

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
EARL GLASS

April 16, 1986

at

Leo Burnett, Inc.

Chicago, Illinois

By Scott Ellsworth

Abstracted by Vanessa Broussard

For the Marlboro Oral History Project
INTERVIEW #8

Archives Center
National Museum of American History
Smithsonian Institution

TAPE ABSTRACT AND INDEX

EARL GLASS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Glass has been in the advertising business for twenty-two years. At the time of the interview Glass was an art director primarily responsible for promotional advertisements.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The interview focuses on promotional advertisements created for the Marlboro account. Glass explains how ideas are conceived for promotions, how often these advertisements appear in magazines and consumer response to advertisements. Major topics include: authenticity and advertising, staff on Marlboro account, various promotional advertisements and the merchandise offered in these ads, warning labels, locations for advertisements, and photography.

The interview was conducted in Mr. Glass' office at Leo Burnett Advertising Agency in Chicago, Illinois.

GLASS ABSTRACT

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Abstract of interview with Earl Glass, April 16, 1986,
Leo Burnett Advertising Agency, Chicago, Illinois
Interviewer: Scott Ellsworth

Tape 1, Side 1

BACKGROUND

- :10 Earl Glass has been with the Leo Burnett Advertising Agency for nine years, mostly on the Marlboro account.
- :20 Glass previously worked for R. R. Donnelley & Sons, a printing company. Prior to this he worked for Needham, Harper & Steers, now Needham, Harper Worldwide.
- Glass was born in Chicago and has lived there all his life.
- :45 He is currently an art director at Leo Burnett. He was promoted to this position three years ago. Glass has been in the advertising business for twenty-two years.

HIERARCHY OF STAFF ON MALBORO ACCOUNT

- 1:10 At the top is Ken Krom who is the creative director. Under him is Les Bagdesarian, the associate creative director. The staff consists of writers, senior art directors, art director supervisors, art directors, and assistant art directors.
- 1:55 Normally the people who are hired for Marlboro account have experience; it is not a place where one learns the craft.

PROMOTIONAL ADVERTISEMENTS

- 2:45 Glass is mainly responsible for promotional ads for the Marlboro account.
- 3:00 Promotions are done at least twice a year and occasionally four times a year.
- There are two types of promotions. Brand promotions are called "Red Roof" because they picture the Marlboro red roof symbol on the advertisement.

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Image promotions are tied directly to the cowboy images.

CHILI PROMOTION (#4367)

6:20

A cookbook featuring chili recipes was offered on the carton of Marlboro cigarettes. They included with the cookbook a cook pot and ladle.

This project took Glass nine months to complete. It involved trying to find someone to make the pots for the advertisement. The pot and ladle were then offered for \$32.00 a set. The purpose of a promotional advertisement is not to make money. It is intended to visually interrupt the Marlboro campaign and offer customers a chance to own a piece of "Marlboro Country."

"CHUCK WAGON COOKING FOR MARLBORO"

16:55

This promotion featured different recipes from chuck wagon cooks. Two chuck wagon cooks from Texas were used as models.

Included in the center of the cookbook was a history of the chuck wagon.

The cookbook was given away with a carton of cigarettes.

"HOT FOOT" (ad #5263)

19:20

The idea for this promotional item was the result of public interest. A number of customers wrote in to ask about acquiring a jacket worn by one of the cowboys in an advertisement.

The Marlboro account people decided to recreate the jacket to sell to the public as a promotion item. The jacket was given the name "The Line Rider Jacket" from Marlboro.

"POKER OF THE OLD WEST" (promotion)

21:30

Two decks of playing cards were offered in cartons of Marlboro cigarettes with a brochure concerning cowboys and playing cards.

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The card design was found by a researcher in a playing card museum in Cincinnati. The cards dated from 1890, and were named "The Texan."

"WINTER COUNTRY STORE" (ad #5221, promotion)

25:35

The biggest promotion the Marlboro account does is the country store. It is done every three to four years.

"Winter Country Store" is the last country store advertisement that was done. It was a seven-page unit in magazines.

Some of the items included in the promotion were designed for the Marlboro account, and some were brought from suppliers.

Tape 1, Side 2

WARNING LABEL

1:05

The new law requires that the warning label be on each spread, even if there are no cigarettes pictured in the advertisement.

"WILD WEST COLLECTION" (promotion)

1:20

The "Wild West Collection" is the promotion coming up in the fall of 1986.

It was born out of a desire to make the promotional items more contemporary. The collection includes such items as hats, boots, dusters, eight-sided dice, shirts, bed rolls, spurs, beer mug and pitcher.

7:25

The Marlboro account people usually present about one hundred items to the client. The client will then choose about fifty, and then the advertising agency will see how many they can manufacture.

10:30

Cowboys are never used as models to sell products in promotional advertisements. They are always presented as working cowboys.

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"COUNTRY STORE" (ad #5221)

12:30 In the ad, Darrell Winfield lit a cigarette, but there is no smoke. Glass says the reason for this is because the smoke would look phony.

THE IDEA OF AUTHENTICITY

17:30 The Marlboro account group took the cowboy and the outdoors as an image for its products, and within the bounds of good taste tried to be as authentic as possible.

The Marlboro account group does research for its advertisements, and has used historical pictures in background research.

"RODEO RANGE" (ad #5607)

20:00 This advertisement is a recreation of cowboy ropings. At these events, the cowboys match their roping skills against each other.

Glass says that the basis of this advertisement is that cowboys do this today and they did it historically.

25:45 DISCUSSION OF IMPACT OF MARLBORO COUNTRY ON MEDIA

The Marlboro account group wants the public to believe that everything in its advertisements is authentic. Marlboro Country was created on what went on in the past.

27:00 "ROCKY MOUNTAIN GAZE" (ad #5848)

This advertisement was shot in Colorado.

Tape 2, Side 1

PHOTOGRAPHS THAT DON'T WORK

1:55 The Marlboro account group looks at photographs that didn't work to learn from them.

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An example of a photograph that did not work was the picture of cowboy ducking under the branch of a tree.

WARNING LABELS

4:00 The warning label is always on the bottom of the advertisements because Marlboro account people want to keep labels below and away from the packs of cigarettes.

4:55 "BIG VALLEY HERD" (ad #6067A)

The warning box is under the packs of cigarettes. Glass argues this was done because they had nowhere else to put it without destroying the advertisement.

"ROCKY MOUNTAIN GAZE" (ad # 848)

5:20 There was very little retouching done on this advertisement.

The Marlboro account group took the road and the fence out of the photograph because the period that they wanted to depict did not have these things.

LOCATIONS FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

8:55 The photographers are the ones who look for good locations. The photographer brings back a polaroid of the location for the art director.

Occasionally, cowboys will call the Marlboro account group if there is something going on at a particular ranch.

"MONUMENT VALLEY" (ad #5847)

10:00 A film crew was at a Navajo reservation near Aspen working on a shot. Someone informed them that it was snowing in Monument Valley, which it rarely does. The whole operation then went over to Monument Valley to do a snow scene.

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15:10 Glass suggests that Jim Braddy has probably contributed more, photographically, to the Marlboro account group than anyone else.

IDEAS FOR NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

16:10 Both the art director and the photographer will make a list of ideas they would like to use for an advertisement. The two will then merge their lists and come up with fifteen to twenty ideas.

The art director will then come up with stock and a location.

"SLICKER ROPER" (ad #5672)

18:25 Glass uses this as an example of a photograph that just happened.

It was a stormy day and it was raining behind the cowboys. Glass decided to run horses with cowboys as if they were chasing something.

19:45 The Marlboro account people have the cowboy smoke when it is natural for him to take a smoke break.

"RICH TYPE ROPER"

20:50 The cowboy in this advertisement is coming overhead chasing a steer with a cigarette in his mouth. When cowboys rope they don't have to think about it.

Glass says that the Marlboro account group does not force cigarettes into its advertisements.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PHOTOGRAPHS

22:50 The Marlboro account group tries to balance the number of portraits, vistas and action shots that it does.

Portrait shots are a natural place to have the cowboy light up a cigarette or take a smoke break.

Glass says that group shots are the hardest ones to do.

Sometimes the Marlboro account will have pictures for a year or two before it decides to use them.

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"BLACKIE"

26:10

This is a single page ad where the account group decided to use black horses.

Dean Myers is the cowboy in this advertisement. Glass says that black horses are beautiful animals but they don't use them that much because they are hard to spot.

MARLBORO ACCOUNT

27:05

Glass says that there is no account like the Marlboro account. Philip Morris encourages them to do their best and will give money to support their ideas. He believes that for these reasons they are number one.

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