LIPSITZ

February 7, 1985

at

New York City

By Scott Ellsworth

For the "Pepsi Generation" Oral History Project

Archives Center

National Museum of American History

Smithsonian Institution

TAPE ABSTRACT AND INDEX

Lipsitz, Hilary. New York, New York. February 7, 1985.
Interviewed by Scott Ellsworth.

~~Second~~ of two interviews
First

A former Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn (BBDO) staffer, Hilary Lipsitz was a member of the agency team that created Pepsi's commercials during the 1960s. Mr. Lipsitz's special role was in securing musical talent.

Primarily, the interview consists of an informed review of the origins and first decade of the "Pepsi Generation" advertising campaign. Special attention is given to: The origins of "Come Alive" advertising campaign; contributions made by specific BBDO staff; the nature of business dealings between BBDO and Pepsi advertising staff; perceptions of California as the leading edge in youth culture; the "Taste That Beats The Others Cold" and the "Live/Give" advertising campaigns; the role of John Bergin; comparisons with Coke's advertising during the 1960s; the musical impact of the Beatles; and the cinematic origins of the "Rope Swing" commercial in "The Triumph of the Will".

The interview was conducted in Mr. Lipsitz's office in New York City.

Abstract of first interview with Hilary Lipsitz Interview 1
New York City February 7, 1985
Interviewer: Scott Ellsworth

Tape 1, Side 1

1:10

PEPSI ACCOUNT TO BBDO

Pepsi-Cola was interested in moving the account from Kenyon and Eckhardt to a more prestigious agency. BBDO wanted the account because it would be their first large packaged goods client.

Religion played a role in the decision to change agencies as well. Herb Barnet and Al Steele were Jewish and were probably looking for an agency which could provide "Waspy" business and political contacts.

4:40

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born in Ahoskie, North Carolina. Attended Mercersberg prep school and Princeton University, where he majored in a special humanities program. Came to New York in 1956 and began working in the training program at BBDO. Began producing plays in 1958. BBDO gets Pepsi account in 1960. Began work on the Pepsi-Cola account (in 1962) mostly because of his theater background.

Lipsitz was once in charge of creative media and research, worked with a Pepsi account group. Began working with music almost by default, because no one else wanted to get involved with musical groups. The account was split into two parts; the television group, and the print group headed by John Bergin.

10:40

ORIGINS OF "COME ALIVE" CAMPAIGN

Prior to the "Come Alive You're In The Pepsi Generation" campaign management changed at Pepsi. The BBDO staff knew they would need a new campaign. Lipsitz recalls the origins of the line, "Come Alive, You're in the Pepsi Generation". Many meetings were held at the hotel. Discusses Role of Dick Von Glahn's role. Bergin had a meeting at the Cattleman's Restaurant to decide on the line for the campaign in about February 1964.

17:40

PRODUCING "COME ALIVE"

The first commercial they shot for the "Pepsi Generation" was shot in Shea Stadium. The film crew used sun mirror that bothered the players so much that the crew was kicked out of the stadium.

Irving Penn gave Pepsi-Cola advertising a distinct look in "For Those Who Think Young". Half of the commercials for the "Pepsi Generation" were shot in black and white and half in color. California was really just becoming accessible because of the introduction of commercial jets.

22:15

BOTTLER'S CONVENTION AT WALDORF ASTORIA

The first "Come Alive" commercial was shown to the bottlers, who loved the campaign. "Come Alive" commercials were innovative. Shooting them in California was the key, as it was at the leading edge of youth culture at the time. Coke was still using Anita Bryant with "Zing What a Feeling", while Pepsi was using "Now It's Pepsi For Those Who Think Young." Coke woke up and hired Burt Sturn. Early Pepsi/BBDO advertising campaigns did not use any minorities. Recalls some themes of commercials such as sand skiing.

Tape 1, Side 2

:10

FROM "COME ALIVE" TO "TASTE THAT BEATS THE OTHERS COLD PEPSI POURS IT ON"

Jim Somerall was head of the Pepsi when BBDO presented the campaign, "Taste...Pepsi Pours It On." They hated it. They wanted something about Pepsi tasting better. The line evolved to, "For Taste That Beats the Others Cold - Pepsi Pours It On." Not everyone at BBDO did not want to change from "Come Alive." They tried to make the new campaign as "lifestyle" oriented as possible.

2:10

"ROPE SWING" COMMERCIAL HAS FILM MODEL

Ed Vorkapich shot the commercial "Rope Swing" in the artistic style of the 1936 Nazi propaganda film, "Triumph of the Will," with slow motion and almost all backlighting. Vorkapich's father lectured on this film at UCLA.. Lipsitz was extremely surprised

when it became one of Pepsi's best commercials. At the time, Pepsi people had some strong reservations about it.

6:20

"LIVE/GIVE" ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

"You've Got A Lot to Live - Pepsi's Got a Lot to Give" was an innocent campaign, with an almost political message. "Taste That Beats the Others Cold" ran for three or four years and Pepsi was ready for a different lifestyle campaign. Lipsitz left BBDO and formed his own company. Discusses print advertising.

The big shift at BBDO came when they combined the print group and the television group. One of the main reasons for this consolidation was that the print writers were generally more talented than the television writers--especially Jim Jordan and John Bergin.

17:45

PRESENTATIONS OF CAMPAIGNS

The Pepsi people always got together with the account group the night before the formal presentation and discussed the advertising ideas. The BBDO group had a close relationship with Pepsi people. John Bergin at BBDO was also producing good commercials for Schaeffer Beer at that time. John Bergin, Al Hoffman, who wrote the line, Alan Pottasch, Don Kendall, and John Corbani were all instrumental in "Come Alive." Recalls David Ogilvy's reaction to "For Those Who Think Young" television commercial.

25:20

MUSIC IN CAMPAIGNS

The Beatles' impact on U.S. music was great. Most of music in commercials prior to that point was Broadway theater music. Beatles movies, "Hard Days Night" and "Help," influenced Pepsi commercials.

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Second Oral History Interview

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April 19, 1985

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Abstract of interview with Hilary Lipsitz New York City April 19, 1985
Interviewer: Scott Ellsworth

Tape 1, Side 1

:45

DISCUSSION OF PEPSI-COLA JINGLES

Dick Williams and Lou Anderson sang the original "Pepsi-Cola Hits the Spot" jingle. Anderson had previously worked as Clarabell the clown on the "Howdy Doody Show." Discussion of "Now It's Pepsi For Those Who Think Young."

3:30

"POP GOES THE PEPSI" CAMPAIGN IDEA

This was an idea for a campaign which emerged before the "Think Young" campaign within the Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn advertising agency.

4:40

ROOTS OF ROCK AND ROLL IN ADVERTISING

Lipsitz was interested in this kind of music because he saw the trend toward it. They used Anne Phillips, who had just done much of the background vocals for "The Leader of the Pack" song. Pepsi-Cola at that time reacted negatively to this genre of music. Lipsitz begged his boss, Von Glahn, to let him hire Diana Ross and The Supremes but he refused. Ross went to work for Coca-Cola and that liason proved very successful for them. Lipsitz was then requested to find a good black group as quickly as possible, so he contracted the Four Tops.

10:20

THE BEATLES

Pepsi-Cola had a television show called "The Beatles" before Ed Sullivan had them on his show. Lipsitz, then account supervisor, asked Dick Dwan to negotiate with the groups through Siana Productions. Siana had done the production work on a Revlon commercial which was probably the first to use rock and roll music.

14:05

BLACK MUSICIANS IN ADVERTISEMENTS

BBDO produced jingles for Pepsi-Cola for distribution to Top 40's radio stations. They did not make segregated jingles. The "On The Beach" television commercial within the "Come Alive, You're in the "Pepsi Generation" campaign showed Quincy Jones playing.

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16:50

BLACK GROUPS

They filmed The Turtles and The Four Tops in 1964 and 1965, long before most people did. Lipsitz and his colleagues were instrumental in opening up opportunities for Black groups in the business.

18:05

JINGLES IN PROMOTIONS

Jingles were not considered advertisements or as parts of campaigns but rather considered promotions. Therefore they had very small budgets to pay these groups. The impact of these jingles was the switch of this musical ad to the advertising budget from promotions at BBDO.

20:00

JOINED PEPSI ACCOUNT

In November of 1962 joined the Pepsi account as the v.p. account supervisor with responsibility for media, research and creative work.

24:05

LIPSITZ WANTED TO BE A LYRIC WRITER

He wrote lyrics to several songs; Harper Valley PTA, The Next Face I See Will Be Jesus.

Tape 1 Side 2

8:40

LIPSITZ LEAVES BBDO

He left BBDO because Pepsi wanted someone with more marketing skills in his creative position. Lipsitz felt that by moving more into the account work he could move up the corporate ladder but would miss the creative work.

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Scott: As we discussed.

H.J.L.

Hilary Lipsch

DATE - ?

=ESTIMATE=

PEPSI COLA 3 COMMERCIALS
2-60 second 1-30 second

ARTISTS: UNION GAP

Musicians	\$ 2,376.00	
Social Security	99.79	
Pension & Welfare	118.80	
Arrangements (VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL)	1,000.00	2,000.00
Copyists	350.00	
Production Fee	1,000.00	1,000.00
Instrument Rental	85.00	
Cartage	30.00	
Studios & Tapes (3 DAYS)	2,000.00	
		\$ 8,059.59
Talent Fee	4,000.00	
Transportation (Los Angeles) (5)	1,680.00	
Per Diem (2 Days)	350.00	
Pension & Welfare	200.00	
		6,230.00
Group Singers (4)	624.00	
Rehearsal	144.00	
Pension & Welfare	39.40	
Social Security	28.00	
Overdubbed (One Time)	835.40	
		1,670.80
		<u>\$ 15,960.39</u>
	TOTAL	

750 - INST }
500 - VOCAL } 60
1250

500 - INST. }
250 - VOCAL } 30
750

2000

AC
8 HOURS - RECORD
3 HOURS - REHEARSAL
3 HOURS - MIX
2 HOURS MASTER
16 HOURS

1590 2394.45
18354.45

[Handwritten signature]

125
16
750
125
875