

**100 Stories from the Golden Age of Advertising.
Doyle Dane Bernbach in the 1960s.**



As told by the Art Directors and Copywriters who were there.

196Bs

Stories By:

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Introduction

Doyle Dane Bernbach was founded on June 1st, 1949 by Ned Doyle, Mac Dane and Bill Bernbach. Bill's vision of matching an art director with a copywriter changed advertising history. That simple combination helped create advertising that shook the ad community and changed consumers' taste forever.

From 1949 to 1959 DDB's award winning ads and creative people [many of whom are in The Advertising Hall of Fame] set the stage for the creative revolution in the 1960s.

The following 100 stories were written by art directors and copywriters who worked and created at DDB in the 1960s, standing on the shoulders of the art directors and copywriters who came before us.



Don't take risks! For the first time there's a safe, fast way to remove ear wax at home
Wax, packed solid and deep in your ear canal can deaden sound just like a wad of cotton. And doctors will tell you, if this wax is not removed it can be a breeding ground for infectious germs, a source of constant danger to your ears. Now for the first time, you can get rid of this hidden ear wax painlessly. You can do it at home without using dangerous, pointed objects that can puncture your ear drums. Without costly, painful removal by surgical instruments. Now for the first time, in a new exclusive preparation called Kerid Drops, you yourself can use the same hospital-tested formula doctors are finding so safe, so easy and so effective for removing excessive or impacted ear wax.

In minutes, Kerid loosens and removes the hardened wax plug. In minutes, your ears are unblocked, clear again! Kerid—and only Kerid—is specially formulated to do this. And Kerid is unconditionally guaranteed to remove ear wax—or your money back. Once you try Kerid, once you discover the wonderful, fast relief it brings to ears packed with wax—you'll always use Kerid. (And you'll reveal the good word! So we make this limited introductory offer: bring this ad to your druggist—and he will allow you 20¢ off on the regular size of Kerid Drops. Do it today! Use Kerid tonight. Get that uncomfortable, dangerous wax plug out of your ears safely, in a matter of minutes.

kerid

Pushing a visual to its graphic brink

When I was a rookie art director at Doyle Dane Bernbach in 1959, my first assignment was to create a campaign for a new product, Kerid eardrops.

Burrowing through Kerid's research, I confirmed that most people clean their ears by poking around with pencils and bobby pins. I pushed that finding to its graphic brink by showing a colossal close-up of an ear sprouting a pencil, a paper clip, and assorted hardware.

The ad screamed: Don't risk a punctured eardrum by poking and stabbing and tinkering with your ears. Use Kerid eardrops. Outraged veteran creative people at DDB formed a posse and galloped up to Bill Bernbach's office to protest my "disgusting" campaign. Bernbach patted them on the head and herded them out the door.

(In those days, the buzzword was "tasteful." Taste, schmaste, my ass! There is imagery that stocks people for shock's sake and imagery that attracts and holds attention because of a meaningful and memorable message!)

I thought of myself as a modern-day Hieronymus Bosch, vulgar at times, but conceptually and viscerally dead-on.

My boss and I sold the campaign, Kerid sold a lot of eardrops, and a lot of people quit sticking bobby pins in the wrong place.



George Lois
DDB Art Director
1958 / 1959



Quick Cuts

I'm about 2 months into my assistant ad gig for Bill Taubin when Bill Bernbach pops his head in my office. to compliment me on a trade ad I did for Sylvania Flashbulbs. Needless to say I was elated and very impressed how much he cared about all the work coming out of DDB.

Sal Lombardo and I volunteered for every bullpen all-nighter we could get our Exacto knives on. Cutting up type to eliminate rivers in body copy at 4 am was a lot of fun. Hey, when you were making \$75 a week, double overtime really helped. Thanks Ellie.

Alan Small, Rich Ferrante, myself and a few other lunies would go to the garment district to buy yards of fabric to have made into wide ties. I think we supplied half the ad biz with our "graphic" neckware.

David Reider twistng Bill Taubin's arm to let me do my first consumer campaign (with Peggy Courtney) for the French Tourist office.

A few weeks later I'm driving down the French coast with Dick Richards looking for a beach location. The ads ran in Life magazine. Thanks David, Peggy, Bill.

After work bull sessions in Bert Steinhauser's office. A bunch of us youngins with Bert holding court as only he could."

Allan Septoff
DDB Art Director

Yet another Helmut story

So Art Director Kathe Tanous (who later married Bob Levenson) and I were drafted to do an Impossible Deadline ad for Uniroyal. Direction to come from Helmut. We tore into his office. He wasn't there. After 2 agonizing hours with the clock ticking down, he STILL wasn't there. Then somebody told us that, more often than not, he was NEVER there during normal business hours.

The Impossible Deadline came and went. Then Helmut came and went. Without giving us our Direction. He returned well before dawn. He was unperturbed. He gave us Direction Plan A. We came up with 3 concepts in no time flat and brought them in to him. He took one look and asked why we had gone in such a stupid Direction? Direction Plan B was the way to solve this client's problem. Off we went. Back we came. Showed off Direction Plan B concepts. Helmut's thoughtful response: "Shitty Direction. What were you thinking?"

We slink out. We have thoughts of breakfast. Thoughts of mass suicide. Then we have a Fabulous Thought. Kathe redoes the original Direction Plan A tissues. We bring them in. Helmut smiles. Yes, he SMILES. "Finally!" he says.

Hal Silverman
DDB Copywriter



A Len Sirowitz and Bob Gage story

As an Assistant and then Junior Art Director, I worked on Sony under the wonderful supervision of Len Sirowitz, you know, Pee Wee TV, Wash n' Watch, Telefishin', etc. etc. How lucky can a kid from the Bronx be? Well, I was doing ads, pretty much introducing uses for the Sony Portable Videorecorder. A pretty new kind of product—being portable. One of my ads was "Sony on the Spot" with a Fireman holding the camera in his hand and recorder on his shoulder while riding at the back of a fire truck. By the way, this machine at the time weighed a ton—a huge camera connect by a cable to a 16" square box, 4" thick. It was portable though.

Anyway, and please forgive me, Hans Kracauer, Toni Pagano, or maybe another (please speak up) as I can't remember who the writer was on this new ad concept—aah, it was my idea anyway :) Just kidding — I think. In any event, the new ad visual was a guy pointing the portable video recorder camera over the top of an open transom above an office door or maybe a hotel room (It was just an idea at the time and a rough layout) and the headline was, in Sony type, "Witness for the prosecution". I guess the account group, maybe it was Chuck Lewin, wasn't going for it but, Len and Ron loved it, or liked it a lot, or let's put it this way, Len was willing to bring it up to Bob Gage and "Fight" for it. Thank you Len. Can't ask for anything better than that, right? Well Bob Gage said "It was in poor taste" and that was simply the end of that. See, It must have been my idea.

Rich Ferrante
DDB Art Director

My days at DDB

My days at DDB started in 1965,
The 1960s!! An exciting time in the adbiz thanks to Doyle Dane Bernbach.
In my time there I worked on International Silver (Insilco), Winchester, Uniroyal, Seagrams, Lane Furniture and Avis. Yeah Avis!...my Supervisor being Helmut Krone. He was the greatest and assigned me ads for Avis Leasing. He even got me a gig to do my very first TV spot for Lane. I worked on International Silver with Deanna Cohen Drew. We always refer to Helmut as "The Lord God Krone"! And to us he was! We had a song and the lyrics were 'There was a guy, always on his own and they went and named him Helmut Krone . Helmut, Helmut he is The Lord God Krone" etc. All those great ads on his wall! And he was a superb painter. I really enjoyed it when he showed me his work. My office was 2 doors away, me on one end, Krone on the other and Mel Rustom in the center office.

Deanna and I were working late one nite on an International Silver campaign. We heard a rustling sound in the corner of my office. Deanna said "Oh look, a cat" and I said that's not a cat! A rat as big as a small feline scooted out the door!! Aaaagh! I don't think we got much done after that!

We visited Helmut in the hospital when he had surgery. D says the LGK was in striped PJ's and happy to see us. When we were ready to leave he asked us to stay and opened the cabinet next to the bed and took out a bottle of Chivas & paper cups.

There will never be another like him, rare, incredibly talented, terrific!!!

In later years I freelanced at Backer Spielvogel who had taken over the space at 11 West when DDB moved to Madison Ave. Memories galore as I saw that 3 office corner area once again!

Burt Purnell
DDB Art Director



Bob looked me in the eye

A couple of months into my new job in Sales Promotion I was given the assignment of designing a brochure for Dreyfus & Co. I'm really sorry, but I forget who the writer was. The headline was, "Not luck".....on the cover and "But skill" on the inside. The illustration on the cover was a horseshoe and when you opened the piece we showed 3 tossed horseshoes ringing the post. The typeface I used was delicate Bodoni Book to be printed in red against the black photograph which was bleed. I knew that this was going to be a great piece for my portfolio & couldn't wait to see the proofs. To my dismay my delicate type had "bloomed" destroying the look I wanted. I decided to ask Bob Gage's advise as to what to do. When he looked at the printed piece, he said, "Looks great, Les". I explained how disappointed I was. Bob said, "Do you expect the engraver to do it over?". I said, "Welllll". To which Bob replied, "I can't ask him to do that". Then he looked at me right in the eye and said, "You will have to learn to temper justice with mercy."

Lester Feldman
DDB Art Director

A close call:

When we shot coffee commercials in SA we had to bring lots of equipment and crew since we were shooting in small villages or farms, far from civilization. On one occasion we paid to take over a small town where we knew that they used large hand looms to weave a fabric that everyone in the village wore, these fabrics were quite colorful and intricate in design.

We did notice that primarily older men, women and children occupied the town. When we asked where the young men were, we were told that they were cutting sugar cane.

So we pulled our truck and 5 cabs into the village's small square and unloaded all our video equipment, which was a lot of stuff. We then spent the day shooting the weavers working at their looms. Nearing the end of the shoot the cameraman and I hopped in a cab and went to a high vantage point to see if we would like to get a master shot of the town. From our spot we could not get a view of the town square so we decided against doing the shot.

Imagine our surprise when we returned to the square to discover that it was completely empty, no equipment, no truck, no crew, nothing. We were only gone 5 minutes that was a lot of stuff to move in such a short amount of time. Then a cab backed into the square from a side street on the left and the copywriter emerged pointing to the right and shouting for us to leave now. When we looked to where she was pointing, we saw a bus from which an angry group of very small men had emerged brandishing machetes, as they approached us. we hopped in the cab and sped off.

Apparently they were not happy about us shooting film of their town and its people and wanted us to turn over the camera and its contents. Also they had ordered everyone to leave the square before we got back.

John Caggiano
DDB Art Director

Maxwell Dane story



Did you go to the, I think it was, 50th anniversary DDB celebration at the Museum of Modern Art?

It was like going to a DDB Christmas Party again. There were so many, many of us all dressed to the nines with open bars all together again in the middle of a blizzard that raged out on the streets. We were all laughing and having fun just like the good old days. It was like a dream come true.

But, something was nagingly obvious. There was work up on the walls of the museum, and, clearly, the old work was head and shoulders above the new.

At some point, everyone was called down to hear speeches in a huge open august area of the museum. One after another, important executives were announced and spoke glowingly about the great accomplishments of the agency and it's increased potential to earn even more profits.

Finally, they announced the last speaker, a very special one, Maxwell Dane! OH MY GOSH, there he was!!!! How wonderful to see him! One of the giant heroes of my life, the kind they don't make anymore, still walked among us. It was a miracle.

Here's what he had to say:

He started with words to the effect that he was glad the agency was still going.

And then, these are almost his exact words, he said, "Back then, Ned and Bill and I used to go to lunch at the Algonquin, because it was close by just around the corner. once or twice a year, usually around the holidays, to informally discuss agency issues. How we thought things were going. What things we thought might need to be done or changed. Inevitably, we'd finally end up talking about what we were the most proud of about the agency and what we had accomplished.

Here's what we were most proud of. What we were the most proud of was that we had built a company where people could get good jobs so that they could live happy and fulfilling lives. People could get started in life. Get married. Buy a home. Have families and send their children to college. That's what we were the most proud of.

Thank you for allowing me to speak."

The whole Museum of Modern Art fell absolutely silent. You could have heard a pin drop. It would have sounded like thunder.

John Eding
DDB Art Director

Take a message

I began as secretary to Dave Reider, Bob Levenson, Dan Bingham, Jack Dillon, Marcia Bell, Evan Stark and Peter Tannen. Dave Reider and Bill Taubin had just landed a Teflon Account. Dave asked Jackie End to cook fried eggs over the weekend without butter so she could learn about the account. She came in all enthusiastic on Monday morning and gave me a long complicated and detailed message about her first encounter with Teflon. I dutifully listened and wrote this message for Dave "Dave, Jackie End did it twice this weekend. With a spatula. It was a success." Dave came back from his meeting, read the message and told me to "Call Miss End and tell her I am a copywriter, not a priest."

Jane Talcott
DDB Copywriter



The Great Wall

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of Doyle Dane is the one liners people would throw around back then.

"DDB was a great place to work, if your parents could afford to send you there."

"You could get dirty just by walking down the halls."

It's true the interior decorating may not have been up to Madison Avenue standards, and the salaries were a little anemic, so why did everyone and his brother (or sister) lie, cheat, steal and kill just to get in the place?

I was no exception.

I jumped at the chance to work in the bullpen at DDB.

When I told the agency I was working for I would be leaving, they offered me a promotion and a nice pay raise. I said, "Nothing doing". Without a second thought, I was on my way to the promise land, DDB!

A few of us from the bullpen would occasionally venture to the "great wall" upstairs where the suits lurked and the latest ads from the agency were tacked up on the hallway wall for all to marvel upon.

Not even the "great wall" could satisfy our hunger for creative inspiration. We patrolled the hallways looking for ads upon any wall.

We came across a lone ad hanging in the middle of one office wall, I think it was Roy Grace's, and he was sitting there. He startled us by being there (imagine, sitting in his own office), but I asked him if we could come in and look at his wall.

He must have thought we were addled, but he agreed and we entered the inner sanctum.

He had just finished an ad for the American Cancer Society, encouraging people to get a screening.

It was the one lone ad hanging on his wall. I almost felt sorry for him. Most people had at least 6-8 ads on their wall. Poor bastard. One lousy ad.

The headline was only about 10 point dead center in a full page. One line, all by itself with tons of white space all around.

It almost looked like a blank page. The body copy and logo rested at the bottom of the page.

The headline read, "What makes you think you don't have cancer?"

I didn't feel sorry for him anymore.

Lou Gehrig said he was "the luckiest man on the face of the earth". He was wrong.

I was.

I was lucky enough to be at the right place at the right time. Doyle, Dane & Bernbach..

Joe Iozzi
DDB Art Director



You don't have to be Jewish to love this story

American Export Lines was launching two new cruise ships and they wanted to announce it to the trade.

I had an idea for the visual; it was a photograph of the company's office door with the name American Export Lines embossed on it.

On the knob I hung a hand written sign that said, CLOSED FOR LAUNCH.

I showed it to Leon Meadows who loved it so much he said I should show it to Bill Bernbach, who was involved with the account at the time.

Big mistake.

Bill hated it.

And to make matters worse, he even seemed upset.

While walking me to the door he said, rather sternly,

"Charlie, "we don't do puns here at DDB".

As I slunk by Nancy's desk, I overheard Bill say to her, "That Charlie, he's a real Mensch". A Mensch? What's that mean?

As soon as I got downstairs I went right to Leon's office and told him that not only did Benbach not like the ad, but he had also called me a Mensch?

Leon rocked back in his chair like he was shot.

He grimaced and covered his face with both hands. Then he just started shaking his head. "That's terrible", really terrible". "You're finished here".

"You'd better start looking for a new job".

Oh no, I just took out a mortgage on a new home.

For a couple of days I was in shock, but then, resigned to facing the problem

I called a couple of headhunters. Luckily one had actually just gotten a call from Y&R.

They were looking for a young DDB team.

I called Alan Mond, a writer I liked working with, who was also a good friend, and asked him if he'd be interested.

His first response was "Why in the world would you want to leave DDB?"

I told him the awful "Mensch" story.

There was a pause...then I heard him scream, "A Mensch". "A Mensch". "A Mensch".

Then I heard a clunk and the phone went dead.

When Alan burst into my office he was laughing so hysterically it was frightening.

When he finally calmed down he was out of breath.

"Charlie, he whispered, "I got news for you, a Mensch is a good thing. A very good thing. In fact it's the ultimate Jewish compliment". "It means you're a real good guy".

Well, needless to say, I was relieved.

I felt really good that Bill Bernbach considered me to be a "Mensch".

However, when I thought about the prank that Leon had played on me, and how I went overboard for it, I also felt like a "Schmuck".

*Charlie Piccirillo
DDB Art Director*

What DDB really meant to me

To me, DDB was more than the world's most creative ad agency; it was an agency with a heart. Beyond the brilliance and panache that we brought to our great product accounts, there was the creative dynamics we brought to vital public service campaigns.



Who of us can forget the black page in Life Magazine with the headline: "This is what yellow daisies on a green field against a blue sky look like to many Americans. You have only one pair of eyes. Have them examined every year or two. The Better Vision Institute." Kudos to Len Sirowitz and Leon Meadows.

Or Len's breathtaking, "Dr. Spock is worried" ad for Sane Nuclear Policy.

Or the alphabet in lower case from a to z, surrounded by a lot of white space, with Monte Gertler's poetic headline: "At your public library, they have these 26 little marks arranged in ways that can make you giggle, ponder, wonder, amaze, and understand."

And let's not forget a picture of a rat with a dotted line around it and Chuck Kollewe's line: "Cut this out and put it in bed next to your child."

Bill, himself, wrote the line (and I paraphrase): "We now have enough atomic bombs to kill every Russian 600 times. The Russians have enough atomic bombs to kill every American 250 times. We're ahead, aren't we?"

That kind of creativity is what truly stirred my Aquarian spirit, and fortunately, one day I got to get my place in that sun. It was after I returned from a trip through the state of Arizona for a NY Times Sunday Supplement issue on the state, sponsored by American Airlines.

It was 1967, a few years after the Glen Canyon Dam was built against the outcry of conservation groups. True, while the dam did flood half of the 400 foot canyon walls, it created Lake Powell, a spectacular body of water that created public access to extraordinary wonders that were previously inaccessible to any but the hardest explorers to brave the roaring rapids of the Colorado River.

Copywriter Steve August, photographer Bob Monroe, and I loved it and created a beautiful spread on Lake Powell for the NY Times supplement.

However, I also emphasized with the conservation groups, and a few years later, I discovered that the Sierra Club had an office a few doors east from us on the 43rd street side of 11 West 42nd St.

In mid-March, 1970, I went up there, introduced myself, and asked if I could offer my pro bono creative services. The timing was perfect as their sister organization, Friends of the Earth, was staging an "Environmental Teach-In" on April 22nd, and needed a poster to disseminate to college campuses and environmental groups all across the U.S.A.

As I worked on the concept, I spotted an ad that Lee Epstein and Hal Silverman did for Olin. The headline read, "An open letter to the people of a dying planet." It was part of a brilliant campaign that included the dynamic ad with a photo of a Vietnamese girl drinking water out of her hands. "In Vietnam, the water will kill her faster than the Vietcong."

The Open Letter ad was a little too strong for Olin to run as it might set them up for scrutiny. But it wasn't too strong for Friends of the Earth. They loved the concept.

So Lee Epstein put me together with writer Jim Lawson, and together we crafted the copy, which is as relevant, if not more so, today.

The poster got folded to leaflet size, and distributed to college campuses all across the country, helping to make the Environmental Teach-In successful.

And helped make that day, April 22, 1970 go down in history as the first Earth Day.

Thanks Lee, Hal, Jim, and DDB. We helped make it happen.

Vic Zurbel
DDB Art Director

An open letter to the people of a dying planet.

For years, your experts have pleaded with you to conserve your resources. Ecologists have warned that your fumes and bulldozers and wastes and chemicals have already tipped the balance of nature against you.

And still, the vast majority of you can't, or won't comprehend. Don't you realize that most of your food is hazardous to your health? That you eat the pesticides they spray on your crops, you eat the drugs they feed your cattle, you eat the chemicals they use to color, preserve and flavor your food?

Don't you realize that most "disposables," such as plastic containers, aluminum cans and wax cartons, are as dangerous as auto exhaust? (A city incinerator changes them into poisonous smoke.)

Don't you realize that an entire ocean can be polluted? (Navigators include great seas of sewage in their charts.)

That nature actually needs the millions of animals you slaughter each year for clothing? (Remember, your seashell coat was once a seal.)

That rampant and unlimited consumption eventually consumes you?

On April 22nd, thousands of students will be holding an Environmental Teach-In at their schools and colleges.

The purpose is to discuss the ecological facts of death. And discuss alternatives.

Whether you're a student or not, you can still commemorate this day by taking a look at what you're doing to destroy yourself. At what you wear, what you eat, and what you waste.

Only your own living and buying habits will reclaim this planet.

Only your letters and votes will force politicians to place life over lobbies.

Only your buying power will convince industry that a dead planet is bad for business.

Set aside April 22nd as the day you start to save yourself.

There may be no time but the present.

Friends of the Earth
30 East 42nd Street, NY, NY 10017

Grasshoppers



We were doing a commercial for Keds Grasshoppers, a casual shoe manufactured by Uniroyal. To give the product some sophistication, we decided to do 2 spots, one in French and another in Italian, with English subtitles.

The shoot was to be on the French Riviera. Our idea was to have a suave Italian seated in front of an Italian villa surrounded by beautiful women and a Frenchman on a yacht with Nice in the background.

All the dialogue would be in Italian and French respectively with English subtitles. The only English the actors had to speak was the product name, Keds Grasshoppers.

Well the yacht and the villa were secured, and the location was spectacular, it was high on a hill overlooking the sea.

We were finally ready to shoot and our first location was the villa where the opening line was, in Italian, "all the women love" Keds Grasshoppers. *Tutte le donne amano etc.*

What our actor said was *Tutte le donne amano "Kens Grand snappers"* and this mispronunciation went on for the rest of the shoot. So we figured to keep shooting, and after we got all the shots, we would sit with him and the soundman and phonetically try to get him to say keds grasshoppers.

However we then began to do some close ups and different angles etc. after about an hour of shooting he asked if he was finished and he would like to leave.

We informed him that he was hired for the day and could leave when we said he could, he then proceeded to tell us how when he works with Fellini he's finished in one hour. it was difficult to keep from throwing this clown off the mountain. Needless to say if it weren't that we were on the Riviera, it would have been an awful shoot.

Ciao bella.

John Caggiano
DDB Art Director

Working for Helmut, I learned about "German gestalt"

Before joining DDB I attended an advertising class at Pratt Institute, which was taught by DDB senior writers and Art Directors each week. This week the assignment was to create an ad or ads for "The Better Vision Institute". The assignments were always from the DDB client list. At the time the writer on the account was Leon Meadow and AD Len Serowitz. I came up with two ideas that week. Believe that week instructors were Len and Bob Levenson. If not Len then the AD was Sid Myers.

We were asked to pin our ads up in front of class. Bob Kuperman was also in the class.

First Len said: "Who did this concept?" pointing to one of mine. He said: "That basic concept will be running in Life magazine next week". The concept was a black page with the headline: "This is what a field of daisies in a valley, looks like to a blind person. Have your eyes checked." By the way, Kuperman came up with that same visual idea, a black page.

My second concept was a white page with a tiny block of copy in the center of the page, say 4 point type that read: (Using a larger headline below:) "If you can't read the small copy block, you should have your eyes checked". No one else in the class did that idea. Believe Levenson said: that concept will be running in Life magazine in about 2 weeks. That of course served my entree into DDB. I was told to see "Ben Spiegel". Ben said to me: "So you're that kid they told me about". I was told in two weeks I would be assistant to Helmut Krone. I then went on vacation

Vinny De Luca
DDB Art Director



Fan Dance

One of the great things about working in advertising, especially at the ground zero of advertising at DDB, was that it prepared you for anything. PANIC was not an option. You had to learn to think on your feet. How to improvise. No matter how dire the situation or impossible you had to figure out how to turn the tables and come up with success.

One time, Iva Silver and I had to present a storyboard to Roy shortly after he had been made creative head. Neither of us had ever presented to Roy let alone knew him very well.

One of the iron clad rules of presentation is always visit the bathroom before a presentation whether you need to or not. So, I did. And my fly broke. To my horror, my zipper jumped the track!! There was no way I could get it to work and close the barn door.

Holy #\$%^&^%\$%^&*(what do I do now!!!!!! Roy is waiting for Iva and me in his office RIGHT NOW.

Calmly, I took the storyboards and walked to Roy's office holding the boards in front of me rather than at my side. I met Iva and we walked into Roy's office. He motioned for me to sit down on the couch in front of him.

Instead of laying the boards on the low table in front of him, I held them up on my knees. When I finished with one, I slid it around behind the next one. It took a while, but things, thankfully, went well. We all stood up. Iva said she wanted the boards, but I said, no, let me carry them to your office for you. In Iva's office, I picked up my storyboard pad before I handed her the storyboards.

A couple of years later, after I had gotten to know him, I was riding with Jane Talcott and Roy to go to a VW test drive way out on Long Island. We got to talking about tense moments in advertising and how we got out of them.

We all laughrd about this one. Roy couldn't believe I'd pulled it off. Frankly, neither could I.

And I still can't

*John Eding
DDB Art Director*



Ellie and the bullpen

The year was 1963, and up to that point in my life I was trying to make it as an illustrator in New York City. As a young guy with no professional art experience it was tough going, to say the least.

I worked in art studios without much success doing illustrations. I did do a lot of mechanical work for ads and brochure's in the studios to gain valuable experience which would become my way into the world of advertising which I knew nothing about.

One day I decided to go to the New York State Unemployment Service which was free at that time. I explained my desire to illustrate and would even be willing to draw storyboards for art directors who couldn't draw. Then on November 22, I got a call from the New York State Unemployment Service and they sent me to DDB for an interview. I had no idea who or what DDB did at that time. My career and dream was about to change.

I was interviewed by one of the sweetest people I could hope to meet. Her name was Eleanor Gentile! Eleanor was the bullpen manager and ran the bullpen where future great art directors were in training. Eleanor needed an assistant to help her with the training. Eleanor hired me right on the spot, it was one of the happiest and saddest days of my life. It was the day John F. Kennedy was shot. A day I would never forget.

After meeting Eleanor there was no way I was going to turn down this job. Probably it helped that I was a Italian! Eleanor needed someone with good mechanical experience to give out assignments to those who worked in the bullpen. I also had to oversee the work that was done and to make sure the jobs were done on time and met with professional standards. The basic learning curve for future assistant art directors was to develop good mechanical skills and know how to place type and photography on a page in good design taste. Creative directors and art directors would bring in very rough tissue layouts and they depended on the bullpen people to make sure their work looked good and professional before it went into print. And part of my job was to make sure that happened.

Everyone who became an assistant art director had to develop there skills in the bullpen before they could move on. I'm sure I drove everyone crazy when it came to mechanicals because I could spot something off a 30 second of an inch. I was hard on myself with my own work and I carried that over in helping others to develop that same attitude. Hopefully it paid off. You could say I was the Helmut Krone of mechanicals. Eleanor deserves kudos for assistant artdirectors who came out of her bullpen with DDB great high standards that was hard to beat. Here's a few - Paul Jervis, Steve Graff, Sal Lombardo, Frank Gentile, Dave Clark, Ed Griles, Paul Gulner, Alan Honig, Barry Marcus, Jack Mariucci, Alan Septoff, Art Taylor, Charlie Gennarelli, Doug Costanza, Alan Frank, Jim Brancalone, Richie DePascal.

I am honored to have worked for Eleanor and to have a part of this great talent of gifted art directors. As for me it's a whole other story for another time. My break did come...no I never did get to do storyboards, but I did get promoted to be Roy Grace's assistant (He was my favorite Creative Director) he taught me a lot, and eventually I became a junior art director under Lester Feldman. Thanks Ellie! Thanks Roy! "Happy Trails" and may the good Lord take a like'n ta yah

Art Manno
DDB Art Director



I remember Roy

I asked Roy if he would speak to our newly formed L.A. Creative Club.
He gladly accepted the invitation. And promptly let me know he had two reels of different lengths.
I suggested the shorter reel to allow more time for a Q&A period.
Roy quickly replied:
"Bob, my short reel is one hour long."

A month later, an overflow crowd of creatives, account, and leaders of the L.A. ad community all showed up at Perino's to meet and hear Roy.

That evening, as the club's president, I proudly introduced him.
Proud to know he had made creative ad history, and to know we were friends.

After his classic reel, it came time for the Q&A.
Standing side to side, I said:
"Roy, I've collected index cards with questions in a complete random order.
I've shuffled them up and here's the first:
..... " How much do you make a year? "

Roy stared slowly over at me, and replied even more slowly:
"More than you'll ever make in 3 lifetimes."

Because of Roy, the entire meeting-agenda was a huge success.
In closing, as a fledging new club, we didn't have anything fancy for him
as our parting gesture.

Instead, I unveiled a surprise.
The original Volkswagen TV boards for "Funeral".
Everything was still intact with his original drawings and John Noble's
typed copy on the white stickers.

I was returning a historic piece to a rightful owner.

For once, Roy was speechless. Stunned and pleased.
He asked how I happened to have it for over 10 years.

I said: "Roy, you'll never know in 3 lifetimes."

*Bob Matsumoto
DDB Art Director*



God loved the concept:

It's 1969. I'm a newly hired, very tired, over-worked assistant; assisting two brilliant young art Directors who keep me hopping. In spite of the painful learning curve, I'm thinking DDB is where I need to be. But I'm also in the Army Reserves. Viet Nam is spiraling out of control and my reserve unit may soon be in harm's way. Ironically, I come into possession of a very provocative 18X24 size anti-war poster in the form of a petition; with a big, bold, two word headline that said it all: FUCK WAR! The "body copy" (as such) would be a laundry list of anti-war signatures. Once it was filled with signatures, the petition would be sent to the White House. Fired up, I signed up, hoping to see every space filled before I left for my annual two weeks of active duty. But as I left for summer camp, my signature was still the only one on the petition. On my return, I was surprised to find my roommate unusually energized and pointing to the petition that was now crammed full of signatures. However, the real shocker was the signature right under mine; which belonged to none other than... Bill Bernbach! A Divine Intervention? Well, when an entity that powerful causes 98 more signatures to miraculously appear . . . ya' gotta believe! Now it was perfectly clear... Doyle Dane Bernbach was where I had to be!

(It had me 15 years.)

Charlie Rice
DDB Art Director

Bill smiled

Bill Bernbach, Mac Dane, Judy Protos, Sheldon Harris (the account guy) and I were at Ohrbach's presenting a new campaign to a conference room full of Ohrbach's clients. A young man sitting across the room, perhaps looking to score some points, offered that classic line that every art director waits to hear, "Can you make the logo bigger?" Bill smiled at him and whispered warmly, "Charles, I guarantee the logo will look bigger when you sit closer."

Gary Geyer
DDB Art Director

Jack Dillon

When my boss, Jack Dillon, passed away, there was a memorial service for him at a church someplace in the wilds of Connecticut.

Convinced that, with my sense of direction, I would become hopelessly lost in the suburbs, I left really early and, when I pulled up to the church, there was only one car waiting in the parking lot.

I saw that it was Helmut, who waved me over. I got in the passenger seat and said: "How're you doing, Helmut?"

He looked at me for quite a while and, without breaking a smile, said "Better than Jack."

Pete Tannen
DDB Copywriter



Remembering one of the greats – Ron Rosenfeld

As I look back, I can recall a multitude of events and one on-going debate with Ron. A debate that spanned most of the 30 years we worked together at DDB and later in our own business.

It began in 1965 when Ron and I introduced Sony to the American marketplace with a humorous campaign. One of those ads showed a picture of a chubby Mr. Everyman, sitting on a wooden kitchen chair, joyously smoking his stogie and on his knee was, what was then, the smallest television set you had ever seen in your life. The headline, in bold type across the top said: "PEE WEE TEE VEE". Now, Ron being the writer, wanted it to say: "PEE WEE KNEE TEE VEE". I, being the art director, wanted it to be "PEE WEE TEE VEE" because, I said, the extra word would diminish the size of the type, therefore, the impact of the headline. Now, since I was the art director, it was also my job to set the type. That's probably the only reason I got my way and Ron would never let me hear the end of it.

For more than a quarter of a century, whenever Ron and I got into a heated difference of opinion as to who had the better way to solve a creative problem, he would often break the tension with an all-knowing "PEE WEE KNEE TEE VEE", which immediately prompted a defensive "PEE WEE TEE VEE" from me. It went back and forth, and then we would laugh. In retrospect I wish with all my heart, we could have settled all of our differences in such a kindly manner.

There is one more memory that I would like to share with you because it means so much to me.

I remember when we opened for business in a two room suite in the Warwick Hotel. Due to our rapid growth in the first six months, space became a rare commodity. As we brought in new employees, our own workspace kept getting smaller and smaller as Ron and I were being pushed further and further into the corner. To make matters worse, the hotel refused to take out their furniture while we added drawing tables and desks and typewriters and a copy machine for our newly arrived people. We were forced to store the hotel's furniture from the first room in the second room of the suite. That left Ron and me no choice but to put two chairs, facing each other, into the bathtub. It was there – in the bathtub – with our knees inches apart – looking into each others eyes – that we turned out some damn good advertising.

*Len Sirowitz
DDB Art Director*

Goodbye Mr. Bernbach

I'm pleased you went to the trouble to ask me for a DDB story. The only one I can't forget is not pleasant and remains with me to this day. I had been on the American Airlines and Volkswagen accounts for a couple of years with Hal Silverman and then Charlie Ewell. During those years of watching many different television directors shoot our work I became very interested in their craft and had thoughts of maybe trying it for myself. After deciding I would give it a shot, I went to Bill Bernbach's office to say goodbye. Before I had a chance to say anything he said "I heard you were leaving" and slammed his door inches from my face. I was really stunned for more than a few seconds. After that I proceeded to Bob Gage's office to also say goodbye. Bob could not have been more encouraging to me and said "If this doesn't work out for you please let me be the first one you call and we'll get you back here". I guess this turns out to be more of a Bob Gage story for me, but I always think of him as one of the great gentlemen of the advertising industry.

*George Gomes
DDB Art Director*

Another memory from Len Sirowitz



A Bill Bernbach story.

Just after DDB was awarded the Mobil account, and I, along with Bob Levenson were assigned to it, the agency was invited to attend its first orientation meeting in Mobil's executive boardroom. The purpose was for Bill Bernbach and his team to be brought up to date on Mobil's new corporate identity program, with its main focus on promoting their 100th anniversary.

We were surrounded by Mobil's top brass, including Raleigh Warner, their CEO. One of their executives took us through a slide presentation of their new logo design of "M-O-B-I-L" with a big red "O" that represented a wheel and meant (to them, I guess) "America on the Move!". We were told how it will change the face of every Mobil gas station in the world, and will play a major part in a new communications program that we were hired to create.

After applauding themselves, they then showed us their "most important slide of all"... their big idea to commemorate Mobil's 100th anniversary. They put "1866-1966" right, smack in the middle of their big red "O".

Again there was another huge round of applause from all the Mobil brass in the room.

Instantly, Mobil's Director of Marketing, who obviously wanted to share in the glory, jumped in and expounded with great pride... "Wow!

1866-1966. Isn't that great? Isn't that wonderful? You know what that does for us? You know what that means?" At which point, Bill Bernbach took the wind right out of the poor fellow's enthusiasm, as he jumped in and simply stated, "1866-1966. That means you just died".

End of story. Those dates never saw the light of day in the middle of the big red "O". Instead, thanks to the path opened by Bill Bernbach, Bob and I created Mobil's highway safety campaign, "We Want You To Live".

That's what Bill Bernbach was all about.

*Len Sirowitz
DDB Art Director*

May as well add my Bill Bernbach memoir

When, in 1968, I had made up my mind to defect to Wells, Rich, Greene, I happened upon Bill in one of the elevators. He gave me an admonition. I quote from memory. "Oh, Mort, Mort..." he scolded, with a father-to-son sigh, "what am I going to do with you? If you leave you may regret it. There are wolves out there!"

I was too young and too stupid at the time to understand what he meant, let alone heed it. So I went ahead and left.

In job after job, my boss always bore an uncanny resemblance to Lon Chaney Jr. during a full moon.

After two subsequent careers, TV sitcom writing and a professorship at UCLA and NYU, teaching that harum-scarum art form, the bite marks are still with me.

*Mort Scharfman
DDB Copywriter*

Evan Remembers Helmut



My first Helmut-meet came one evening when (I think it was)Nat Russo and I were tossing a small football to each other in the hallway outside the rest rooms. At some point, Helmut came out of his office to use the men's room.

He grunted and put up his hands in the air as if to receive the ball, so Nat threw the ball to him. Helmut caught it, then tossed it back to Nat and went into the Men's Room. That was the most Helmut said in my presence in about my first three years at the agency.

Some years later, long after I left Doyle Dane I encountered Helmut in the "Old Masters Section" of the Metropolitan Museum of Art so I went over to him and said "Hi, Helmut. Do you see anything you like?".

Evan Stark
DDB Copywriter

A Memorable Evening With Helmut Krone

My first introduction to Helmut Krone was in a classroom at the School of Visual Arts while I was still working at Y&R. I was the guest of a friend who said this would be a night to remember. Gene Case was the instructor and the class assignment was to create a print campaign for an imaginary product guaranteed to restore hair to balding men in 99 out of 100 cases. At the end of the student presentations, Helmut was introduced to the class. The first words out of his mouth were to exclaim that the whole assignment was ridiculous. "If such a product existed," he said, "you wouldn't have to advertise it. It would have sold out the minute it was introduced." In spite of that, Helmut had thought about the assignment in a cab on the way down to the class. "Let's assume that the product does exist", he went on. "You could charge anything you want for a product like this. I decided to charge \$1000 a bottle. Now the assignment said that 99 out of 100 men would have their hair restored. That means that one poor guy who bought the product will still be bald. So I decided that some portion of that \$1000 per bottle, say half of it, should go into a fund." At this point, Helmut unfolded a rough layout showing 100 men on a spread. 99 of the men had a full head of hair and one was bald. Helmut explained that even without having his hair restored, that one man could still be happy. Under each of the 99 men, a line was repeated, "I have hair. I have hair. I have hair. I have hair." And under the bald man, the line read, "I have \$50,000." I knew where I wanted to work.

Walt Hampton
DDB Copywriter

Shoe Story

I was Sid's assistant and he had the Thom McCan account. Needless to say I did a lot of shoe ads. The first ad I ever produced was with David Cantor. Thom McCan had a line of stiff, heavy duty work boots which were hard for big, burly construction workers to break in. So the company came out with a boot that was already broken in. They wanted a name for the boot that implied it was easy to wear. So, we named it - "The Sissy Boot." For tough guys with tender feet. The client loved it. They sold a lot of boots. No one thought anything of it. Maron, have times changed.

Jack Medoff
DDB Art Director



A lesson in humility

In 1968, I was promoted to be an Art Director.

I served my time in the bullpen and preformed well enough as an Assistant Art Director to Lee Epstein
- to deserve that esteemed title.

Upon hearing about my promotion - I STRUTTED into the bullpen on the 24th floor to tease my friends who were still stranded there.

As I was making my grand exit and waiting for a curtain call - In walked Len Sirowitz with a comp he needed mounting.

Len looked for the nearest bullpen person he could see. - ME.

He asked for 1/2" trimming around the edges, mounted on foamcore, black backing and a cellophane wrapping to protect it from the account guys drooling over his beautiful ad.

My bullpen buddies expected me to hand it off to them. Playing Art Director.

I remember thinking . . . This is a Len Sirowitz ad. It deserves respect.

I did my best carrying out his detailed instructions. I delivered it to his immaculate corner office with all his award-winning ads neatly tacked to his wall.

I never STRUTTED into the bullpen again in all my 17 years at DDB.

I was always on-guard in case Len Sirowitz needed something mounted again.

Dom Marino
DDB Art Director

Greetings from Roy

On my 50th birthday, I picked up a phone message from Roy.

Roy: " Bob, I'm calling to wish you a Happy Birthday.
I'm sure you're celebrating it like all your others.
.....Alone."

(click.)

Bob Matsumoto
DDB Art Director



Hal, Paul and Dustin

Paul Katz my writer, and I were assigned a VW Fastback launch commercial. We came up with “where’s the motor” and went into casting for the right pitchman. After many rejects from Paul and I in comes Dustin Hoffman. Paul and I look at each other and we know this was the guy. Dustin was new to New York and hungry for work. Dustin was having difficulty getting a direction from the director so he asked Paul and I what were we looking for. We simultaneously came up with the idea of being “a smart ass and somewhat arrogant about the features of the fastback. Paul and I both having those very attributes had no problem communicating them to Dustin. The spot turned out great!

Two months later he gets a part in Midnight Cowboy and later on in Tootsie and becomes a major movie star.

I’m on a shoot in LA, having dinner in a restaurant, and who comes over to me, but Dustin. He says, “Hal, can we talk.” And I say, “What’s up.”? “Hal can you destroy the negative of “Where’s the motor.”? I say “No way Dustin. In fact the commercial is at the Academy Awards for a preview showing the night before the Awards.” This was true. The man almost plotzed.

Did that stop Dustin? Years later I am at the New York Auto Show with a friend who points out Dustin Hoffman and family checking out a bulletproof Mercedes. Dustin looks up and comes toward me with his family. Now my friend is in a state of disbelief.

A small crowd starts to gather around us. “Harold how are you.”? I was shocked that he remembered my name. “Great Dustin. What’s up.”? “Harold, can you get me that VW negative so that I can destroy it.”? I told him it was put into a time capsule on Governor’s Island and is very well guarded. He mutters “oh shit.” His wife smiled and they left.

Hal Nankin
DDB Art Director

Serious about toys

It was my first year in advertising and I was in awe of all the amazing talent that swirled around me. Like most of the creative people at DDB, I was always looking to learn and grow and build my portfolio. The writers and art directors in this shot were assembled for a spec ad for a non-existent toy company. The concept was that we were extremely serious about creating fun toys. We shot our stuff in a little studio on the 24th floor with a professional Polaroid camera, one of the perks of being Polaroid’s agency. Instead of using real models, we used ourselves (were we great actors, or what!) That’s me on roller skates on the far left. The guy standing fourth from the left is Nat Russo, and that’s Aaron Koster in the middle (don’t ask me who he is or how I remember his name.) Nat went on to become my copy chief at Gilbert Advertising, a creative boutique. I always credit him with helping me become a better writer by cutting through the bullshit and stripping away my flowery excesses. I can’t remember who the other guys were, but I’m sure they went on to have great careers and better toys.

Howie Cohen
DDB Copywriter





The Art of Diplomacy

Fresh out of Art Center School on the West Coast, I was still in shock and disbelief when Dick Loew called and told me that I was hired.

I ran eight blocks, in the rain, to DDB's old building on W.43rd Street and showed up soaking wet with portfolio case in hand.

After listening to Ben Speigel tell me that I was going to start on bull pen salary and filling out all the paper work for H & R, Dick then showed me where I would be sharing an office with another assistant art director, Maija Veide.

She was an attractive lady who spoke in soft and gentle tones. I was full of anxious questions, and Maija was polite with her one word answers.

As time passed, I noticed a constant stream of men coming into our office to say hello, and socialize with Maija. They would always start out by asking her how she was, and continue on about their lives, interests, careers, and eventually an invitation for a drink or two. Maija would listen intently with an occasional nod or "really"? and then in the most diplomatic and sexy way, dismiss them. What amazed me was how they all left with a smile on their face.

Now, I must admit here that I was, and to this day, very naive about the social ways of small talk. But I marveled at Maija's ability to graciously turn these men down with a smile and a kind word so they all felt they had been heard and taken into consideration. She may have been a lady of few words, but a natural genius at diplomacy.

I learned many valuable things about the business and my profession from my first boss, Dick Loew. And I learned at DDB that good was never good enough. But, when it came to the art of negotiation and how to reject an idea without rejecting the person, I learned, from my favorite diplomat, Maija Veide.

*Mel Sant
DDB Art Director*



Mr. Bernbach and the outhouse

MAYBE I WAS FORTUNATE. THE ONLY TIME I EVER SAW "HIM" WAS IN THE ELEVATOR OR WALKING DOWN THE HALL WITH AN ENTOURAGE OF FACELESS SUITS. I HAPPENED TO HAVE LOVED HIS STEELY BLUE EYES BECAUSE I WAS NEVER ON THE RECEIVING END OF THE STEEL.

I WAS HIRED AS A COPY CUB. YES, IT WAS NOT POLITICALLY INCORRECT TO CALL A YOUNG WOMAN A CUB IN THOSE DAYS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I WAS PROUD, VERY PROUD TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF SIX CREATIVES HIRED IN SEPTEMBER, 1966, FOR \$6000 A YEAR. I'M SURE THE GUYS GOT, AT LEAST, \$8000.

I WAS MAKING MORE THAN TWICE THAT MUCH RUNNING AN OFFICE IN THE GARMENT CENTER, A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR BUSINESS SELLING SNAP FASTENERS. YOU KNOW, THE UGLY THINGS THAT REPLACED BEAUTIFUL BUTTONS ON GARMENTS. BUT NOT BEING HAPPY TAKING CARE OF SALES, BOOKKEEPING, GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS, AND A SWITCHBOARD WHEN MY ASSISTANT WENT TO LUNCH WITH THE BOSS, WHICH WAS TOO LONG AND TOO OFTEN, I WANTED TO FLEE.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, I LIVED WITH, AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR WOMEN, (ALWAYS CHANGING) IN AN ELEGANT FLOOR THROUGH TOWNHOUSE ON EAST 39TH STREET. THE RENT WAS OUTRAGEOUS...OVER \$400 A MONTH. WE FOUND WOMEN TO SHARE IN THE NY TIMES, INTERVIEWED THEM FOR A FEW MINUTES AND POOF! YET ANOTHER ROOMMATE.

BUT I'M GETTING OFF TRACK. THE ORIGINALS WERE CAROL LANE, SANDY AND I. CAROL WAS ONE OF THE FIRST FEMALE ART DIRECTORS IN THE BUSINESS. SHE WORKED AT Y&R. SHE WOULD COME HOME AND COMPLAIN BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T GET WHAT SHE WANTED FROM HER WRITERS.

WE'D SIT BETWEEN THE TWO VICTORIAN OAK CARVED LIONHEADS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BAR, WHICH SEPARATED MY ROOM FROM THE REST OF THE APARTMENT. IMAGINE A 28 FT. DINING ROOM, A 19TH CENTURY CRYSTAL CHANDELIER, THE WALLS PAPERED WITH BLUE NYMPHS, ON AN OFF-WHITE BACKGROUND. BUT NO FURNITURE. SO WE ALWAYS MET IN THE BAR ROOM.

CAROL USED TO TELL ME WHAT HER ASSIGNMENTS WERE AND I WOULD GET BACK TO HER WITH A HEADLINE. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT A COPYWRITER WAS. THEN ONE DAY SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE USED ONE OF MY LINES AND THE CLIENT BOUGHT IT...AT Y&R.

SHE SAID I SHOULD BE A COPPYWRITER. I WANTED TO BE AN ART DIRECTOR. THE TITLE SEEMED TO HAVE A LOT MORE CACHE, UNTIL I ALMOST CUT MY BLOODY FINGER OFF DOING A MECHANICAL. WITH A VERY CHECKERED CAREER, AND NEVER FINISHING ANYTHING THAT I EVER STARTED, I ENROLLED AT SVA.

ALL MY TEACHERS TOLD ME TO WRITE. I MUST GIVE CREDIT TO A DEARLY DEPARTED, LOUIE MUSACHIO. IT SEEMS I USUALLY DID THE ADS THAT HE DIDN'T RIP APART AND CALL "SH-." I LOVED HIS PASSION. I LOVED HIS STREET SMARTS AND AGRESSIVENESS. HE WAS LIKE THE BRASH YOUNG GUYS ON THE CORNER THAT MY MOTHER TOLD ME TO AVOID.

FROM THAT, AND MANY OTHER CLASSES, I PUT TOGETHER A SAMPLE BOOK. I SPENT ENDLESS HOURS TAKING POLAROID PICTURES MYSELF. BUYING AND SETTING PRESS TYPE, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY MAKE HELMUT TURN OVER IN HIS GRAVE.

AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, AND I'M SURE I'LL GET LOTS OF FLACK IN THIS AREA, I WAS INVITED, ALONG WITH LOTS OF YOUNG ADVERTISING PEOPLE TO SOUTHAMPTON TO MEET JUDY WALD, A WOMAN WHO SEEMED TO CONTROL THE BUSINESS, AND WHOSE REPUTATION WAS ONE OF "HEAD HUNTER."

I MET HER ON THE BEACH IN SOUTHAMPTON. SHE SAID, STAMMERING..."ER ER ER WHO ARE YOU?" I TOLD HER MY NAME. SHE LOOKED AT ME IN MY TINY WEENY WHITE BIKINI AND SAID..."ER...ER...ER WHY DON'T YOU BECOME A PLAYBOY BUNNY?" I SAID, "DO YOU HAVE A DAUGHTER? WHY DON'T YOU TELL HER TO BE A PLAYBOY BUNNY? I WANT TO BE A COPYWRITER." SHE LOVED MY SPUNK. WE'RE STILL FRIENDS 'TIL THIS DAY.



VERY LONG STORY, BUT NOT MUCH SHORTER, I GOT TWO OFFERS. ONE FROM PAPPERT, KOENIG AND LOIS FOR \$7,000 AND ANOTHER FROM DDB FOR \$6,000. I CALLED JUDY FROM A PHONE BOOTH. SHE HAD BOTH JOBS AND ADVISED ME TO TAKE THE DDB JOB FOR LESS...UNDER ONE CONDITION, THAT I ASK LEON TO WORK IN RON ROSENFELD'S GROUP. I HAD NO IDEA WHO HE WAS. I SCRIBBLED HIS NAME DOWN. SHE TOLD ME THAT IF NOT THAT GROUP TO GO TO PAPPERT, KOENIG AND LOIS.

MR. KOENIG CALLED ME TO ASK IF I WAS TAKING HIS JOB OFFER. MY MOTHER WAS NEVER SO IMPRESSED. I REMEMBER TELLING HIM THAT I ALREADY ACCEPTED LEON'S OFFER. EITHER WAY, IT WAS LESS THAN HALF OF WHAT I WAS ACCUSTOMED TO LIVING ON.

BUT I'M GETTING OFF TRACK AGAIN. IF YOU EVER REMEMBER HAPPY MOMENTS IN YOUR LIFE, THIS IS ONE OF MY MOST MEMORABLE. WALKING DOWN THE STREET AND SKIPPING UP AND DOWN THE SIDEWALKS ON EAST 39TH STREET, LIKE GENE KELLY DID IN "SINGING IN THE RAIN." BUT THERE WAS NO RAIN, ONLY SUNSHINE!

I THANK CAROL LANE, I THANK LOUIE MUSACHIO, I THANK JUDY WALD, AND I THANK RON ROSENFELD, WHO WAS MY MENTOR, MY BEST FRIEND, MY LOVER AND MY HUSBAND...THE MOST TALENTED AND GIVING PERSON I EVER MET IN MY LIFE.

ABOUT THE OUTHOUSE AD WHICH IS HOW I HOOKED YOU INTO READING MY DRIVEL. A VERY TALENTED ART DIRECTOR NAMED ALLEN AND I WERE GIVEN A MAJOR ASSIGNMENT. I CAN'T REMEMBER HIS LAST NAME. DAMN! A CONSUMER AD FOR SONY, THE 7" MEASURED DIAGONALLY TV WITH BATTERY PACK. (THIS WAS LIKE BEING GIVEN GOLD!)

RON AND LENNY MADE SONY. THEY, WITH THEIR BRILLIANCE, SEEMED TO HAVE COVERED EVERY PORTABILITY AREA. AND THAT WAS THE KEY. THOSE LITTLE, YELLOW REQUISITIONS THAT WERE SLIPPED UNDER YOUR DOOR, NEVER GAVE YOU SPECIFIC STRATEGIES, NEVER TOLD YOU WHAT FOCUS GROUPS SAID. JUST DO AN AD. HOW WONDERFUL!

SO WE CAME UP WITH A NEVER BEEN DONE OR SEEN BEFORE SUBJECT. AFTER ALL, ISN'T THAT WHAT WE WERE SUPPOSED TO DO? THIS WAS DDB!

THE VISUAL WAS A BEAUTIFULLY CONSTRUCTED OUTHOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WOODS. IT WAS EVENING. ALL YOU COULD SEE WAS THE LIGHT FROM THE CRESCENT MOON ON THE DOOR OF THE OUTHOUSE. THE HEADLINE READ, "ANYWHERE YOU GO TV."

BERNBACH KILLED IT. SO EVEN AT DDB THERE WERE SUBJECTS THAT COULD NOT BE APPROACHED... NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT RON AND I WERE HAVING AN UNAPPROACHABLE AFFAIR. BUT THAT'S ANOTHER STORY. RICK LEVINE CAUGHT US OUT ON THE TOWN. HE WAS ENTERTAINING HIS IN-LAWS. HE BLEW THE WHISTLE ON US.

AS JIMMY DURANTE ONCE SAID, "I'VE GOT A MILLION OF 'EM. TBC

PS: WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO SANDY? WHO KNOWS?



Bernbach freed the Italians

I'm sure everyone here has heard of Abraham Lincoln. He freed the slaves.

But has anyone here ever heard of William Bernbach?

Well he freed the Italian Art Directors.

I was one of them.

But Bill didn't just help us Italians, He freed the Greeks, Orientals, Hispanics, Blacks, and all the female Art Directors as well.

We were all being held hostage in the back room of Ad Agencies.

You see in the 50's Advertising Agencies were a "Good all boys" business.

All white. All privileged. And, all men.

The ads were created by the Copywriter, usually an English Major from an Ivy League college. He was a V.P., and had a big corner office. He came up with the idea for the ad, wrote the copy and also had the idea for the visual. Kind of a one-man show. Except he didn't have the technical ability to put his ad into a layout form that could be presented to the client. He couldn't render the visual, or hand letter the headline. That took artistic skills.

That's where we ethnic Art Directors came in.

Of course we weren't called Art Directors in those days, we were all just part of a group of artists, referred to as "The Bull Pen". Our drawing boards were crowded into a small windowless office in the rear of the agency, right next to the Mailroom.

And because our education was in art instead of business the "Bull Pen" group was never considered to be candidates for management.

If we wanted to stay in advertising, The "Bull Pen" would be our home.

Bill Bernbach changed all that.

In his new agency artists would be called Art Directors and work together with the Copywriter to create the ad. It made sense. Because to create a great ad the copy and art have to work together to form one powerful message. It was the introduction of the "Creative Team" concept that produced a new wave of exciting advertising.

Suddenly the Italian art director, and all of the other ethnic artists, had been elevated to the highest level of agency responsibility. And respect.

Bill Bernbach had opened the door. Now regardless of your race, color, or gender, you could get a great job at DDB. There was only one requirement.

You had to have talent.

Charlie Piccirillo
DDB Art Director



The Year Helmut Art Directed Himself

The year was around 1962. I was (still) in the bullpen waiting for my big break. Doing the paste-ups for ads that would soon become classics was an everyday occurrence. When we weren't working on our portfolios, we art directors-to-be would pass the time throwing rubber cement balls at each other and playing darts with crow quill pens and pushpins.

All of the guys (and one woman) in the bullpen were in awe of the art director superstars. Our fantasies were not of being an art director but to be chosen to be an assistant art director to one of them. We all felt extremely competitive and would try to slip out unnoticed to show our portfolios to our favorites in hopes that their current assistant would be promoted, quit to go to another agency, or die, leaving an opening. The art directors themselves were not only creative geniuses, they dressed great, which was important. Well, not all of them dressed great. We knew Helmut was a terrific art director but he didn't fit the image. He was overweight, slightly balding, wore thick glasses and dressed very Brooks Brothers disheveled with a rep tie and wing tipped shoes. He could have been an account guy.

Then, one day, that started out as every other day, we were blown away. Into the bullpen walked a Helmut we hadn't seen before. He was about 50 lbs lighter, wore a double breasted suit, a beautiful silk tie, Italian shoes and his hair was cut Julius Caesar-like. And gone were his glasses. (He was either wearing contacts or was choosing not to see very well.) It was the make-over to end all make-overs. He had become the perfect art director -the Helmut that everyone who started at DDB after 1962 knew and respected. I was one of the lucky few who could say, "I knew him when."



Gary Geyer
DDB Art Director



Home

The day I walked into the DDB Reunion.....
It was home, the warmth, the love, the excitement.
The same feeling I was experiencing seem to be
coming from everyone there.
Not a feeling felt that often. Thank you,
"Long may you wave".
Long may we all wave

Jim Ranieri
DDB Art Director

Empire State Building

I was once working with Helmut and he started espousing all the virtues of the Empire State Building, now feeling it was more architecturally significant than his all-time favorite, the Seagrams Building.

When I told Charlie Piccirillo about this, he said, "That fucking guy, now he thinks he discovered the Empire State Building."

Mike Mangano
DDB Copywriter

Get out of my office

Hal Altman was a traffic man before DDB made him a writer.
He was traffic on a Helmut job.
As usual Helmut was late delivering the ad.
Hal went to his office and told Helmut the ad was past due. Helmut replied; "Get out of my office!"
Hal said I'm not leaving till I get the ad. Helmut said; "Get out of my office!!!"
Hal mustered up all his nerve and said, I'm not leaving without the ad.
Helmut said; "If you don't leave my office, I will!" And with that, he threw himself out of his office.

Robert Reitzfeld
DDB Art Director



Skate Story

I met Mac Dane sometimes, at The Rink at The Rock, where both of us skated during our lunch hour(s). A day or so after I decided to leave DDB and accept an offer from Mary Wells, I met Mac at The Rink. I told him I was really divided about my decision to leave DDB. Said Mac: "There's a time in everyones' life when it's time to move on." And off we moved, arm- in arm, skating gently forward with (at least on Macs' side) great propriety.

Carole Anne Fine
DDB Copywriter

Helmut Smiles

When I joined DDB in May 1954 I shared an office with Helmut. He had the window. He was kind & encouraging. He showed his vulnerability often. One morning I found him sitting at my drawing table. He blurted out that he was sure that Bill was going to fire him. I asked him why he just didn't go to Bill & clear it up. He then went to Bill. And he came back to our office with one of the rare smiles Helmut ever allowed anyone to ever see. Believe it or not, the next time I saw Helmut with that great smile was at the farewell party the Agency made for me 37 years later when he kissed me goodbye.

Lester Feldman
DDB Art Director

My story about joining ddb

in early november of '69, leon offered me a job at 10,000 dollars a year and asked me when I could start...i said i needed to give a little notice, but in two weeks...november 15th...
leon said: why don't you take some time off between jobs? start december first. it'll be good for you"...and I did...
on december first i showed up at the office...marva peterson, leon's assistant, took me down to personnel to fill out some forms...on the way, she said: "Too bad you didn't start last week. You would have had a year's vesting in the profit-sharing plan. Today you're one day too late."
leon was a business man, too, it appears.

Tom Messner
DDB Copywriter

Shakespeare vs Knicks



Helmut Krone was my idol, and as luck would have it, my new office was right next to his. His office was my art gallery. On the nights that I'd be working later than Helmut, I would go into his office and study his wall. Every ad a gem, worked on over and over, literally slaved over, rarely finished on time.

One morning as I was working at my desk, Helmut, who rarely said anything to anyone, stormed past my room in his familiar Burberry raincoat. Suddenly he stopped, looked into my room and said; "There is more excitement in a single Knick game than there is in any Shakespeare play!" And with that disappeared into his room.

Robert Reitzfeld
DDB Art Director

Floored

The VW dealerships in the NY area (Worldwide Volkswagen) were run by the same guy who had brought the VW USA national account to DDB way back when. (His name was Arthur Stanton. And he was a wonderful, and VERY important person.)

So I'm at VW headquarters presenting a TV concept to this client group. Mr. Stanton was not in the room because he was well along in years and quite frail, frequently falling down, in fact.

OK, this commercial was to announce a warranty that would last as long as you kept driving the same car. We start with a young man driving out of the dealership in his new warranted car. We keep cutting to him driving the same car, first with a wife, then with wife and kids, and he's getting older and older until as an old frail guy, he stops the still warranted car, opens the door ... and falls out. I'm falling out of my seat at the conference table to dramatize this. JUST as our frail client, Arthur Stanton, is escorted into the room. I'm not only on the floor. I'm FLOORED. (Since he didn't know the plot of the commercial, he could have been offended. But he was totally gracious and grinned at my awkward position.)

Hal Silverman
DDB Copywriter

Shit

I was a junior writer working on trade ads for the Olin Chemical Company. My supervisor Stan Lee loved and approved the campaign that me and my Art Director (sorry.. can't remember the name) came up with for Olin's plant and soil products. The ads were familiar quotations from the Bible about the land, with black and white photos of farmland, trees, seedlings growing, etc. The AD had to get his supervisor's approval, as well. That would be Helmut Krone. We got all our bravado up as we entered his office ... we had heard all the stories ... introduced ourselves and explained the concept. We handed him our ad, which was for Olin's new product, a fertilizer. "THIS IS SHIT," Helmut raged. "REALLY SHIT". I grinned. "Yes it is". But my grin soon turned to panic when I realized that Helmut did not connect 'shit' with fertilizer. He told us to get out and come back with another visual. We left quickly, not believing that the great Helmut Krone didn't find this even a little funny.

Frada Sklar Wallach
DDB Copywriter



We owe it all to Mr. Bernbach

Everything I know I learned at Doyle, Dane, Bernbach. Of course, that's not entirely true, but it sure seems to me to be.

I was lucky enough to have my dream come true and get a job at my dream agency DDB just 6 months out of college in the legendary bullpen in the late 60s. Suddenly, I found myself surrounded with wonderful people more wonderfully talented in wonderful ways I could never have imagined. EVERYBODY was FANTASTIC.

I had never been in a big city before. New York was fantastic, to say the least. New Yorkers were wonderfully exciting. But to walk in off the New York streets into Doyle, Dane, Bernbach was something else. EVERYBODY was larger than life. But none of them thought that. Everybody was.....well, we'll get to that.

I am envious of all the personal Bill Bernbach stories I have been reading. I never got to have my own personal one on one moment with Mr. Bernbach. All my personal one on one moments were with all the people I worked for and reported to who got to have personal one on one moments with Mr. Bernbach. Let me tell you, I don't feel cheated. Yes, I wish I had my Bernbach moment, but I had more than most people get in life wonderful moments with just about every person at DDB. I loved them all and they inspired me to great things.

But, I did have Mr. Bernbach moments. They were shared.

I was surprised to find that on many mornings when I showed up to go to the bullpen, I found myself riding on the same elevator car with Mr. Bernbach. There he was in his fedora hat, calm, reserved and courteous to all. He had such a beautiful voice.

After about a year, I was promoted to be Lee Epstein's assistant and given a small office on the 24th floor just near the screening room. Now I started seeing Mr. Bernbach often. I noticed he often came to the floor to talk to various senior creatives and for screenings. I noticed that he often came out into the hall or in the open area outside the screening room to talk to people instead of remaining in more private spaces. I'm sure that if it was not appropriate, he would have kept the conversation behind closed doors. But, otherwise, it was out in the hall. And I'm sure he knew we were all listening because we all learned so much about, well, so much.

In the 70s, things got tough for America. And for DDB. It was very painful in so many ways and my beloved DDB seemed to be staggering. The economy was sinking. There was the Viet Nam war tearing us apart. Nixon. The agency was under stress. Some great people were leaving. Some people who didn't seem to be the right type had been hired, and then quickly let go. There was a spontaneous outcry for an explanation by the creative department, and Mr. Bernbach came to address us in the common area in the old 42nd St. building.

I will never forget what he had to say.

"To work at Doyle, Dane, Bernbach, you have to be two things. You have to be talented and nice. If you aren't talented, well, we're sorry, you will have to leave because you won't be able to do the work. If you're not nice, well, we're sorry, you might be able to last a while, but sooner or later, you'll have to leave because no one will want to work with you."

I was stunned.

It suddenly came down to me that it was that simple. That's all I needed to know and why the place I worked was so wonderful. And why, decades later we can have a reunion where everyone is so glad to see one another. Like every one of us, time and change drove me out of paradise. But the things I learned from all my wonderful DDB



partners and Mr. Bernbach himself have blessed my life beyond comprehension. We are so lucky to have one another. The reunion proved that. And we owe it all to Mr. Bernbach.

John Eding
DDB Art Director

Talking Wiskey Bottles

I was Ben Spiegel's assistant. On a day Ben didn't come to work I was told to assist Helmut Krone.

He was creating roughs for a new whiskey campaign that was being introduced to the northeastern part of US. He always worked alone (and I was really there as an observer, no one really helps Mr. Krone in my opinion). By mid day he had pinned 5 pencil tissues on his wall, the size of a NY Times full page ad. Each tissue had a drawing of a large bottle (whiskey) and a large, full or empty glass. The whiskey was talking to the glass or vice versa, no other copy.

The account executive who had just started working at DDB came to see his clients campaign. After viewing them he didn't think they would be accepted. Who ever saw a bottle and glass talking, that it wasn't a good way to introduce a new product.

Mr. Krone said it was his recommendation and wasn't going to do anything else. The disgruntled AE left the room, and Mr. Krone removed each tissue, folded them and put them in the garbage. Soon the Account Supervisor came into the office and asked to see them. Without looking up at the Account Supervisor, or saying a word, Mr. Krone pointed his toe in the direction of the trash basket. The AS retrieved the tissues, laid them on the floor, and apologized for the inconvenience and approved the concept.

Months later the ads were produced and appeared the way they were originally conceived in the local papers.

Chuck Blas
DDB Art Director

Good Writer?

I once made the mistake of telling Bill Bernbach that I thought I was already a good writer when I joined the agency.

Bill looked at me as though he thought I had declared myself God.

I then said "If I wasn't a good writer, why would you have hired me?"

It took Bill less than a second to respond, with a smile, "Yes, but you're a better writer now."

Evan Stark
DDB Copywriter



Don't Look Now

I was invited to a Bayer Aspirin TV meeting in Bernbach's office along with other creatives.
Before the meeting Marvin took me over to the side and said: "Dom, don't look at Bill's eyes in the meeting."

I said: "Why Marvin?"

He said: " Because, if he has an idea, he looks for an art director to follow through and produce it"

The meeting took place in Bill's conference room, adjacent to his office.

It was filled with art directors and writers.

I scanned the room looking for art directors who didn't know Marvin's secret.

I spotted Bob Gage. I would take his lead. Surely, he knew how to handle this delicate situation.

Bill began to talk.

Looking at Gage . . .

I looked at my watch.

I looked at Bill's view of the city.

I counted the ads on Bill's wall. [Fourteen.]

I noticed Bill changed his carpet since the last time I was there.

I also noticed the other art director's were keeping there eyes busy not looking at Bill too.

Bill was thinking out loud saying: "I see . . . I see . . . A Willow tree. Waving in the wind"

With that, all the other art directors also noticed Bill has changed his carpet. [Gray with black stripes. Very classy]

Suddenly, Bill roared: "Why isn't anyone LOOKING AT ME!

Bob being the senior art director at the agency . . . Looked into Bill's eyes.

Bob presented "The Willow Tree" spot to the Bayer client.

When they asked him what does it mean?

Bob looked at Bill . . . Who noticed the rug in the conference room needed to be changed.

Dom Marino
DDB Art Director



I Never Talked To Bill Bernbach

What a shocker!

The reunion has now passed into history and in its wake one grisly, bloodcurdling fact stands revealed.

Bill Bernbach never talked to me.

Apparently he had some kind of memorable exchange with every art director or copywriter who ever worked at DDB – except yours truly.

I brooded incessantly over that avalanche of heart-warming reminiscences by my more favored colleagues. But one night I fell into the deepest of slumbers. The next thing I knew, I found myself walking straight into Bill Bernbach's office. The legend smiled graciously and offered me a seat.

Here's the conversation that ensued:

Bill: Yes. Who are you?

Me: My name is Hans Kracauer and I –

Bill: I'm sorry. Do you work here?

Me: Sure. Of course, it's been half a century.

Bill: What is it that you want?

Me: Well, it's like this. It seems that you talked to every last art director and copywriter who was ever at DDB in the sixties. With one glaring exception. Me.

Bill: And now – half a century later –that's really a problem?

Me: Yes, it is. I have no stories to tell about us. (I begin to cry.)

Bill: Kindly stop that.

Me: (Between sobs): You didn't offer me one pearl of wisdom. Not a single sardonic – but extremely well-articulated – critique about the length of my headlines.

Bill: It was just an oversight.

Me: How is that possible? I won all these awards for my Volkswagen ads. You could have furnished me with one astute, quotable word of caution. Gently chiding me for my letting the awards go to my head. Waggishly reminding me that, after all, I was writing in a style that had already been invented by others.

Bill: I'm really sorry. By the way, I don't recall seeing you at that reunion.

Me: You were there?

Bill: Naturally.



Me: Well, I was scheduled to be there as well. But two days before my flight from L.A. to New York, I had an accident. I walked smack into a glass wall and shattered my knee. Couldn't go anywhere.

(Bill starts ushering me out of his office.)

Bill: That was no accident.

Me: What do you mean?

Bill: It was your subconscious at work. You needed an excuse not to show up. You were too terrified to confront your past.

(Bill pushes me out the door.)

Me: Thank you for finally talking to me. If only in my dreams.

Bill (Closing the door): Now go make something of yourself! You can't coast on having been at DDB straight into the 21st century.

*Hans Kracauer
DDB Copywriter*

Writing Copy For Dave Reider

Dave had done the TV for The Tiger Paw and had written all of the copy in the ads, too.

Then one day, he had a piece of copy that was due and didn't have the time to do it himself, so he asked me to do it.

Naturally, Dave's copy was so good (and so long), I wouldn't even have attempted to equal it, so I did the next best thing.

Since the headline for the ad was new, all I did was write a new first line coming off the headline and a new last line to wrap the whole thing up.

When I showed the completed body copy to Dave, he was ecstatic.

"This is a wonderful piece of copy", Dave said.

"Well, all I did was write a new first and a new last line, Dave", I said. "I picked up all the rest from an earlier Tiger Paw ad you wrote".

"You really outdid yourself this time", he continued, so I once again told him that basically the copy was written by him.

He ignored my espousals and continued to compliment me.

Finally, I just thanked him and sent the copy on.

In retrospect, I realized I should have asked for a raise.

*Evan Stark
DDB Copywriter*



My 60s BIG adventure

In August '63 my wife, kids & me were vacationing up on Lake George. No sooner did we get there when the Agency called to inform me that my client, Winchester, needed me back in 2 days. Why? They planned to test their new lines of guns, rifles & ammo on a Safari in East Africa and I was to be ready for my "shots", for my safari "outfits" and boots all from the original Abercrombie & Fitch. In addition I had to select a photographer to fly with us to Africa in 2 weeks. I was lucky to get Elliott Erwitt, the Magnum photographer, to accompany us. He also proved to be a great companion. The Agency also hired a writer just for this assignment, a Brit, Bob Marshall. He was a terrific writer and a nice guy, too.

We three along with the client, Scott Healy, our two chief hunters, David Ommamey and George Barrington of the Safari Outfitters, Ker. Downey & Selby, Winchester's cinematographer, a seasoned big game hunter, and our African gentlemen: trackers, skinners, gunbearers, drivers and two very accomplished cooks.

We were further outfitted in Nairobi. And set out for the Serengeti in Tanganyika (a year or two before Uhuru when it became Tanzania) Africa was incredible. Thousands of zebra and gnu, rhinos, giraffes, lions, leopards, baboons and on and on.

Many new birds to add to my "life list".

Wonderful photo opportunities presented themselves during those three weeks.

We came home with some really terrific stuff.

Enough to create 5 color spreads plus several single pages. A beautiful campaign that never ran.....President Kennedy was assassinated a month after I got back from Africa and, of course, no gun ads ran for about a year.

Almost as soon as I got back to my drawing table Bob Gage came into my office to tell me he was giving me a brand new account for the Agency, U.S. Royal Tires. The writer was my friend David Reider. The years that followed were the most fun anyone could hope to have in advertising as we created " The Rain Tire" and "Tiger Paws".

Lester Feldman
DDB Art Director

A Walk with Mr. Bernbach

It was my third day at DDB working in sales promotion and I had permission from my supervisor, Murray Jacobs to view the works that were created in the national print department. As I walked along the corridor perusing award winning ads, getting an idea about the agency's philosophy, behind me a stranger asked me who I was and what I thought of the ads. I said I was a new employee and that I was very impressed by the exhibit. He walked along side of me, put his hand on my shoulder and told me we create advertising that is believable and not gimmicky and that maybe one day a work of mine may be posted on the wall. He was right, I had a few award winning ads on those walls. That stranger was Mr. Bernbach.

Chuck Blas
DDB Art Director



Only at DDB

Before I found my way into the hallowed halls at 11 West 42nd St., I worked with Ken Duskin at a small agency named Mervin & Jesse Levine. Although we weren't officially an AD/copywriter team à la the DDB method, our offices were right next to each other, with a partition between us that didn't reach all the way to the windows. So we had an open space wide enough to allow for close cooperation on our ads.

Several months after Ken left to join DDB, I got a call from him telling me about an opening in copy. Half elated and half terrified at the prospect of working with such advertising geniuses, I dropped my book off with Mary Wells' secretary, then went straight home with my fears, only to find a message that Mary wanted to see me. I think my interview was the following day. I don't remember much about it except for the following negotiation. Mary asked how much money I wanted. I said "Well, I'm making thirteen, so I'd like twelve, but I'll take eleven."

That's how much I wanted to work at DDB. I didn't even mention that the thirteen I was making was for a three-day week. Which it was. But I never regretted the salary cut because working at DDB wasn't about money—as I think all of us would agree.

Working at DDB wasn't even about working. It was about fulfilling our creative needs and doing better advertising than we ever could or did before.

It was also about being among the nicest bunch of people to be found anywhere. I loved the camaraderie that existed at DDB. Art directors and writers running to show their latest ad to the team next door or down the hall. No cut-throat politics or sour grapes or competitiveness ever got in the way of appreciating the work of our fellow DDBers.

We liked one another. We respected each other's talent and abilities. We didn't take criticism as criticism per se, but as a chance to learn and improve our work. Art directors didn't growl when writers came up with a better graphic idea than theirs. Writers didn't throw a fit when ADs came up with a better headline than theirs.

Working in teams the way Bill Bernbach envisioned it defined teamwork at its best. Other agencies could copy the system, but other agencies didn't have Bill Bernbach at the top, inspiring and nurturing all the people under him, who inspired the people under them, and they the people below them, all the way down to the newest and greenest DDB creative.

Only at DDB did it all come together so perfectly that it still affects us today. How else could a June 1 reunion still be going on in the middle of August—and I suspect, will continue to go on from now on.

Liz Buttkie
DDB Copywriter

Thank You Mr. Bernbach



It was 1962.

We were presenting a new campaign to Chemstrand. Attending the presentation were the clients, our account executive, (I know who he is, but sorry, I've forgotten his name, my memory isn't what it used to be) and writer, Nat Russo.

The ad was for nylon cord tires. It was a full page ad for a major magazine. The headline was bold, white type and it read: "IF YOU WON'T DO IT FOR YOURSELF, DO IT FOR THE KIDS". It covered 70% of the page on a black field, with just one line of 12 point meaningful copy and a small photo of a parent and child.

The client liked the ad but didn't like the black page. He felt it was too somber, and wanted it on a white field with more, longer copy. While he was against the concept, Mr. Bernbach entered the room unannounced, excused himself and whispered to us to continue the meeting. He had simply come in to say hello to the clients, unaware that there was a presentation happening. Mr. Bernbach had never seen the concept, nor was he familiar with it. After more discussion, the matter not been resolved, and the client still had negative thoughts about the campaign.

At this point, Mr. Bernbach intervened and simply stated that the ad was perfect the way it was, and began to give his reasons. His speech was less than 10 minutes. It was simple and to the point and convinced everyone to run the ad. What he said blew my mind.

The campaign appeared exactly as it was conceived in LIFE, LOOK and later in The NY Art Director's Club.

Chuck Blas
DDB Art Director

Two Bernbachian Incidents

(1). When Bill Bernbach interviewed me in 1959, I was fresh from the Promotion Department of Seventeen Magazine and, as Bill turned the pages of my pitiful book, he seemed quite underwhelmed – and I didn't blame him. However, at the end of the interview, he hired me for 2 weeks to "see how it worked out".

2 years later in Phyllis Robinsons' office. Phyllis: Yes, Carole Anne?

Carole Anne: Phyllis, um, two years ago, Bill hired me for two weeks and I'm still temporary, I guess.

Phyllis: Oh mi god.

Carole Anne: Well, um, I wouldn't mind, Phyllis, but it's so embarrassing to get paid when no one does and not to get paid when everyone does.

Phyllis (picking up the phone to call Dorothy Parisi or whomever): Carole Anne. Welcome to DDB.

(2). At a DDB Christmas party somewhere in the 60s

Carole Anne: Bill, I'm having a wonderful time but I think I'm drunk.

Bill: Of course. Our stuff is stronger than anyone's'.

Carole Anne Fine
DDB Copywriter



Lower Lip

I was sent up to DDB Canada as creative director in '67. Both the Toronto and Montreal offices were in a real mess due to the defection of the Managing Director and former CD. When I reported the situation to New York, Ned Doyle called me and told me to arrange a meeting with every client and that I would be expected to attend. I did so and had a quite good time on my first acquaintance with the effervescent Ned, including the learning of a few things about how to calm troubled waters,

At dinner with the Avis client in Montreal Ned had imbibed a few scotches before letting us know he was bored by talking business all the time and did we know any good jokes. Before we could come up with something funny, Ned suddenly turned our attention to a table with a half-dozen attractive women who were obviously out for night of celebration. "See those women over there." said Ned. "I want you to look at them very carefully then tell me which one of them is likely to be the most passionate." The client and I both thought Ned was joking, but he obviously meant it when he said, "I just want to find out how much you guys really know about the important things in life. Take a good look at them." We both complied and Ned said, "Yates, you go first." I said i had no idea but i would think it was the brunette. The client picked the redhead. "Hah!" said Ned. "Both wrong. Don't you guys know anything? A truly passionate woman always has a really voluptuous lower lip! Now look at the lip on the blonde. Obviously she wins The blonde would be the best in bed." With that, Ned had the waiter deliver a bottle of champagne to the ladies' table and seemed very pleased with himself when they raised their glasses to us in a toast. From that night on, when I first meet a woman I always carefully examine her lower lip. I don't know if Ned was right but it is certainly something to contemplate when thinking about the truly useful information one needs to go through life.

*Harry Yates
DDB Copywriter*

Two '60s Quickies

1 - One day, when I was a junior copywriter at DDB, Leon Meadow came into my office and said, "Mike, Bob Levenson needs some help on Volkswagen. Do you have time?"
My big chance, I thought. "Sure, I have time," I said to Leon.
"Great. Do this Seagram ad," he smiled, handing me the requisition.
(Canny fellow, Leon, but I guess in that job he had to be.)

2 - One evening, waiting for the elevator, Dave Reider was complimenting Evan Stark on a piece of copy he had written. Dave got in the elevator and said, "Good night, Evan."
As the elevator doors were closing, Evan, bursting with pride and full of himself, replied, "Good night, Evan."

*Mike Mangano
DDB Copywriter*



I prefer you in women's clothing

One morning without warning....

Do you remember Bill Bernbach's gate keeper? Indeed. Ms. Parisi's regal personage and imposing desk blocked the massive doors to Bill's office.

One day I was commanded to approach that scary Oz entry by Leon. Leon Meadows was my adored boss for more than seven years.

This momentous day Leon insisted that I personally deliver a message to Bill. Bill had become my casual acquaintance through Leon and Phyllis, but this order was frightening to me, because of unspoken dress codes. Men wore suits; except for Jeffrey Metzner who boldly wore black leather jeans. Women wore skirts with stockings (until pantyhose hit the racks).

Well, the snowy winter night before, I hit Macy's rack of women's newly introduced Pant Suits. Skinny, cute little me bought a quite conservative indigo rendition of the male original and flaunted it in DDB's halls the next morning. As I walked past Sachi, Phyllis Robinson's assistant, Sachi smiled while wagging her head "wrong." A little later Phyllis commented that she liked my "Vogue-ish" attire, "Bet it is warm too." Several other copywriters slew clever quips about me, in front of me as if I wasn't there. (For seven plus years there were almost always a party of copywriters and/or art directors surrounding my desk experimenting with ad ideas or laughing at the day's Andy Capp cartoon from Britain.) (Did you know that "The Silver Fox" also enjoyed your banter?)

Late that morning after you all left, Leon emerged from his den and thrust a typed message towards me. This was definitely not his style. What the heck? "Hand deliver this to Bill." Huh?

Leon lowered his head and held the message closer to me. Gulp. "Yes, now?" "Now."

My trudge to the elevator seemed endless. No less endless, however, than the scary trek toward Ms. Parisi's desk. Although we had met cordially many times before, now I was in this pantsuit thingy. She looked me up and then deliberately all the way down. My knees would have been audibly knocking but there were these pants legs covering my legs. She grinned and waved me to "enter." Oh dear.

After very slowly opening one of the castle doors, I pitty patted in. Bill, the always perfect gentleman, stood. Smiled. I was terrified. He said only this, "Toni you may have a man's name, but I prefer you in women's clothing.

"Whew, a soft reproach. Bill slowly walked around his desk, took the message, gave me a quick hug on my oh so padded jacket's shoulders, before I bolted away.

It was not until the following winter that I dare wear that thingy again.

Toni Laub
DDB Copywriter



One David Reider, One Leon Meadow Story

David

I was working with Chuck Blas on a long copy ad for Chemstrand Tires and we were running a little late. We took it to Dave Reider's office late one afternoon for final approval. He lays the copy down on his desk, swings his glasses up onto his head, and hunches over the copy really close. If it were in braille, he could have used his nose like finger tips. He's so close, his head is actually moving left to right and back again like a typewriter carriage.

Minutes go by without comment. Finally, the account guy who met us there says to Dave, "We really have to move on this one Dave, it has to go out tonight."

Dave keeps reading and with his face still inches away from my copy, says, "Oh, this won't be ready tonight."

Over the years I got the unpleasant news about copy rewrites and revisions zillions of times. But never quite like that.

Leon

I'm down on one knee in a long, fairly quiet corridor. Clasp the body of a balsa wood plane with my left hand to steady it, my right hand is furiously turning the prop to crank up the long rubber band that powers it. I wanted to see if it would roll down the corridor on its little red plastic wheels, pick up speed, and actually achieve lift-off. (Things like that are important to know.)

The rubber band is getting lumpy with tension. Just a few more turns for good measure and this baby is good to go. Suddenly, intruding onto my runway, I see a pair of shoes. The shoes are on the feet of Leon Meadow. He doesn't say anything. His face, if anything, is slightly resigned, the way a head counselor might look at camper up to no good. He turns and leaves without a word. The plane, if I recall at all, gets off to a promising start but before it can gain enough speed, veers into a wall and flips over on its back like a dead bug.

I'm a little foggy on the plane because frankly, at that point my mind was elsewhere. Only the day before, I'd begged off a particularly unattractive assignment from Leon, telling him how insanely busy I was.

Now I'm sure Leon appreciated the fact that being a junior trying to live up to the standards established by the living gods who supervised us, was tension-producing, and required breaks. Lots of them. He also knew, no doubt, that juniors exaggerated their workload, hoping they'd be free enough to take on the rare but always hoped for plum assignment.

I had a guitar in my office. And I wasn't the only one. Evan Stark's office had a dart board and a basketball hoop played with ping pong balls. Leon, and DDB, were pretty understanding about stuff like that.

And I had occasion after that to tell Leon I was too jammed to accept some little toad of an ad he was asking me to take off his hands. Often it was actually true. Gentleman that he was, he never brought up anything about planes.



My first [and almost last] Bill Bernbach encounter

I had been at DDB for only two or three months and was keeping a very low profile quietly confining myself to my secluded office and working on Polaroid trade ads that no one ever noticed.

One afternoon, after a long liquid lunch with my good friend Peter Murphy, I found myself sharing the same elevator with Bill Bernbach.

Searching through my alcohol addled brain for a witty way of introducing myself I facetiously asked Mr. Bernbach if I could kiss his ring. (Those Kilroy martinis could certainly produce some great quips: My first idea was to tell him that, like Alan Ladd, he looked much shorter in real life.)

Bill did not respond with words, but the laser stare he gave me sobered me up rather quickly.

I decided to bail out at the first elevator stop and moved to the front of the crowded elevator. As I was getting off the elevator on one of the lower floors, I heard him asking Murphy who I was. Peter without hesitation answered that he had never seen me before in his life.

I later expressed my fear for my DDB career to Murphy. Peter told me not to worry. He suspected that all WASPs looked the same to Bill.

After that I continued keeping a relatively low profile and hiding behind tweed jackets and rep ties.

Lou Delamarter
DDB Copywriter

Almost lost weekend

One Saturday, I came in and found a bunch of assistants and bullpen guys/gals? standing outside the 24th floor sales-pro bullpen door. It was locked. nobody had a key. We all needed to get our work done. Being the crazy kid from the Bronx who once did a handstand on top of the Whitestone Bridge, I thought I'd take a look out the window behind the reception area wall and see if the window was open. It was —about 4". Without anyone knowing. No one would have approved and I am sure each would have wrestled me to the floor, I went out the window. With one foot on the outside receptionist windowsill side and the other foot across to the bullpen windowsill side, I reached down and pulled up the window, while straddling the 24 story drop. I climbed inside and opened the door from the inside surprising the group outside the door. Of course they were shocked.

The only specific person that I can actually remember being there was Rich De Pascal, because we later had a one arm pushup contest that I handily beat him at.

Rich Ferrante
DDB Art Director



Only at Doyle Dane Bernbach could this have happened

In 1979, I was working with Roy Grace on IBM and Helmut Krone on Porsche.

Late one morning, Roy and I were finishing up some IBM ads when his secretary Carol Arevalo came in with a message from Nancy Underwood – "Mr. Bernbach would like to see Roy as soon as possible to talk about IBM."

"Why don't you come with me?" said Roy. "If the news is good, you should share the glory. If it's bad...well...why don't you come with me?"

When we arrived at his office, Mr. Bernbach (to me, he was always Mr. Bernbach) was reading a personal note he'd received from C.R. Smith, the legendary retired CEO of American Airlines. Through the years, they had remained friends.

"Come in, fellas. How's it going on IBM?" asked Mr. Bernbach.

Roy said everything was great on Typewriters. But we had run into a brick wall on Copiers. We had presented a TV/print campaign featuring George Burns. And one person – one out of about 30 people in the approval loop at IBM – had "non-concurred." Under IBM's non-concur system, it took only one person to say "I non-concur" and everything stopped.

We described the George Burns campaign to Mr. Bernbach, starting with the print ad.

"Can I see the ad?" asked Mr. Bernbach.

Not really explained Roy. The comp was at IBM. The only thing in the agency was the old original rough layout, but it was all marked up with instructions for the bullpen to make the comp.

"Can I see the rough?" asked Mr. Bernbach.

When Carol Arevalo brought the rough upstairs, it looked worse than I had remembered. The corners were torn. There were big heavy markings everywhere: Instructions for the picture size and position. Instructions for the headline typeface and pt. size. Instructions for where the headline and the dummy body copy should go. Specs for the size and location of the IBM logo. It looked like a mess. But despite all this, Mr. Bernbach could see the idea.

"Well, fellas," he said, "this is the kind of work we should be doing. And this is the kind of work they should be buying."

And as he said this, Mr. Bernbach rolled up the torn marked-up rough, slipped a rubber band around it and headed for the door with the old rough in hand. "Fellas," he said, "this is your lucky day. Because I'm seeing the Chairman of IBM at lunch."

We couldn't believe it. Bill Bernbach was walking out the door and taking our torn, marked-up, rolled-up rough to show the Chairman of IBM. Roy offered to find the negative for the comp, have the stat house work extra fast, and deliver a print of the comp before dessert.

But Bill Bernbach didn't need a picture-perfect comp. He had the idea. And that was enough. "Fellas, if I can't sell this...well..."

Two hours later, Carol Arevalo appeared in Roy's office with another message from Nancy Underwood –



Mr. Bernbach has just returned from lunch. All the problems regarding George Burns have gone away. The George Burns IBM Copier campaign is approved.

Only at Doyle Dane Bernbach could this have happened.

Tom Yobage
DDB Copywriter

My Dad and Mr. Bernbach

I was a junior writer at DDB and my first ad for Barton's Candy "How To Be A Good Lover" had caused a great stir in the press, with disc jockeys, who read it on Valentine's Day, and from people I didn't yet know at DDB. My Dad, who was a great letter writer, had read in the ad column of the NYTimes that the Parker Pen Company was looking for an advertising agency. Without telling me, he wrote to Parker, sending them a copy of my ad and telling them this was the kind of advertising they could expect from Doyle Dane Bernbach and why they should be their new agency. One afternoon, looking into the hall from the office, I saw Bill Bernbach. I thought he was coming to chat with Ron Rosenfeld whose office was next to mine. But no, he came in and walked over to where I was sitting. Rapid heartbeats on my part. Mr. Bernbach thanked me for the agency being asked to present to the Parker Pen Company. He thought DDB had a good chance of winning the account. When he saw that I was looked totally confused, he said very gently that "Oh, I thought you knew that your father sent them a copy of your ad ..." "Oh, my God, he didn't" is all I could say. "But I think we may have the account," Bill Bernbach said very gently, smiling at my embarrassment. He thanked me again and left. From that time on he always had a very warm smile and nod for me whenever we passed each other. I had many encounters with him ... a lot of them killing ads I was defending. He was always gracious!

Frada Skar Wallach
DDB Copywriter

You're working for DDB now

The very first TV spot I did was a black and white commercial with the cast of the "Leave It To Beaver" show, to be filmed in Los Angeles. I was so thrilled to be at the Beverly Hills Hotel in glamorous Los Angeles, that I took my wife to share this exciting experience. This was a considerable expense for a young couple. We were at a little table for two in the corner of the Polo Lounge sharing a salad niciose for dinner. I felt a shadow cross the table, I looked up and there was Ned Doyle. "Aren't you the new kid on Polaroid?" I sheepishly said "yes". "What's that you're eating?" I replied, "salad niciose". "GET RID OF IT!". "What's your favorite food?" Still stunned, I said, "steak". "ORDER IT!". He turned to my wife who by this time was halfway under the table. "And your favorite?" "LLLLlobster," she demurred. "ORDER IT, your'e working for DDB now.!" And with that he wheeled and headed straight for the bar.

Sid Myers
DDB Art Director



“Change some of the words, Bill?”

At our first meeting with the Alka-Seltzer people they told us that they were going to introduce a cold tablet and name it Alka-Seltzer Plus because it was Alka-Seltzer plus an antihistamine and a decongestive.

Bill told them right away that the name was a bad one and that it would cannibalize their Alka-Seltzer brand but they said it was already being shipped to retailers and they needed a quick TV commercial to run when the product was in the stores.

Sid Myers and I were told to do a spot right away.

We knew that it had to be something simple because we didn't have time to do something complex.

Sid and I decided to spoof the type of pharmaceutical commercial that featured a man in a white coat standing behind his desk and doing a spiel.

The difference between ours and the ones people usually saw was that our man in the white coat was heckled by a voice from off-stage.

The spot quickly brought awareness to Alka-Seltzer Plus, but Bill was right and the product did eat into the sales of Alka-Seltzer itself.

Right after we finished the spot, Sid left to be a director as well as a partner in Richards & Myers productions and I was immediately teamed with Roy Grace.

I give you this information as a lead-in to my actual story.

Before we ever got to shoot an Alka-Seltzer spot, Roy and I were asked to do a follow-up commercial for Alka-Seltzer Plus.

We came up with a concept which was approved by the client and we prepared to shoot.

The spot featured a man in his underwear sitting on a cake of ice, while his wife shivered in a warm winter coat.

Oh yes, it was snowing outside and a blowing fan was sitting in the window.

The premise of the spot was that the man wanted to try this new cold tablet, but wouldn't do it until he actually had a cold because as he said in the spot "I'm an ethical human being, Ethel".

There was dialogue back and forth throughout the commercial (it was in the day of the 60 second spot) and Roy and I were having trouble with the director almost from the moment we starting filming.

The director decided that the man on the cake of ice was a professional type who was teaching his wife about how the Alka-Seltzer Plus tablet worked.

Roy and I told the director that we definitely didn't want our actor to be a professorial type.

Our vision was that the guy on the cake of ice was actually a nut case.

At lunch, we spoke with the rep from the studio and told him about our problem with the director, and he told us he would take care of it before any more film was shot.

He did that as promised and the director shot it our way.

When we started cutting the spot, we realized that we were looking at a man with a split personality.

The early part of the spot featured the professor and the second part was taken over by the lunatic.

Despite what we had on film, Roy and I edited the spot as best we could.

When we finished "Evans Cold", we came back to the agency and called Bill to let him know the spot was ready to be seen.

Roy and I went to the screening room and were joined there by Bill Bernbach and Joe Daley.

After we all saw the spot on the (relatively) big screen, Bill asked for it to be rerun because he said he found the spot confusing.

After we ran it again Bill said he still found it a little confusing and then turned to me and said "Could you change some of the words, Evan?", and I replied quizzically "Change some of the words, Bill?".

"Yes Evan", Bill said, "change some of the words", to which I replied just as quizzically as before, "Change some of the words, Bill?"

Now Bill was starting to get annoyed at me, as I could tell by his tone of voice.

He said "Evan, you're a writer, aren't you?" and I replied "Yes, Bill".



He followed that up with "And you have a typewriter, don't you?" and I again responded in the affirmative.

"Then", he said "change some of the words".

Fortunately, Joe saved my ass by intervening and telling Bill that I couldn't change any of the words because the words on the sound track have to match the lip movements of the actors.

"Is that right, Evan", Bill asked.

"Uh, yes", I replied to which he followed up with this directive.

"See what you can do to make it clearer before it goes on the air".

Directly after our meeting with Bill and Joe, Roy and I went straight to Bob Gage's office (Bob was then Creative Director) and pleaded with him to do a commercial with Bill so that Bill would understand how you go from a storyboard to a finished spot.

Bob said no way and smilingly told us to get the hell out of his office.

Of all the millions and millions of people who have seen movies since the advent of sound in film, I had to run into the one person who didn't realize the sound track had to match the lip movements of the performers.

Fortunately, he let me stay on the account long enough for me to create "Mamma mia, that's a spicy meatball".

Along with Roy, of course,

Evan Stark
DDB Copywriter

Another Side of Bill

One day, in the late '70s, I discovered a whole other side of Bill Bernbach.

We both happened to be on the same plane to LA: I flying there to shoot a commercial, Bill going to spend some time with his friend, Jonas Salk, in La Joya. The seat next to mine was vacant, and Bill, who was sitting a row or two in front of me, spotted me and asked the flight attendant if he could change his seat. When Bill sat down, I, of course, smiled warmly and told him what a pleasant coincidence this was – however, all I could think of was how I am going to spend the next five hours with this man who for years I've spoken to primarily about advertising. Was I in for a surprise!

Bill was one of the most pleasant flying companions I ever had. We discussed everything from art (we were both Picasso fans) to literature (Joseph Heller, whose daughter was a copywriter at DDB, took up quite a bit of time) to politics (Bill knew my uncle, who was then administrative director and general clerk of the State Supreme Court in Brooklyn).

As I remember, we didn't talk about advertising at all. The time flew faster than the 747. Everyone remarks about Bill's brilliance in the field of advertising. That day, I learned it covered a whole lot more.

Mike Mangano
DDB Copywriter



"Hello Mr. Bernbach"

My first meeting, if you could call it that, with Bill Bernbach was in an elevator. He said, "Hello," and I mumbled a weak, "Hello Mr. Bernbach."

I was 22 years old, fresh out of art school and had been at Doyle Dane Bernbach for one month.

It was 1963 and by then most of the first shots of what became known as the Creative Revolution had been fired (by Bernbach and his troops).

Bill was leading the agency by roaming the halls and dashing in and out of art directors' and writers' Offices, but hadn't yet made it back to where the young Turks like myself sat over glue pots pasting ads together.

So this accidental encounter in the elevator terrified me.

After all, this was Bill Bernbach: the Bernbach that everyone in the agency constantly talked about and whose approval was all that mattered to every art director and writer at DDB. Selling work and winning creative awards paled in the face of being able to say, "We showed the ad to Bill and he liked it."

"Bill liked it" were the three most important words in the world to a creative person.

For a year after that first encounter, my exposure to Bernbach was limited to the halls, elevators and the DDB Christmas party at the Waldorf Astoria.

Then one day (I was a junior art director) when I was in one of my mad rages over an ad that was killed by a client, I announced to the Account Executive, "I am going to see Bernbach. I've had enough of this client."

And before I could stop myself there I was sitting outside of his office next to his longtime secretary Nancy Underwood, and shaking like a leaf.

To my amazement the man sitting behind the round table spoke to me more like a caring grandfather than like the mythical figure I was in such a nervous state about meeting. He was patient, listened, looked at the ad and gave me some interesting ideas for improvement. Before I knew it, I was back downstairs working on a new ad.

It was like a dream. Did I really just have a meeting with Bill Bernbach? I went storming up there like some self-entitled creative brat and he treated me with the utmost respect and kindness. He took the time to listen to this young egotistical kid from Brooklyn with an accent that made English sound like his second language. He provided me with lifelong inspiration and confidence about who I am by telling me that I was one of the young talents in the agency and he was expecting big things from me.

As the years passed, my relationship with Bernbach changed. I became more comfortable in his presence, but it was always clear that he was the teacher and I remained the student. He repeatedly asked me to call him "Bill" and my reply was always the same: "Mr. Bernbach, I can't call you anything but Mr. Bernbach." He'd laugh and we'd go on with whatever we were talking about.

I discovered things about him I certainly didn't expect.

If he didn't like a particular ad in a campaign that you presented to him he simply ignored it. He never would address why he didn't like it or why it didn't work—he simply ignored it.



I learned this the hard way in a meeting with Bob Gage. We were showing Bill five new ads and I noted that there was one ad he hadn't said a word about. I did this several times and on the final try I received a swift kick under the table from Bob. As we were leaving his office Bob whispered to me, "If he doesn't talk about it, he doesn't like it."

If Bill suggested a line for an ad, it was more than just a suggestion.

I learned little things about him...like he was a fastidious dresser and only wore blue shirts because someone once told him he looked best in them, plus they photograph well. On a trip with him to Chicago I found he was a "white knuckle flyer like myself. And that every once and awhile he spoke above a whisper.

While I still adored him I started to see that he wasn't perfect. I think this made most of us who worked for him love him even more. He was human and had faults just like the rest of us.

My relationship with Bill Bernbach became one of the most important in my life. To this day it's hard for me to talk about him without tears welling in my eyes. I still have the note he took the time to write to me when I left DDB in 1971. His ideas about the business have been my guiding principles.

He pointed out that we are not in the communication business (as many thought then and still think today), but in the persuasion business:

That persuasion is not a science, but an art. That research, customer insight and product information may tell us what to say in an ad, but it was the how you said it that really mattered (never more true than it is today).

That how you said it took talent and figuring out how to say it in the most impactful and effective way took special talent.

This is what I and every art director and writer then and now owe Bill Bernbach.

He made talent count.

He made the business one where wit, intelligence and artistry not only mattered but were essential to succeed.

He gave us and the world a different view of what we did every day for a living.

He called it the "aesthetic choice."

That's why even though I worked for greats like Carl Ally, Mary Wells and Jay Chiat, I never really stopped working for one man: Bill Bernbach.

*Bob Kuperman
DDB Art Director*



Eskimos in the Salmon Building

A true tale of Doyle Dane Bernbach's first creative gangbang and how I lost it. During the first of my two relatively brief stints at DDB, I was partnered with a much more senior art director, Alan Buitekant, and assigned to come up with a new campaign for Rheingold Beer and thereby save the account. This was a doomed mission, with three strikes against it:

Strike 1: The campaign which we were supposed to replace, created by Ron Rosenfeld and Sid Meyers, was one of the great TV campaigns of all time. A celebration of New York City as melting pot, each spot featured some kind of joyous ethnic celebration - a Jewish wedding, an Italian christening, an Irish guy passing the civil service exam - I don't remember exactly, but they were all great, with beautiful film and music tracks that would make a Nazi get up and dance the hora. Rosenfeld's copy was short, quirky, and brilliant. It went roughly like this: "In New York City, where there are more Jews than In Tel Aviv, why do more people drink Rheingold than any other beer? We don't know. We must be doing something right." I may not be remembering the copy verbatim, but I know the last line is correct because it instantly became a popular catchphrase. Rosenfeld had taken a hackneyed claim - essentially "New York's largest-selling beer" - and, by radically underplaying it, made it fresh and memorable. The spots were warm, humane, and life-affirming. Everyone loved them. Except the client.

Strike 2: Whenever you are assigned to "save the account", the account is probably well past saving. After all, this client had the most talked-about beer advertising in the country (which, incidentally, actually sold beer) and they still weren't happy. I was a 25 year old copy punk who had spent a couple of years at that citadel of hackdom, J. Walter Thompson, and had produced nothing particularly memorable at DDB. Why was I getting this job? (Why, at Doyle Dane Bernbach, where there were more great copywriters than anywhere else on earth, did more great copywriters pass on this assignment than any other until the Hubert Humphrey campaign?) Where were Stark, Honig, Green, Levenson, Robinson, Noble, Silverman, Dillon, etc. etc.? What about the writer of the famous Utica Club Beer advertising, Dave Reider ... well, I'll get to that.

Strike 3: Bernbach had an idea.

When my very first ad at DDB was rejected by the account people, being a pliable drudge from JWT, I was prepared to start over. But Hal Silverman, my supervisor, said, "We'll take it to Bernbach!" Taking a rejected Polaroid trade ad to Bernbach struck me as a little like taking a parking ticket to the Supreme Court. First of all, the ad wasn't that good, and second of all, this was Bernbach, whom I had accepted as my Personal Savior but, like Jesus, had never actually met.

Bernbach did not look like the person who had overturned the advertising applecart. Small, conservatively dressed, formal to the point of being almost prim ... and soft-spoken. In an office full of tumblers, shouters, drinkers, swaggerers, and even hitters, he was the ad whisperer. Neil Schreckinger*, the droll and urbane account supervisor, presented the case for the prosecution: He and Joe Daly agreed with his account executive that my headline could be misinterpreted to mean "Don't buy this camera."

The ad whisperer spoke: "Neil, people are perverse. They don't believe everything they read. It's a nice ad." Case closed. Justice rendered. Over the succeeding months, this happened a few times. So up until this point, I had seen Bernbach as the reincarnation of Cosimo the Magnificent: a benevolent patron of the advertising arts with consummate good taste. I had forgotten that he was also a copywriter.

An art director and copywriter being paired up for the first time is like a blind date. (Will it just be talk, lunch, or could it go all the way to layout?) Buitekant had just done the Clairol Great Day campaign with Ron Rosenfeld and some other notable stuff. He was hot. He was also overbearing, opinionated, and caustic. I liked him immediately. We would eventually become business partners and remain friends for life. In spite of what I am about to do to him.



For the first week we met in Alan's office every morning where the conversation would often turn to all the great New York foods we might associate with Rheingold Beer: Katz's pastrami **, Schaller und Weber's sausages, Umberto's clams, etc. This would make us very hungry and we would go to lunch.

The problem with this campaign direction was that it was a lot like the Rosenfeld/Myers campaign (which the client had abandoned), but with more kielbasa and fewer Poles. And who would want to do a reworked, watered-down version of that great campaign? As it turned out, Bill Bernbach.

*When I saw Hal Silverman at our reunion and got to this point in the story, he interjected, "Neil knew better." Where else, forty years after the fact, would a creative person feel compelled to defend an account person? For that matter, where else would we all feel compelled to applaud and cheer as the pictures of our old supervisors were flashed onto a screen? Collegiality was part of the DDB culture. We liked each other.

** Pastrami was introduced to New York by the grandfather of Patty Volk, who used to work at DDB as a copywriter. Read her charming family memoir, "Stuffed"

One morning while Buitekant and I were once again sitting in his office making each other salivate, Bernbach appeared and nestled into the unoccupied director's chair. He had been thinking. What he had thought of was, "In this town, either you have it or you don't." The point being that New Yorkers were intolerant of anything second rate. Therefore, if they liked Rheingold Beer, well

What I didn't realize was that Bernbach having an idea was like Michael Jordan saying, "Give me the ball."

It probably seems disrespectful to refer to him as "Bernbach." Everyone in those days used the familiar "Bill", whereas I always addressed him as "Mr. Bernbach". He never said, "Call me Bill," and I never did. "Mr. Bernbach" acknowledged his supremacy. I had probably noticed from my brief service in the US Naval Reserve, that you could give your superiors all kinds of grief as long as you never forgot to address them as "Sir". So when I went up to his office to explain to him what was wrong with his idea, I was careful to call him "Mr. Bernbach."

First of all, I pointed out that his idea was a lot like "We must be doing something right," but not as good. And, I went on to explain, while he had obviously achieved success, a lot of the people who drank Rheingold Beer hadn't. So unless you defined "having it" to mean being a really good cabdriver, the theme might not resonate in Queens.

I later realized that me criticizing Bernbach's copy was like a mouse criticizing a lion: "No one likes the mane - it has to go. And the claws are a turnoff." After I'd finished, Bernbach said, "Well, John, anytime you feel this way, I hope you'll feel free to come up here and tell me so." Missing the irony, I thanked him and started to leave. Bob Gage, who'd been sitting at Bernbach's table with a bemused look, said, "You do realize that you're fired, of course." But I wasn't. Lions don't condescend to eat mice.

In retrospect, "In this town, you either have it or you don't" may not have been that bad an idea. Some years later Sinatra would get a lot of mileage out of "If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere." But I didn't feel like writing what seemed like an inferior sequel to a great campaign. So, even though Michael Jordan was right under the basket, yelling for the ball, Buitekant and I decided to go for the three pointer: We'd drop the whole New York thing and do something entirely different. Rather than something emotional, something rational. Something with a product superiority claim. The new advertising people at Rheingold were former P&G product managers. They loved that stuff.

The brewmaster at Rheingold, Dr. Owades, came up with two claims: The head on a glass of Rheingold was so stable, you could write your initials on it. I don't know what this signified, but when we tried it, it didn't work. He also told us that Rheingold was krausened (aged) at a slightly lower temperature than other beers. This seemed to be true, which led us to



"Rheingold Beer. Brewed in America's coldest Brewery." Suspend your judgment here. This story is not about which campaign was better.

Budweiser might own beechwood aging. Coors might own Rocky Mountain water. We were going to own cold. So, on a sweltering summer day, when you thought about cold beer, you were going to think about Rheingold. The new tap pulls would look like they were encased in ice. We'd put artificial snow on the delivery trucks. As for the commercials, I recall that one featured a board of directors meeting where everyone was in parkas. In another, a brewery tour group was freezing to death. And at some point in every commercial, a penguin waddled through frame. Bernbach said that he loved it. As for his campaign, since he'd had Bob Gage and Dave Reider working on it, naturally he would have to present it, too. This was like Casey Stengel telling you, "You're my guys, but since I've got Whitey Ford and Yogi Berra warming up, I have to let them play a couple of innings."

There was an understanding in those days at DDB that when a team was given an assignment, it was theirs. They might nail it or they might fumble it, but there were no alternative campaigns, no creative gangbans. Now, for the first time, there was a back-up team. We had a feeling it was probably not The Three Advertising Immortals. It was probably us.

We could have accepted our fate. Or Bernbach could have just killed our campaign. But he was too much of a gentleman to pull rank that way. He would let us present our work. He didn't know who he was up against. Buitekant was a terrific presenter. Besides, I had an idea: In order to dramatize the fun of our Siberia-in-the summer concept, we would show up for the presentation in Eskimo suits.

Being older and wiser, Buitekant knew that this was a lousy idea. First of all, it was antithetical to everything the agency stood for. DDB's work was cool, cerebral, and witty. This was cornball schtick. There was no way I was going to get him into an Eskimo suit. However, eager to help save the Rheingold account, the DDB wardrobe department had sprung into action. Within hours, a moldering cardboard box materialized. And inside were not tacky costumes, but the real thing: Caribou fur parkas with wolf fur trim, caribou fur leggings, handsewn mukluks, bear fur mittens, snowshoes with rawhide laces...They were even accessorized with fake ivory necklaces and harpoons. These outfits were relics of "Shangra-La", a Broadway musical based on Frank Capra's "Lost Horizon". (The fact that "Shangra-La" had closed after 22 performances was probably not a good omen.) But we had been seduced. The suits were simply too good not to wear.

"What the hell?!" said Ned Doyle when he tottered back from lunch to find two sweaty Eskimos seated outside Bernbach's office. Alan then put on an impromptu puppet show with his bear fur mittens, in which two fuzzy creatures met, nuzzled each other, and eventually copulated. Being half in the bag, Ned found this hilarious, which encouraged us.

Bernbach's secretary, Nancy Underwood, was a model of efficiency and discretion. (As you'd expect from a secretary named after a typewriter.) Sensing a fiasco in the making, she now attempted to warn Bernbach via the intercom: "Mr. Bernbach? Alan and John are here..... yes, they're here but ... I think you should know that ...they're here but ...alright, I'll send them in." What now followed would forever redefine "bad timing".

When we walked into his office, the usually imperturbable Bernbach gaped momentarily. Gathering himself, he said, "Ah...that's ...that's very ... humorous, fellas. We're not quite finished presenting Bob and Dave's campaign, so ...uh ... why don't you have a seat."

There were only two chairs available. Buitekant took the one at the round table where Bernbach, along with Gage, Reider, and Ed Russell, was presenting his campaign. I settled into the Eames chair and tried to affect a casual look by crossing my legs, which is not easy with snowshoes.

For the next 20 minutes, as the presentation continued, everyone tried to avoid noticing that two Eskimos had entered the room. Unfortunately Buitekant found himself seated between the two Rheingold clients. "Shangra-La" had closed



over a decade earlier. Stressed by the move from cold storage to the toasty Salmon Building, his parka was shedding clouds of fur. In those days, all P&G execs and former P&G execs wore dark blue suits. The only thing they hated worse than funny commercials was lint. With an air of mild irritation, they would periodically try to brush clumps of caribou fuzz off their sleeves.

It was obvious that Bernbach was selling his campaign hard and that they were buying it. So, by the time it was our turn, we were not only irrelevant, but slightly miffed. Buitekant narrated the TV spots while I pointed to the frames with my harpoon. Everyone chuckled in the appropriate spots, after which Bernbach praised our campaign as “fresh” and “original” (tactfully omitting “dead”), which was obviously our cue to leave.

As we exited, Bernbach tried again to soothe us by complimenting the work as “fresh” and “inventive”. Buitekant said, “We’re available for bar mitzvahs.” Yes, we felt we’d been treated like a cheap novelty act. Like Senor Wences following a Laurence Olivier reading on the Ed Sullivan Show. Perhaps there’s something about wearing an Eskimo suit in July which prevents people from taking you seriously.

As we sat in Buitekant’s office that afternoon licking our wounds, Rich Vitaliano came to the door and said, “Hey, I heard you guys did something, but you didn’t really do what ... (SPYING THE ESKIMO SUITS CRUMPLED IN THE CORNER:) ... oh, you did.” To my recollection, no one else ever mentioned it again. As I said, collegiality was part of the DDB culture. It was as if the whole thing had never happened. At about 4 o’clock, a messenger came to pick up the Eskimo outfits. And the only remaining trace of the misadventure was a faint trail of caribou hair leading to the elevator.

Postscript

Alan Buitekant submitted this story for the book of recollections assembled for DDB’s 25th anniversary in 1974. It was omitted, probably because it seemed disrespectful, although the intent was entirely otherwise. Bernbach was too gracious to kill our campaign outright and too courteous to leave us waiting outside his office. In that sense, it was all his fault.

John Crawford.
DDB Copywriter

It’s Still Wrong

Paul Margulies and I were working on a special, pet project for Bill. It was to be a brochure for a NY Hospital seeking donations to build a teaching facility.

Paul had just taken a new job and was in his notice period when we went upstairs to present our idea to Bill.

The brochure copy took the form of quotes from famous people who'd had experience with the Hospital. Now Mr. Bernbach was clearly upset that Paul was leaving, as he could be when anyone left the nest.

He loved the idea, but then he started to pick apart the sentence structure of one of the quotes. Paul reminded him that it was a quote after all. Bill's frustration and a bit of anger showed and he said, "quote or not, it's still wrong!"

He not only loved great work, he loved his people as family and hated to see them leave.

Bob Reitzfeld
DDB Art Director



Safari

The morning of my first day back at the office after being away 3 weeks on a Safari, Bill came into my office, closed the door, sat down and asked me to tell him all about the adventure.

I finished up with our being chased by a thundering rhino, the puff adder that crawled under my tent floor to shed its old skin and how we accidentally surprised a pride of dozing lions

All the while the roof hatch of our vehicle was wide open. Bill listened intently then said to me, "Les, if I knew it was going to be that dangerous I never would have let you go."

A Mac Dane story:

Back in those days you had to go to Mac Dane to get his ok for a raise for your assistant. After I explained to Mac how hard working Ralph Gustavson was, and that he was ready for a raise.

Mac agreed to a raise for him, but added, "You can tell Ralph that if he can wait 2 months, he will get a good raise." I asked Mac what a good raise would be, Mac smiled and said, "That depends

If you're getting the raise, or if you're giving the raise."

Lester Feldman
DDB Art Director

Advertising Man of the Year

When Bill was named Advertising Man of the Year, he was going to be introduced at the installation dinner by his friend and Seagrams client Mr. Bronfman. Bill called me up and asked me to write the introductory speech that Bronfman was going to make about him. I'd never written a speech about anybody, let alone my boss and my idol. I needed some guidance. And who better to ask than Bill's personal secretary Nancy? I went up to her office and said that while there were tons of great things to say about Bill, I didn't want to go overboard. And she looked at me and said, "Hal, there is no overboard."

Hal Silverman
DDB Copywriter



Making A First Impression on Mr. B

For starters, in my almost four years at DDB, I'm not so sure I ever called Bill "Bill." But hating to sound like I wasn't part of the team, I didn't call him "Mr. Bernbach" either. So I avoided sentence constructions requiring any form of greeting, the way some of us avoid calling our in-laws "mom" or "dad."

Somewhere in my first few months at DDB, I went up to Bernbach's office to show him a billboard idea for Ronson lighters with my art director, Jim Raniere. Bernbach said the line was nice but a little too generic and would sell other people's lighters. Whereupon I piped up with something like, "What's the difference if we sell a few competitor's lighters, as long as we sell more Ronsons?"

Oh boy.

A chill came over the room. He didn't scold, or scowl or describe how far up my ass my head was. He simply behaved, from that point on, as though I wasn't there. Which, at that point, I'd have preferred!

Now consider an early impression made by my office mate, Marvin Honig.

We shared a long, narrow office, and because I was there first, I had the window and Marvin got the door.

Back then, a bunch of us – Marvin, me, Mike Lawlor, Mike Mangano and Evan Stark – went to lunch just about every day, mostly Kilroy's. My apologies to anybody I'm leaving out. In those more humanely paced times, we also went home around 6, 6:30 every night.

At the time, Marvin smoked Tiparillo's, the thin plastic-tipped cigars made famous on television by Edie Adams, who suggested men come up and smoke her some time. Even now my glasses steam up a little.

One day at lunch, Marvin described the following incident. While he was standing, leaning over Bernbach's desk to make a point, the Tiparillo between his teeth slipped out and, weirdly enough, landed exactly in the "v" formed by the fore and middle finger of his right hand, looking for all the world as though it were something he did all the time – could do in his sleep. And Bill, Marvin said, saw the whole thing.

"From that point on," he said, "I really had his attention!"
Yeah, you could say that.

Marvin, to put it mildly, got dealt a really lousy hand later in life. But in those golden, Garden-of-Eden 60's, even the Tiparillo's were falling right. And even his slip-ups worked out better than mine.

Nat Russo
DDB Copywriter



How I got my job at DDB

In 1961, fresh out of college, I joined the Army Reserve. It required 6 months of active duty instead of the 2 years I would have had to do if I waited to be drafted. But the Berlin crisis put the Army on temporary freeze. Nobody was going out; nobody was going in. I was in limbo. So I took a job selling Life magazine subscriptions on the telephone while I waited to be called up.

One night I was watching a television talk show called "PM East" with Mike Wallace. His guest was an advertising man who headed a small creative agency. The man was Bill Bernbach and he was talking about his agency's campaign for Volkswagen. The ads were clever, provocative, different than anything I had ever seen and I remember thinking to myself: "It would be great to make a living doing that."

I asked around and was told that the only way to get a writing job in an ad agency was to create a "book," write some ads of my own and submit them directly to the agencies. I spent the next several weeks fashioning my idea of great ads, putting them all together under a cover letter and sending the package to 5 different agencies, including DDB. I got rejected by all of them. But DDB's Sue Brock wrote to tell me that although they had no openings she would be willing to talk to me about my work if I wanted to come in.

When I got to her office, she was polite but brutally honest. She saw some writing ability in the ads I submitted but it was clear to her that I knew nothing whatsoever about advertising. However, she said there was an associate of hers who was just then teaching a copy course at NYU. He had offered to have me audit his class at no charge. I jumped at the offer and the following Thursday evening was sitting with about 20 other students in Bob Levenson's copy class. The same Bob Levenson who wrote the Volkswagen ads!

He spoke. I listened. The veil dropped from my eyes.

Every week Bob would give the class an assignment as homework for the following week. When my first assignment for an orange juice brand met with his approval, I was walking on air. Eight weeks later, after the last class was leaving, Bob asked me to wait behind. He said he wanted to keep my homework assignments to show to some people at DDB; there might be an opening for me after I got out of the army. (That thought alone is what got me through the miseries of basic training at Fort Dix in February.) I called him the day I got out. He introduced me to Mary Wells, who hired me as a copy trainee in her group; the first trainee ever hired at DDB.

Since then I have had a lot of great moments in advertising. But one of the greatest came several years later when I was working on an ad campaign for American Motors – covered by Life magazine.

Charlie Moss
DDB Copywriter



The Blind Art Director

As you know, the old DDB was a highly charged working environment. Unusual creatives will do unusually creative things to relieve the intense stress of having to meet the relentless never ending demands to come up with new and exciting ads the likes of which no one had ever seen or imagined before and then have to spend endless hours and days waiting to hear from on high what their fate is going to be.

In addition to honing our skills at throwing pushpins like darts into the cork wall of the 24th floor screening room or pitching pennies against it, we put on endless skits and musicals and what, in to today's contemporary art world and at the Museum of Modern Art, is currently referred to as "performance art."

Acting out was a big part of our day.

The old building on 43rd street was a rabbit warren of offices that trailed off down long corridors. Many were abandoned as people moved around a lot and all kinds of odd things got left behind. Those offices were a treasure trove of props. One day Chuck Schroeder and I found a folding long white telescoping cane used by the blind to navigate by tapping and sweeping the sidewalk before them. Who knows how it got there.

Bingo! The blind art director was born.

One creative would take the stick and put on sun glasses, and another creative would lead him into an art director's office and announce that here was the art director sent from on high or from the client to evaluate the work and, in an effort to make things move more efficiently and avoid revisions, make corrections and suggestions to improve things. Of course, the blind art director would savage the layout, typeface, letter spacing, photography, color choices, etc. while moving his/her fingers back and forth over it and knocking things over with the stick.

Well, as you can imagine, this was hysterically funny.....a few times. But it got stale fast.

But, being who we were, rather than let it die, we took up the challenge, just as we always did, to try to expand the idea into something new, bigger, funnier. The more hopeless and stale an idea, the harder we tried to make it funny. Anybody can make funny funny. It takes genius to make boring and unfunny funny.

Our blood was up and the hunt was on!

Rumor had gotten out about the blind art director, and we fanned the flames.

One of the duties of an art director was to go to the "light room" and meet with reps from the engravers to evaluate press proofs and make corrections. There was a new rep who had just been assigned to DDB who was trying to establish himself against stiff odds. With it's big high profile accounts and it's brutal, demanding, picky, snobby, self-agrandizing art directors DDB was the Mount Everest of engraver's reps.

Over a week or two, he was allowed to over hear amazed art directors discussing the new incredibly talented art director who had just been hired. He was BLIND! He could actually see with his hands!.

"What!! You're kidding!!!"

"No! I swear! I didn't believe it, either!"

And, man, was he talented! It was downright miraculous!



The day came when, sure enough, the new rep had a job for the blind art director. Since I wore really thick glasses, I was to be the blind art director. Dom lead me in, banging my cane back and forth followed by a couple of other suitably awe struck art directors the guy already knew. They introduced me very nonchalantly. I held out my hand, of course not in the right place, and he had to move to shake it. Dom led me over under the lights as I bumped into things and banged things with my stick.

I held my hand out over the proof. Slowly, I moved my hand back and forth over the proof for a while. "Oh, very nice.....this is good here.....ummmmmmmmm, I think this is just a little too red.....but just a tiny bit.....oh-oh, what's this..... don't like the contrast here, it feels muddy, snap it up!.....pump up the darks!!!!.....make it SIZZLE!!!!... ..etc.". The guy's jaw dropped!!! He was in shock!!!!!!

But, of course, we couldn't stand it!! Guys were wringing their hands with tears in their eyes. Somebody began to snicker and it was all over!! But, it had worked for a minute, well, thirty seconds, at least.

We gave the rep a big hug! He was IN! He was a made man at DDB! You never saw a happier guy!.

But, the thing that was so wonderful was that DDB was such a magical place that people could actually believe that an art director worked there who was so fabulously talented that it made no difference that he happened to be totally blind.

Well, for a minute.

John Eding
DDB Art Director

Jane Talcott
DDB Copywriter



In the beginning

Over the years DDB's work has been characterized as "Creative", "Provocative", "Witty", "Audacious", and even at times been called "Outrageous".

But as much as all of those adjectives would be considered true, they really don't describe what made DDB's advertising so special.

That unique quality was best described to me during my interview with Bob Gage when I applied for a job in the Art Studio at DDB in the late 50's.

As Bob was looking at the portfolio I had put together at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, a well dressed gentleman wearing a nice grey suit and tie, walked into his office. Bob introduced him as "The Boss". I would later find out his name was Bill Bernbach. The boss looked over Bob's shoulder as he flipped through the pages of my work, then he asked me a very odd question,

"Charlie, what kind of job are you looking for?"

I said "I would like to be an Art Director some day".

He looked up at me over his glasses, and said, "We don't really need an Art Director". Oh boy, I thought, there goes the job. Except that at Pratt along with doing ads, I had studied package design, so I quickly responded, "I am also a designer".

He responded, "No, we don't need a designer either".

My last shot was based on some calligraphy samples I had in my book, so I said, "I can also do Hand Lettering".

He shook his head, and finally he said, "I can see you have lots of artistic talents", but let me ask you another question, "Would you like to be a salesman?" That's what we really need ". A Salesman? I must be in the wrong place?

"No, I'm sorry," I said, " I don't know anything about being a salesman".

He smiled, and said, "That's OK, we'll teach you.

To which Bob added, "See you Monday morning".

One of the first lessons I learned as an Art Director at DDB, was that the best graphic you can create is a bold line going upwards on the Clients sales chart.

Charlie Piccirillo
DDB Art Director



The Golden 60's

One of my earliest assignments after being made an Art Director was a PSA ad for the Public Library. Full page, NY Times. Wow.

How did this one get by my supervisor, Bill Taulbin who seemed to glom all the plums? Probably because he also assigned me a ton of small space ads for EL AL that would run in the Tel Aviv News, where the ads would be translated into Hebrew.

In any event it was a big opportunity and me and Monte Gherlter so we spent some long nights working on it. We finally came up with the idea of using the alphabet as the visual.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

I set the line in 12 pt type and placed it in the middle of a full page of white space.

Monte's headline still holds the record of being the longest headline ever written in DDB history. However, it was brilliant:

In your Public Library they have these arranged in ways that can make you cry, giggle, love, hate, wonder, ponder and understand.

I sent the copy out for type (remember that) and in the morning did a rough paste up.

I was so excited I decided to show the ad off to the art director next door, which just happened to be Helmut Krone. He took a long look, then he said, or rather growled, "Boring".

I was crushed. I spent the next 2 days and nights putting together a dozen new versions, using every imaginable alphabetical visual device from children's blocks to a bowl of alphabet soup.

Then the trouble was, I couldn't make up my mind. So I called Nancy and asked if I could come up and see Mr. Bernbach. To my surprise Nancy said he was coming down to see Bob Gage and would stop by my office on the way. Bill come to my office? I called all my Art Director buddies to come take a look.

When Bill came in I had all 10 versions pinned to my corkboard. He glanced around and looked as confused as I was. Then he said: "This is a really good idea Charlie, but boy did you screw it up".



Why don't you just put down the alphabet in small type across the page as the visual. It would be much more powerful."

I said, Bill, that's the way I started, but Helmut thought it was boring".

Bill shook his head, and as he walked out he said, "Charlie I'm going to see Bob Gage now, and the first thing I'm going to tell him is to give you a raise, then I'm going to tell him change your office".

The Library ad won my first Gold Medal at the 1962 Art Directors Club Award Show.

It's still my most treasured.



Charlie Piccirillo
DDB Art Director
1957 / 2001



DDB...THE START

Before Phyllis Robinson hired me...the second writer she hired and the first she didn't fire....I worked in the ad department at Macy's. In those five years, I never met a soul in the art department. I got my copy assignment, I wrote it, with luck my creative head OK'd it, and the traffic department ran it off to God knew where. Fifteen years later on a beach in Acapulco, I met a guy, a total stranger, who was an art director while I was a writer, in the same store at the same time in the same ad department.

That was what Bill Bernbach changed. And that change...as brilliantly simple as putting an art director and a writer in the same room on the same assignment...was what revolutionized advertising. DDB broke all the rules and ruled its world. The great years of advertising were the building years of the 50's and the glory years of the 60's. Those are the years you're celebrating at this reunion, and those are the years I remember with the most warmth: working with Bob Gage on Crackerjack, with Bill Taubin on Levy's, with Charlie Piccirillo on Ohrbach's, with Lester Feldman on Lehman Brothers.

What happened? The first of the decade recessions. The early 70's. Clients began looking less at the headline and more at the bottom line. Control shifted to the guys who once said, "Bill, if you say it's OK, go ahead". Now, they trusted only testing, the infamous focus group. Every penny was shaved: the two-second break between TV spots vanished, so you didn't know when one ended and the next stepped on its heels.

DDB fought back. Bill fought back. Ned Doyle kept his account guys loyal to the creatives. Mac provided the glue of warmth and humor. But the change ate away. And hasn't stopped. Advertising ain't what it used to be.

Still, you have your own memories. I hope you relish them. I hope you're proud of them. They're golden, and the way this world is going, there may never be anything like them again.



Judy Protas
DDB Copywriter
1952 / 1997



The Dreyfus Lion

Bob Gage and Bill Bernbach hired me on March 24, 1954 to do Sales Promotion designing (brochures, posters, etc) for their campaigns. Bob put me at ease by telling me they don't expect me to do my best work until I've been with them for 6 months. The Agency was 5 years old then and about 50 people strong.

A year later Bob made me an Art Director! I joined the illustrious group of Gage, Krone, and Federico.

I was given the smallest accounts; Bartons Candy, Dormans Cheese, Flexalun and Dreyfus. Jack Dreyfus ran a 60 line ad in the Times on Tuesdays. That was the extent of it. A few months later he asked for a TV commercial to promote his fledgling Mutual Fund. This was 1956 and the Agency was barely into TV, but since it was my account I was assigned to create it. Phyllis Robinson, the great lady, who was the copy chief was to be my partner.

All the information we had to work with was in that 60 line ad whose words were carefully vetted by the SEC and an illustration Jack loved of a lion from some Coat of Arms. My thinking was this is DDB so go wild! "Let's put a live lion on Wall Street." Phyllis literally took me by the hand into Bob Gage's office, where he and Bill were fashioning another great Ohrbach's campaign, and prompted me to tell my idea. They bought it and so did Jack.



How to produce it? DDB hired a freelance producer who had me show up at 6 a.m. on Sunday on Wall Street, look into the camera where they duplicated the angle in my storyboard then told me to go home. The producer then flew to L.A., shot the lion against rear-screen projection of the street, brought it back and we ran it. It never occurred to anyone at the Agency to have the Art Director at the shoot. Remember, this was 1956.

Phyllis' generosity in crediting me was typical of her's and Gage's and Bill's and Mac's and Ned's attitudes to us creatives.

I stayed at the Agency for 37 more years.



*Lester Feldman
DDB Art Director
1954 / 1991*

The Iozzi Method

In the summer of 1966 I arrived early for my first day on the job at Doyle Dane Bernbach; a real advertising agency. I had been kicking around small design studios for a couple of years. These places were usually run by cheap-skates or tyrants, or both. Part of my duties, besides keeping the water - color paints moist, would be to deliver work to advertising agencies. While there, I couldn't help but notice that the guys were cooler, the women were beautiful and putting your feet up on the desk was acceptable. I immediately wanted to be part of that action. Realizing that I was a mediocre designer and an even worse messenger boy, I put together a portfolio that was probably a 5.5 out of 10. I wasn't too isolated not to have heard of DDB, so when the Bullpen job was described to me by a headhunter, I jumped. Without getting too sappy about it, that moment was when I found a career.

During my interview, Lee Epstein lectured me about standing up when ruling the crop marks at the top of the mechanicals to avoid making a measuring mistake of perhaps 1/64th or 1/32nd of an inch. Then he offered me the job of Bullpen drudge for \$85 per week. I took it.

As if to say, "we're different from all other ad agencies," DDB started the work day at 9:30. Most milked this largesse for all it was worth. Because of this 9:30 start, anyone arriving at 10:30 was still pretty much considered a conscientious employee. On the first day, I showed up at 9:00 A.M. I should have gotten "Employee of the Year," although one day on the job may not have qualified me.

On day one I met Joe Iozzi, Hugh Cunningham, Mitch Leichner, Ron Alberti and Joe Cappadonna and got a dire warning from them about a guy named Dom Marino who was away for military service in the Marines. The line on Dom was: cocky, arrogant, and had an inside track on a promotion when he returned. I also was introduced to my glue pot.



After Dom's triumphant return from Parris Island, we were up to full strength and this antagonistic little group chugged along. In spite of the negative reviews, Dom and I immediately became great friends. Like the seven dwarfs, we each had our persona. Cunningham, the wild spirit. Iozzi, the intense. Leichner, the bashful. Alberti, the suspicious. Cappadonna, the lay-back. And Marino, the man on a mission.

I would describe myself as "the old man"; twenty-three compared to twenty-one for the others. In fact, Dom might have only been twenty. I was pretty easygoing but I could relish destroying another guy's work just as much as the next guy. This was essentially what kept us all going. If you couldn't feed your creative ego at the expense of the other guy, why bother being in this business?

It didn't take me long to realize that I was working in the sales-promotion bullpen, and not the one that prepared all the great magazine and newspaper ads that made DDB famous. No, that studio was one flight up on the 25th floor. It was our job on 24 to prepare all manner of brochures, folders, flyers and inserts. And though many of these were creatively of the highest order, there was no doubt that we were second class citizens. So even though some of the most talented people inhabited this division of the agency, most attempts at advancement were met with extreme prejudice.

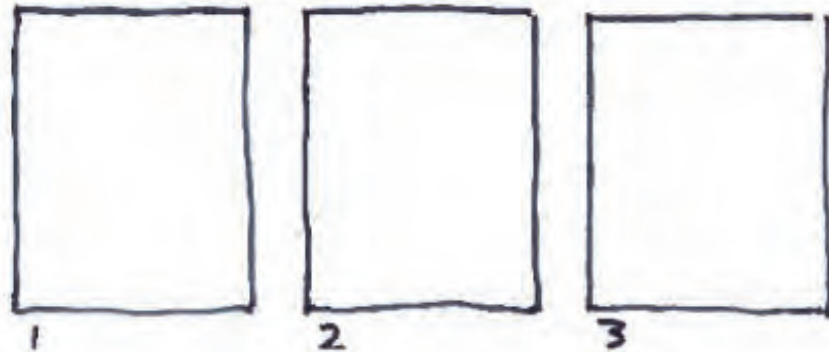
The way forward was not easy. The only way to get promoted was to re-work your portfolio every time an opening for assistant art director occurred. It wouldn't do to show the same stuff you got rejected with the last time. If only I could become an assistant art director! I'd have my own office, just one boss, and the greatest thing - a chance to do my own real ads.

But this was all up to Ben Spiegel. When it came to promotions, Ben was the man. About every few months, the word would go out: "there's a call for books." Maybe one job was open, maybe two. Once again we all submitted our work for inspection. And once again we all sat there as the rumors filtered down that one, two, even three jobs went to the folks from the mainstream studio. Being on the 24th floor was a real hindrance to advancement.

In this tumultuous den, we wore our careers on our sleeves. Every ad that each of us created for our portfolios was subject to the most vicious attacks from the other in-mates. After all, this was Doyle Dane Bernbach and if your work didn't approach the standards set by ads such as "Think small" or "You don't have to be Jewish," you deserved to be humiliated. Sometimes things got a little out of hand and anger, jealousy and frustration would rule. Alberti took to locking his work in his desk, hiding it from the rest of us, which wasn't the best political move. He would have been better off taking it on the chin.

A kinder form of attack was having any stupid thing you might say immediately scrawled directly onto the wall with magic marker. I was enshrined by saying: **"I never say anything that makes the wall."** There's a chance we may have committed a few fire code violations. I can confess now how we would encircle a victim with rubber cement on the floor and then light it. Or how we would make flamethrowers from markers and spray fixative cans. We heated pizza in the dry mount press and I can say with a certain amount of pride that I personally destroyed Bill Bernbach's C-print photos of his Japan trip in same device. Management allowed this insanity either to allow us to blow off steam or because they had long ago written off this contaminated area.

I spent many hours looking across my drafting table at Joe Iozzi. With dark intense eyes and jet-black hair, he was the picture of obsession. No one was more dedicated to the idea of promotion than him. Every day he feverishly dedicated himself to this pursuit.



All people in advertising know that to demonstrate the viability of a print campaign, you must show at least three ads. Iozzi's approach to this requirement was to draw three boxes on a sheet of paper. Before even having an inkling of an idea, Joe would stare at these empty rectangles for long periods of time. Sometimes when ideas didn't come, he would

throw away the sheet and start a new one. I often thought that staring at three boxes before you even had one idea was a little presumptuous. But it worked for him.

Sooner or later, Joe would fill all three boxes with ads. However, after some merciless attack from the rest of us, he would have to retreat and admit that he could do better. At that point, I would watch Joe re-inscribe the three magic rectangles. Sometimes we would all fall prey to the Iozzi Method. It was a great psych job. The thinking was that if one could draw three outlines, filling them with brilliant advertising was simply the next step. It was just a matter of time. Creatively, however, there's always that little bit of a mystery. What came first? The ads? The idea? The boxes? The paper? Lunch?



Iozzi, Scordato, Marino, Cunningham & Schwenk

Eventually, we all managed to escape glue city. Cappadona (who was voted by the women in the agency as the guy they would most like to be trapped in the elevator with) by charming his way into the national bullpen which was a more direct route to promotion; Cunningham got a job at Cunningham (no relation) & Walsh for the inconceivable salary of \$10,000 a year; And Marino, by dint of his energy, got one of the coveted Assistant AD jobs in a few months. Alberti, too, made it out. Eventually, the man who originally hired me, Lee Epstein, re-hired me, as his assistant.



After three years – one in the bullpen and 2 with Lee – I left for the lure of more money and, what I thought at the time, more opportunity.

Years ago, Robert Fulghum wrote a book titled, All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. I believe all I now know about advertising was what I learned in the DDB Bullpen. The great work I saw fly in and out of that crazy room inspired me, and the competition gave me a thick skin. You can't push yourself if you crumble in the face of criticism. We all emerged better for the experience.

In some way, the Iozzi Method is ingrained in all of us. Get a big idea, make sure the ads fit with that idea, and for God's sake, make sure there are three of them.



Thanks to DDB for teaching me about the mysteries of advertising. And thanks to all the great people I met there...especially the guys in the Bullpen. May your rectangles always be filled.

Nick Scardato
DDB Art Director
1966 / 1969

Chemstrand ad

Bill was on vacation when I did it. When he saw it when he got back, he kinda hemmed and hawed, suggesting it "went too far." Bill was always thrown when ads got a little sexy.

When I told Bill the Chemstrand client called the morning it ran and said it got immediate sales of leotards, calling it the most successful trade ad they ever ran, Bill wanly smiled and said, "keep up the edgy work, George."

I was at DDB from only 1958 through the last day of 1959.



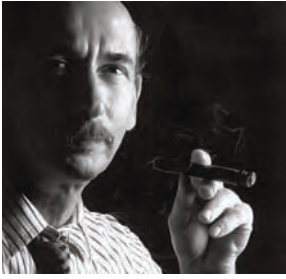
George Lois
DDB Art Director
1958 / 1959



Roy

the fact that roy was
the best television art director
in the history of advertising...
was only the tip of his iceberg

what most people didn't know
was how many other things roy had mastered...



he was an accomplished
carpenter
electrician
mason
plumber
cartoonist
fine artist
writer...

he seemed to master any endeavor he undertook
he was truly a renaissance man

but the thing i loved most about what roy mastered
was his sense of humor...
he was dry, sharp, incisive and lovingly disrespectful...

like the first time roy took me to lunch,
as we were leaving he called out to his secretary
"carol, i'm taking jim to lunch, i'll be back in 20 minutes...
or the first time he gave me a raise, i seemed happy, so he said
"jim, my maid makes more than you"...
and when i mentioned to him
that another agency was interested in hiring me he said,
"tell them we'll pay half your salary..."

he was also enormously generous
bringing me to, shoots, edits, and voice over sessions
i watched him make advertising history
and became part of it
by pasting meatballs on to bowls of spaghetti
for one of his storyboards...
he went on vacation one summer
and let me cover a commercial called "funeral"
he was that confident in his work...

for those of us who worked for or along side roy
it was tough love all the way
and sometimes it was just tough,
like the time i walked into his office one day
looking for sympathy for something stupid i did,
i said "roy when i tell you what i did, your gonna want to fire me",

he said "jim, be careful, your talking to hitler"
which kept the total amount of times he fired me at 3...

but i came to realize
roy was simply demanding a level of excellence from others
that he demanded from himself...

he demanded that excellence from himself when he was confronted
with the battle of his life he kept what he was going through to himself,
never complained, didn't change and never lost his sense humor...

he was truly heroic to the end...

if God judges us on how well we used the gifts he gave us
i'm sure he will be well pleased with roy, because not only did he fulfill
his enormous potential with masterful success, he filled the people
around him with an inspiration that shaped their lives



Jim Salfone
DDB Art Director
1968 / 1992

roy, succeeded in finding a special place in the advertising hall of fame, the museum of modern art,
but most of all in the hearts of all those people who loved him so much...he is irreplaceable

and i'd like to add on more thing to that list of things he mastered...
he was my hero

Between the two of us

Roy Grace and I are in a crowded DDB elevator.



As I leave, Roy shouts out:
"Bob, don't forget my shirts.
Medium starch on hangers!"
Behind a roar of loud laughter, I see Roy smiling.
The next morning, I tell him his joke wasn't funny.
Because "I'm Japanese, not Chinese!"
With a smirk, he slowly replied,
"Nobody else knows the difference."

Roy was staying at the Beverly Hills Hotel.
I called the front desk to leave him a message
of great urgency.
"Its importance requires the utmost speed for you
to hand-deliver it to Mr. Grace!"
They guaranteed my request.

The message: "Mr. Grace, your toupee is ready."
Signed: Matsumoto of Beverly Hills.



Bob Matsumoto
DDB Art Director
1964 / 1969



Turns Out Laughing Is Just Like Riding A Bicycle

It all comes back to you. Just like that. It's not that I don't laugh today. I do. But the laughing I did at Doyle Dane in the '60s was different. I was part of a group. A member in good standing of a talented, smarter-than-smart, smart-ass group.

Although it wasn't so easy to get in. I remember Marvin Honig constantly challenging me with his one-liners. It was like watching a prize fight. Marvin was Ali. I was Frazier. He'd jab a good sarcastic one and I'd take it on the chin or bob and weave with some pretty lame replies. Then one day I decided I'd had enough. I mean, I was from Brooklyn for God's sake. And Sicilian. Are you kidding me?

So the next time I saw Marvin, I put on the gloves and landed a good one. He looked surprised for a beat, then started to laugh. And from then on we pelted each other with one-liners every chance we got. I was in.

I can't really remember now what it was that made us laugh so much. (Humor being fleeting and all that.) But I do remember that for four years at Doyle Dane Bernbach, I laughed.



The way I'm laughing now writing back and forth about the reunion. Even on email, it all comes back to you.



Jackie End
DDB Copywriter
1965 / 1969



Remembering Doyle Dane Bernbach (A Love Story)

I recently read of Doyle Dane Bernbach's 50th anniversary. The idea of that jolted me into writing this piece, a nod to more than nostalgia. I started working there as a copywriter when the agency was 19 and I was 20. It was a miracle.



Two years before I got hired, I was a student at the School of Visual Arts channeling my ability to draw and paint as a kid into a 'commercial art' course of study there. I was a sheltered, Orthodox Jewish boy, only recently taking to walking around without a yarmulke on my head. I was shy. It was Doyle Dane that led me out of a fairly repressed youth. I am eternally grateful.

I was a decent student at SVA. My first year there, 1966, was designated 'Foundation'—a bunch of art-related courses like photography, sculpture, two-dimensional design. Year two, you got to specialize.

In 1967, not only was Doyle Dane Bernbach happening, Mary Wells had just opened a hot-shot agency. Carl Ally was new and noticed. Ed McCabe burst onto our consciousness. Taking the subway to Manhattan, I became transfixed by posters for Benson & Hedges 100s, Levy's Rye Bread, Horn & Hardart. In magazines like Look and Time, I swooned over Volkswagen ads and Avis ads while other teenage boys were ogling Playboy. I used to rip out the Mobil ads and tape them to my Brooklyn bedroom walls the way other kids hung Hendrix and Beatles posters. I wanted to be in advertising.

Our teachers were practicing art directors. One teacher of mine, the lone copywriter, was John Emmerling, who worked at Y & R. He had such glamour to me, showing us his Tiparillo ads and his work on The Peace Corps. (Give a Damn.) John Emmerling was tall, blond and handsome. A skier. He taught the one writing class two hours on a Thursday morning. John took a special interest in me, and once a week, he would invite me up to Y & R for an individual class, one on one, critiquing my work more closely, giving me additional assignments. He thought I could write.

In two months time, I had enough good, fake ads to fill a black, vinyl, zippered portfolio. I had made the switch from art director to copywriter in my head and on paper. It was May. The school year was ending soon and I had to decide if I was to spend my last remaining year there, the advertising course of study a three year thing.

"Leave SVA," John said. "Transfer to a journalism college. Keep writing. (That last bit would be what many published writers have said to me since; this was the first time I heard it.) Or, try to get a job."

He asked me where I thought I wanted to work. I said, without missing a beat, "Doyle Dane Bernbach."

"Good luck," he said, or actually, smirked.

It's a blur, the next week or so, the actual dropping off of the work, and to who. A couple of days later, I got a call from Leon Meadow, the 'head of the copywriters'. We set up an interview.

It was towards the end of May. I remember the suit I wore. Grey wool. The best suit I owned. (The only suit I owned.) I was a superstitious kid; I stuck a small glass crystal ball in my pocket for good luck. I couldn't imagine they would actually want me—my only other work experience was selling shoes over summers at my father's store. But up I went, to the 25th floor of 11 West 42nd Street. To Leon Meadow's office.



I sat opposite him as he hauled my book onto his desk. He flipped the acetate pages. "Nice work," he said. "Now, it is you who did all these?"

"Of course," I said. "Every single ad." I was frightened, but a small part of me was proud of my work, hand-drawn and rough-hewn.

"It's one thing to do this kind of thing in school. Something else entirely in a work environment," he said.

I was extremely nervous, sweat trickling down my back beneath the layers of cotton and wool. I palmed the glass ball in my pocket.

"I mean, let's say we do hire you and in six months time, you're not able to deliver this level of work here. I'm afraid then we would have to let you go," he said.

"I understand," I said, my heart beating under my tongue.

"So, if we do take a chance on you, and I think we just might, we would pay you, to start, 65."

In the shoe store, I was used to being paid by the week. I quickly tried to multiply that figure by 52. It had happened too fast for me to compute.



Leon pulled a small white pad closer to him and started doodling. Hy, he wrote (the first time I saw my name as Hy, until then it was Hymie). 65, he wrote, then added two zeros after it. \$6500 a year he meant. \$125 a week!

Just like that. Doyle Dane Bernbach. "Thanks," I said.

We worked out a starting date, he handed me a bunch of forms and brochures. (I didn't believe this was actually happening; few days in my life are as significant as this.) I called John Emmerling to blurt out my news.

"What?! You're kidding me," he said. "I've been trying to get into that place for years!"

My first day, I wore a navy blue blazer and a new tie bought for the occasion, wide diagonal stripes, Christian Dior, from Lord & Taylor, and the same hot grey wool slacks from the interview suit. I was shown to my office, a small square room with no window. On the desk was a Royal typewriter, bigger than a breadbox. Also, a black rotary phone with a red hold button, my extension: 8585. And an interoffice directory, a black plastic book with binders. On the cover, two Ds in maroon and grey, one on top of the other, forming a B. I opened the book. The pages were tan, unlined, and held the names I knew from the awards annuals: Bob Gage. Bill Taubin. Phyllis Robinson. Dave Reider. Helmut Krone. Roy Grace. John Noble. Evan Stark. Bob Levenson. Ron Rosenfeld. And there was my name, in the same size type, first name on the top of page one. I even had a secretary, Debbie Pollenberg she was, who took messages for eight or so of us writers and art directors. I was one of them. A writer.

There were a lot of young people around, a bunch of art directors working in a communal space known as 'the bullpen'. It was a warm and welcoming place. The offices were fairly drab, frosted glass doors, fluorescent lights, flat grey carpeting or shiny black floors. Sounds chic today, but then it was thought of as plain and dull. Word was the place was too busy doing great ads to think about the décor.

And the great ads just kept pouring out of the place.

My first ad, a trade ad for an obscure gin, was a bomb. During my first six months, I floated, assigned to no group



in particular. I did some Polaroid trade ads, some Sara Lee small space newspaper. We were given two weeks to do each ad and I needed every hour of those two weeks. Then, an additional week to write the body copy. Hal Silverman was my first supervisor. Then, Lore Parker. (Where are they now?) One day I got assigned an El Al trade ad. El Al was one of the biggies. Bill Taubin was famous for designing an early El Al ad showing the ocean, a first (overcoming the fear that a plane could plunge into it), and Bob Levenson was writing: My son, the pilot. Someone did an ad: This Christmas, spend Channukah in Israel. El Al was the real thing. The ad I was assigned to was directed to travel agents, touting Israel as a tourist destination. The art director and I, in two weeks, came up with a stock photo of a guy water-skiing, the wake behind him in two distinct waves. The parting of the Red Sea, 1969, I wrote. It worked.



I was put on a Sony trade ad. This this stereo stereo tape tape recorder recorder has has an an echo echo chamber chamber, I wrote. I was getting there.

Leon Meadow called me into his office one day and told me I was being assigned to the Volkswagen account. John Noble was to be my supervisor (my second John mentor). My responsibilities were trade and radio. John's office was like a museum of magnificent ads, all hung neatly and squarely. There are a lot of good cars for \$3,400. This is two of them, with an overhead shot of two VWs. And for the camper: There's no place like car. And: It takes you to extremes, exemplifying VW's rear traction in snow and on sand. And dozens of others. Down the hall from John on that hallowed 25th floor, other ads on the walls. Live below your means, Frances Caldwell. Even when it's empty, it delivers, Norman Muchnick, for the hatchback. Buy low, sell

high, Tom Messner. Lemon and Think small were done earlier, setting the tone. But the later work, John Noble's and Roy Grace's were as catchy and clever as anything Larry Gelbart was writing at the time. Or Woody Allen. Or Stephen Sondheim.

I felt no pressure, surprisingly. The thing about Doyle Dane Bernbach was it was so inspirational. You had to do your best, you never felt like sloughing off, everyone was watching, every client was buying, there was no reason to do anything but your absolute best. There was rarely a crunch, never a gang bang. If deadlines weren't met, deadlines were postponed. One team worked on one assignment. Clients, every last one of them, waited, it seemed breathlessly, for the brilliance to emerge. Insertion dates were canceled until the creative team was ready to solve the problems in a unique and memorable way. We could have been working for the New Yorker, the ads were that urbane. That literate. That smart and charming and funny and bright. With no account planners, no strategists, no research, no focus groups, we handed our internally approved ads to traffic people who trafficked them to the account group. Next day, sold. Not one word changed.

In a month or less, it would be a slick, color magazine proof. I gathered all mine up, every last one, and laminated them, hung them on my walls. Everywhere, in every office, you saw these ads!

Telefishin', Tummy Television, Walter Cronkite vs. Daffy Duck, all for Sony, selling small, second black and white televisions while RCA Victor and GE were selling console tv sets as big as easy chairs. I will always remember my dumbstruck reaction when I read the last lines of the Telefishin' ad. The visual is a guy in a canoe with a fishing pole gazing at a cordless tv...and if the fish aren't biting, you can always turn on the news. And catch Robert Trout. I still get goosebumps over that ending.

They should have stayed in the lane they were in, for Mobil, visual of rows and rows of gravestones. And: In 1890 there were only two cars in America. Guess what happened? visual of two cars about to collide. We want you to live was the Mobil tagline. Len Sirowitz, Bob Kuperman worked on that account.

And, of course, there was Avis, with its tagline, its position still resonating almost 40 years later: We try harder.



Helmut Krone had all his ads up on the wall, written by Julian Koenig, Paula Green, David Herzbrun. They were indeed works of art with lines like: When you're number two, you try harder and, one of my all-time favorites because of the daring change of tense in the headline: The writer of this ad recently rented an Avis car. Here's what I found, showing an ashtray filled with cigarette butts, the opening copy: I write ads for a living. But that doesn't make me a paid liar, and goes on to admonish Avis for the oversight, telling them they must do better. The freaking honesty of this kind of thing. The intimate revelations. The cleverness. The un-advertising advertising of it all. It all worked like gangbusters..

With ads like: I found out about Joan, the groundbreaking one with the cat and the cigarette, Ohrbach's became the retailer, an early account, to cash in on the sass and the class of DDB. Does your babysitter look better coming in than you do going out? Ohrbach's wanted to know.

We sat, in pairs, in offices. Chain-smoking and brain-storming. Trying to meet the standard, set impossibly high, but, really, at that time, in that place, all in a day's work. I finally did believe I was a part of that high-toned agency. On VW I wrote ads with a young, talented art director named Ted Shaine. Ads like: Two ridiculous gimmicks of the 1940s, showing a sepia-toned photograph of an early VW and one of the first television sets. One hour later, it won't get hungry again, showing a VW actually used as a Chinese restaurant takeout delivery car filling up at a gas pump. I was proud to do that work, winning my early awards and getting recognition that still thrills me to this day. I was in my early 20s. Looking back, nothing has ever come close to that experience.



Much has been said and written about the place. People who worked there 30 years ago still talk about it as if it was 30 minutes ago. "When we were at Doyle Dane..." they'd say, like it was some sort of heaven, some kind of utopia. Which it was. I left too soon and never went back, but I have friends I still see from there, that place and that time, and we talk about it, our shared, profound experience. We were there, this elite group, in the middle of the making of advertising history. I don't often look back, but in this case, justifiably, I do. And grow mushy and misty with the memories.

I also remember this: Ron Rosenfeld, famous for his work on Sony and the Jamaica Tourist Board and Rival Dog Food, of all things, announced one day that he was leaving Doyle Dane for J. Walter Thompson. They had the RCA account at the time, they no doubt wanted his Sony magic to do the same for RCA, and more, and the word around the agency was that he was getting a staggering 100,000 dollars a year to run the creative department. (It was 1971.) Ron was a star in those years, resplendent in his Nehru suits with a Julius Caesar haircut. Doyle Dane didn't pay well, they didn't have to, and, often, writers and art directors landed jobs that doubled, tripled their salaries. Ron left, but came back inside of a year. "They wouldn't let me do my Doyle Dane thing," he said, in response. Simple as that.

Others of us complained about the low salaries, the supervisors with the egos who killed ads harshly, the funny neighborhood with the Library across the street when Bryant Park was a mess and Tie City was next door. We stayed nights, looking out at the lights of New York City, the Empire State Building before the colors, the Chrysler Building before the white neon. We went to The Tehran, a bar and restaurant on W. 44th Street between Fifth and Sixth where we talked about the ads we had done that day, reflecting in the glow of each other. We knew we were somewhere important. We certainly didn't know where we'd be flung years later—some of us to agencies of our own, some freelance, some dead, some with big jobs, some stuck. I kept moving. To bigger jobs and more money.



Hy Abady
DDB Copywriter
1968 / 1972

I do remember Doyle Dane Bernbach.

I never had another job like it.



He Always Gets His Man

In an alternate universe, Jerry Wagner would have been a secret service agent for the president. But at DDB in the '60s, Jerry was a traffic guy who would rather have taken a bullet than be late with an ad insertion.

Jerry couldn't plate an ad unless the art director and the copywriter put their OK on it. So, mechanical in hand, he'd speed down the hall to find us. It didn't matter if you weren't in your office, Jerry would sniff you out in stairways, board rooms, Gotte's eatery downstairs.

Nothing could stop him. Until one late Friday afternoon.

Jerry came whizzing down the hall, mechanical in hand, checking his watch and you just knew this was going to be a real squeaker getting that ad plated on time.

Jerry stopped in front of an art director's closed door and knocked. No answer. He yelled out that he needed the art director's OK or he would miss the closing. No answer. He turned to some of us hanging out and asked if the art director was in there. We said yes. What we didn't say was there was a secretary in there with him. But Jerry saw it in our eyes.

He hesitated for maybe a second. Then he rushed right into the office next to the art director's. Ignoring the creative team who were working in there, Jerry headed straight for the window, opened it and climbed out, 24 flights over the city. He worked his way on the ledge to the art director's window, opened it and climbed in. Two minutes later he climbed out, worked his way back on the ledge, climbed back into the office, looked at all our mouths hanging open then streaked down the hall to get the ad plated on time.

Nothing could stop him.



Deanna Cohen Drew
DDB Copywriter
1965 / 1985
1990 / 1992



My early DDB memory

Bob Kuperman was a year ahead of me at Pratt, so he had been working at a couple of agencies during my senior year. When it was time for me to look for a job, Kupe was working at Doyle Dane Bernbach. At school, we all knew about Doyle Dane Bernbach. It was the most creative agency in advertising. So that's where I wanted to be.

In order to get any job in advertising, I had to have a portfolio. Mine looked like an art school graduate's book. Design pieces, book jackets, album covers, drawings, paintings, but no real advertising. When I showed it to Kuperman he told me to put all the art school pieces in the back and to do a dozen tissue ads. The look wasn't important, he said, show them how you think. I did the tissues and showed them to Bob. He took my book up to DDB and I got a job working in the Sales Promotion bullpen. I didn't really know what "Sales Promotion" was or what a bullpen was, but I had a job at DDB right out of school. And that was incredible.



Bob Kuperman and Andy Langer

I started working almost immediately. I didn't even go to graduation. I was working.

The bullpen was filled with people who only did mechanicals. We cut apart the type, pasted it in place and followed the art director's instructions. It was a great place to learn. You'd see all the great ads that were being done in the agency and a number of different styles of art direction. But the object was to get out of the bullpen and become an assistant art director as soon as possible and we were all competing to escape.

About a week after getting the job, I was asked if I was a Democrat. I wasn't at all political, but my father was a Democrat so I said, 'sure'. I was put on the LBJ election team as an assistant working for Hal Nankin. I did this from June through Election Day and saw some amazing work, most of it anti-Goldwater commercials.



Jane McWhorter and Jeff Metzner

The day after the election, I was back in the bullpen. Usually you'd be in the bullpen for at least a year. But I got lucky. Jeffrey Metzner's assistant was being promoted. And Jeff wanted me as his new assistant.

Jeffrey wasn't like anyone else in the agency. While most everyone else looked like they worked at IBM, including me, Jeff had his own look. Pre-Beatle long hair, thrift shop clothes and a great attitude. He always looked like he was having a good time. And he was.

I started dressing like him almost immediately. It was fun going to thrift shops to find clothes. I could buy ten ties for five cents each, all from the '30s. My wardrobe had never been so big.

It wasn't just thrift shops, I remember a number of us going to a strange store in Chinatown to buy suits. They were packed in bales and the owner would hold one up and we'd say yes or no. We all ended up buying white linen suits for less than 20 dollars apiece. I wore mine the entire summer, until it turned yellow.

It was an amazing time. Art directors were like rock stars. At least art directors from Doyle Dane Bernbach were. And their assistants.



Andy Langer
DDB Art Director
1964 / 1969



O. K. LaMont

As you know, we all had to line up in that narrow corridor on the 24th floor outside of Bob Levenson's office to get our work approved. Everything we did at many certain points had to be OKed by Bob before we could move ahead. Additionally we also needed his OK to do or get things we needed like go on vacation or get more magic markers.

Bob was the only person who could OK these things in the whole creative department, and that meant that a whole lot of people needed a whole lot of OKs everyday. And the only way to get them was to go line up in that narrow corridor outside of Bob's office and hope that, sooner or later, you would be granted an audience by Bob's secretary who sat in a niche in the corridor ferociously guarding the door to Bob's inner sanctum.

The reason for the long line was not that Bob was a difficult OK hoarding Creative Head. No, Bob was most generous with OKs. Well, when it came to things like going on vacation or getting more magic markers. When it came to the work, things could get a little more ticklish especially if the work was, well, not the very best that you or anyone else of supreme talent like yours could come up with. But, such matters would always be settled quickly and graciously because Bob was extremely brilliant and extremely gracious.

No, the problem with the OK thing was not Bob.

The problem was OK overload. So many OK needs. So little OK time. We were in the midst of an OK crisis. We had a full blown OK Gap on our hands.

So it was that we all languished in that long line in that extremely narrow corridor with people squeezing past attempting to get to Floyd Stone's office to find out what times (plural) it was. (If you don't remember, for some reason, Floyd wore TWO Rolex watches and was quite proud of that.)

One day, while standing in that line, Dom noticed a hole in the wall across from him on the other side of the corridor that no one had ever paid any attention to. Curiosity got the best of him to the extent that he gave up his precious place in line to go explore it.

He discovered that what looked like a short dead end corridor to nowhere actually had a hidden turn that opened up unto a secret mini Ali-Baba treasure cave.

In his excitement, Dom ran and got me and a couple of other ADs. In the hidden room we discovered everything necessary to not only create an office, but also a person of great importance to go in it!

There was a metal desk, a derelict phone, a swivel chair, memos, papers, ad proofs, stapler, paper clips, etc. And there was a jacket, shirt, tie, trousers, even shoes and socks. We stuffed the clothes with old proofs and set the body up in the chair behind the desk. There was an old issue of Rolling Stone with a picture of Nixon on the cover. We used Nixon's face and put a mop that was laying there on top of Nixon for hair.



Voila! A new presence on the OK corridor, O. K. LaMont.

Now, if we couldn't get an OK from Bob, we could just step across to O. K.'s office and get a fake one to tide us over, no problem.

That way, if someone from Traffic like Gerry Wagner so riddled away with Traffic



anxiety that if he turned sideways and stuck out his tongue he resembled a zipper or sweet Harriet Messenger who was just plain.....well, you remember Harriet Messenger, came barging into our offices over and over and over screaming, "DID YOU GET AN OK, YET!", we could calmly reply, "Why, yes." And go on with our work without having to deal with a Traffic person meltdown.

I'm sure you remember that people wrote memos for O. K. George Rike wrote the O. K. Quiz memo. "What was the name of the coral where Wyatt Earp shot a whole bunch of bad guys?" "What is the abbreviation for Oklahoma?" Etc. It was hysterical. George was REALLY good at that sort of thing. I would give anything to see that quiz again.

Our goal was to actually make O. K. into a real person. There was talk of getting him hired, and we would take turns doing his work so he actually did stuff. And we would divide up his salary.

Word got out about O. K. LaMont just like word got out about anything that happened at DDB. Photo reps would try to get to see him because the word was that he was very powerful and the key to getting work and big juicy assignments. Kay Massarro (God bless her soul in Heaven) used to advise them, "Mr. LaMont is VERY busy today!" (Sometimes, she'd add, "He has lots of things he needs to OK.")

"That's OK, I'll wait."

"OK, I'll see what I can do to get you in."

They would sit there for hours.

Didn't you just love Kay! She was our mother!!

As for O. K.'s demise. Dom wrote a memo for O. K. that went something like this:

To: Creative Staff
From: O. K. LaMont
Re: Vacation

"I'll be on vacation for the next two weeks, so anything you do is O.K. with me."

O. K. LaMont

We were very careful about sending out memos from O. K., but, apparently, not careful enough. One day, I heard screaming coming from the corridor to Bob's office. Somehow, Dorothy Parisi had gotten hold of the memo. SHE WAS FURIOUS!!!! Within minutes a squad of office service men in blue uniforms swarmed the halls. POOF!!! Our beautiful O. K. was gone.....and a silence fell over the whole floor.



But, not for long!!!

John Eding
DDB Art Director
1968 / 1986



When Talent was King



I guess I arrived early.

It said in the lobby at 11 West 42nd Street. DOYLE DANE BERNBACH. Didn't it?

The hallways were dark. Not even a receptionist in sight. By 10 o' clock, stragglers holding cups of coffee began to drift in.

The receptionist was the last to show up. "Yes, can I help you?" "I'm here to start work in the bullpen." "Thata way." Pointing left.

October 1st 10:15, 1966, my career at DOYLE DANE BERNBACH begins.

I felt it even then. Not more than 45 minutes sharing the same air with future hall of famers. Talent. Talent everywhere.

My job in the bullpen [studio] was to prepare mechanicals for art directors and their ads. A perfect observation post to see talent at work.

The art directors lovingly carried their layouts in their hands as if they were 'sacred tablets.' "Stat this. Cut that. Move this over here." It seemed to matter enormously, precisely where the legal type was placed.

I was jealous. I wanted to walk around with 'sacred tablets' too.

We would all spend money on the gold standard of the day- Life magazine - so we could see the great ads that were created by our agency and others. The world was burning around us and we couldn't wait to see the latest Volkswagen ad. Buddhist monks torching themselves in the streets of Saigon but we only had eyes for ads.

I was enrolled in a night class at the School of Visual Arts along with everyone else in the bullpen. My teacher was an art director at DDB, Frank Cammardella. He taught the DOYLE DANE BERNBACH way of creating ads. "Make the ads a personal statement." "No advertising talk." "Do an ad your Mother could understand."

He would start each class with a favorite ad or campaign DDB had created.

"Funny that fat people have fat dog" one ad for Purina said.

"Skinny Chickens make thin soup says Henry Heinz. We don't use them"

"After we paint the car, we paint the paint" the latest Volkswagen ad proclaimed.

He made sure we knew which creative teams were the authors. Bert Steinhauser, Ron Rosenfeld, Roy Grace and Marvin Honig.

The headlines and the visuals dovetailed perfectly. Seemingly to come out a single brain instead of two. The creative team. A phrase invented at DDB.





From my birds-eye view in the bullpen I watched creative teams walk around the agency as if they were lovers. Side by side with their 'sacred tablets' in tow.

When they spoke about their ads [which was often] it was never "I" but "we." The love they had for their work showed on their faces. Pride. Proud to be in the creative department of the most creative ad agency in the world.

No one went home at 5:30. Into the night our juvenile talk about sex was replaced by "Did you see the ad Bob Gage and Jack Dillon did for Polaroid?"

After I was promoted to assistant art director, I felt I earned the right to hang out at DDB's local watering hole on 46th Street called The Tehran. There, classes resumed as we watched the 'soon to be legends' unwind. Just being there made us feel part of the revolution in advertising. There was no need for pep talks. We all knew we were working for the right place. We wanted to make history too.

The atmosphere at DDB was unique. A combination of stale coffee and kindred spirits. No fear in the hallways, just enthusiasm. No one was hiding behind closed doors. The teams were there on display for all to see. Bert Steinhauser's cluttered office, where once a rabbit lived for months to test a fact that Life Cereal claimed in a brief. Down the hall Evan Stark proudly had mushrooms growing under a mildew carpet in his office. Frank, the shoe shine man gave us valuable career advice while making change. Lenny Sirowitz with his immaculate white carpet, always tacking his ads neatly to his wall. You could close your eyes and point. An award winner North, East, South and West.

I learned from them by observation. Not imitation. There was room for only one Helmut Krone. One Phyllis Robinson. There was no DDB style to copy. "Make the ads a personal statement." "No advertising talk." "Do an ad your Mother could understand." That was the DDB way and I was proud to be part of it.

When I had the opportunity to do my first ad for Polaroid I was scared. "Polaroid was Bob Gage Country." My supervisors were gentle. They guided us to do a good ad. My rite of passage. Not quite an award winner yet, but on my way.

Now don't get me wrong. DDB was a very competitive place . . . but the creative people weren't competitive against each other. They were competing against the DOYLE DANE BERNBACH legend. The bar was constantly rising. There was so much good work being done, it was dizzying.

What impressed me most was the talent on every level. Young art directors started in the bullpen. Young writers started as junior writers. Basic training for the ad wars ahead. We all felt we had to earn our stripes. Learn our craft. Refine it. Like prize race horses we were treated like royalty . . . almost.

A lot was expected of us. We were the future of DDB and we took our job seriously. We studied other teams' work. We marveled at John Noble's body copy for Volkswagen. We drooled over Roy Grace's storyboards.

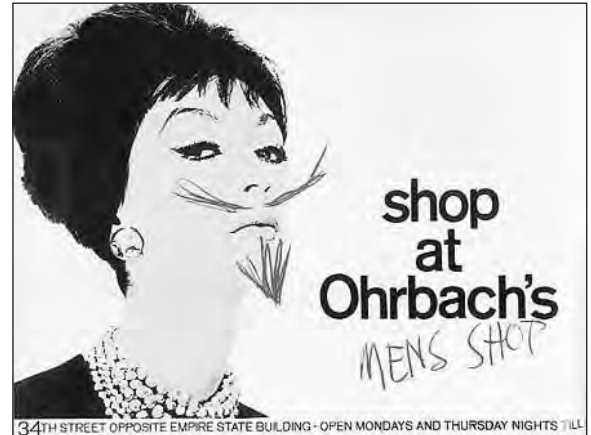




We were proud of Bert Steinhauser and Chuck Kollewe's Rat Bill Ad in the New York Times. "Cut this out and put it next to your child" The body copy went on to say: "You can't? Well, you have more common sense Go ahead. Try it, If you have the stomach for it. Lay it next to your baby and let him play with. You can't" Then you have a lot more imagination than some of the members of the House of Representatives."

These ads and hundreds others are forever neatly tucked in the scrap book of my mind. Always available at a moment's notice to inspire me and to keep me focused on the prize ahead. Doing a great ad.

Admittedly, there were great ads created before my time at DDB in 1966. They were the ads that lured us there in the first place. I remember a Ohrbach's subway poster when I was going to art school. The visual was a beautiful female fashion model with a red crayon mustache and van dyke drawn on her face. The headline read: "Shop at Ohrbach's Mens Shop."



Already in advertising history were the subway posters for Levy's Real Jewish Rye. African-American Altar Boys, Irish Policemen and Native Americans eating rye sandwiches with the memorable headline: "You Don't Have To Be Jewish To Love Levy's" We were writing more than ads. We were writing about life.

When Helmut Krone and Paula Green created: "We're No 2 in the rent-a-car business, we have to try harder" for Avis, they struck a blow for us underdogs.

When you owned a Volkswagen, you stood for something. Sensible, dependable, smart and frugal. All that because a copy writer and an art director saw the true character and soul of a once Nazi SS car.

DDB was in such demand we had two airline accounts. American Airlines and EL AL Airlines. The Airline of Israel.

EL AL produced ads like "Gad is my co-pilot" and "My son the pilot" ads you want to read. Ads that made you feel like part of the family. In fact, Tilly Katz the fictional author of the "My son, the pilot" ad said in the body copy . . . "the next time you fly EL AL tell my son to keep his neck warm."



DDB was so cocky they created and paid for a American Airlines ad in Advertising Age that showed a drawing of the American Airlines CEO looking quite perturbed. The headline read: "We couldn't stand another advertising agency. We can barely stand the one we have."

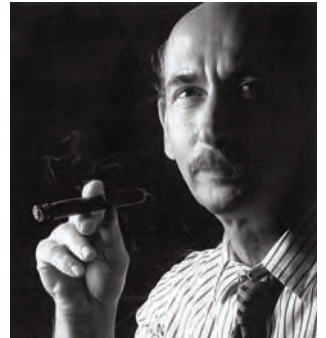
What separated a DDB ad from other ads was . . . you can sense the author[s]. There was a person behind the statement. Sometimes a venerable person just like you. Not a claim from a faceless company but a insight from another human being. "Doctor Spock is worried" an ad for Sane Nuclear Policy said.



There was quality work being done on every level. Trade ads and small space ads were the battling ground for us juniors. "Get beautiful pictures like these in seconds" showed a striking visual by Hal Nankin: decayed teeth for a Polaroid trade ad. "Save bread on our rolls" went a Sara Lee coupon ad written by Hy Abady.

We were learning our craft. More importantly, we were learning how to defend our work. Roy Grace once said: "I can't understand how a creative team could spend two weeks coming up with an idea and be talked out of it in 5 minutes."

When a team presented an ad to a supervisor or account person, "I don't like it." wasn't accepted. They had to give you a good reason not to present it to the client. If the team disagreed with the criticism they could go up the chain of command without reprisals. Even to Bernbach if they felt it necessary.



Bill's office was perched on the 26th floor in a corner office not protected by armed bodyguards. He was accessible. Always ready to give you words of wisdom if you asked and sometimes if you didn't.

I remember once we were sitting in the lobby restaurant, waiting for a fire drill to be over. To our surprise, Bill occupied the empty seat at our table. He said to us: "Be careful not to get too close to your client's problem." "Don't get bogged down with research and information." This was Bill's way of saying keep a distance from your client. Don't get caught up in client politics. You can't make magic if you do. Bill Bernbach's talent was recognizing other talent. He accumulated a team of creative people who had one thing in common. They wanted to create something original. The more they did the more famous Bill became.



And he deserved it.

No other ad agency then or since has had such a diverse pool of talent. He created an environment where unusual personalities flourished. Even encouraged. There was the cold germanic brilliance of Helmut Krone. The warmth of Bob Gage and Phyllis Robinson. The off-beat humor of Marvin Honig. The European style of Jack Piccollo. The stark simplicity of Roy Grace. The down-home tone of Jack Dillon who once wrote in an ad: "Drop us a line at OM Scotts & Sons in Marysville

Ohio. No need for an address, the postman knows where we live."

What I found fascinating about this splendid inventory of talent was when they put teams together who never worked with each other before. Mix a little warmth of Bob Gage with a sprinkling of Marvin Honig's off-beat humor and voila. The famous award-winning TV spot - "Bride's first meal" for Alka Seltzer.

That was the secret of DDB. Strong personalities allowed to make magic.



The creative department wasn't the only place to find them either.

The account group had its share. Thanks to the strong will of Ned Doyle. There was Joe Daly an ex-marine who feared no client and let them know it. The charm of John Fenyo who wore fancy shoes, silk ties but was as tough as Joe and Ned when it came to selling creative. That's right. Tough when it came to selling creative. The account group took as much pride as we did when it came to the creative product. I would often hear them say something like: "Did you see the great ad we did for Sony?"



Although I left DDB almost 25 years ago, I still say we when I talk about that magical place. Speaking of we: I learned how to work with another person in the room. A copy writer. My partner. A fox hole buddy. Together we were stronger than by ourselves. My favorite was Deanna Cohen. An art director turned writer by Frank Cammardella in class. Deanna taught me love for words. I taught her curse words. We spent many nights, weekends, and time away from our families working as a team. It was great to have a extra set of ears and eyes when solving a problem. I produced work I didn't know I was capable of. We gave each other courage that we didn't possess individually. Fred & Ginger / Dom & Deanna.

Deanna loved DDB as much as I did. She was and still is a loyal disciple of the DDB way. We would spend countless hours refining a headline or visual. Before we would present an idea to our creative director or client we would rehearse, making sure there were no holes in our argument. If our idea was not accepted we didn't feel sorry for ourselves. We made the idea better.

If this story sounds like a fairy tale, it is. It was a time in advertising when talent mattered most. Not wearing black and bleaching your hair to look cool and hip. Not sucking up to your creative director to get ahead. Just plain old talent. You were as good as your last ad or TV spot. Those were the rules and we obeyed them religiously.

Although Jeff Metzner wore an American flag suit from time to time, his ads were even louder. Floyd Stone wore four watches on his wrist but his fingers never left the typewriter. Jim Scalfone did Marlon Brando imitations but his mind was always on advertising. Ken Duskin had an ego the size of his 13-foot couch in his office but he slaved over every award-winning campaign.

Respect for talent not frivolous showmanship was the standard. How else could you explain the senior citizens in every department. Gray hair didn't seem to matter, just gold medals you won at award shows.

I remember thinking the older you were at DDB the wiser. There was fabulous work being done by ancient Bill Taubin, Leon Meadow, Judy Protas and David Reider. In their 40's and 50's they would zip up and down the hallways like Michael Jackson.

The secret formula DDB possessed at that time to create all those award-winning campaigns was the combination of many different types of talent.





Age was not an issue. Talent was. How you dressed only mattered once a year at the annual DDB Christmas party held at the Waldorf Astoria. The key was the willingness of the creative staff to go the extra mile, even for a trade ad. But . . . if I had to pick the most important ingredient, it was the conscience of senior management. We could stand on their shoulders if we had to. We often did.

Creative teams at DDB didn't need public service announcements to make you think deeply about a subject. If there was no pressing issue, they would invent one. "Does your babysitter look better coming in than you do going out?" went a Ohrbach's women's accessory ad. "I suffer from menstrual pains." accompanied by a photo of a young husband for a feminine hygiene product. Mobil Oil ran a safety campaign with the theme "We want you to live" and sold more gasoline than ever.

Creativity was good for business. Volkswagen won hundreds of awards and outsold the Model T, then the most produced car ever. "We try harder" is still some 40 years later working hard for Avis.

Creativity wasn't a dirty word then. It was a banner to be held high. MBA's, Account Planners, Research gurus and focus groups weren't part of the advertising revolution. It would have fizzled if they had.

In fact, Avis did conduct primitive consumer research that warned that "We're number 2 in the rent-a-car business. We try harder" was headed for disaster. Bernbach put himself on the line and convinced the Avis management to go ahead with the campaign. To their credit they did. They trusted Bill. The rest is history.



It was like playing for the Yankees. Instead of Ruth, Gerig, Mantel and DiMaggio. It was Gage, Robinson, Knone, Honig, Piccillo and Grace. Also in the starting lineup was Sirowitz, Steinhauer, Stark, Noble, Piccirillo and Levenson rounded out the first string players. The rest of us were on the bench ready to pitch-hit or steal a base if we had to.

There were enough accounts and assignments to go around for everyone. Supervisors were generous. They didn't fear you. They wanted you to succeed. It was contagious. When your turn came to supervise talent you knew what to do. It was only fair. It was the DOYLE DANE BERNBACH way.

Even though DDB was the closest thing to Camelot in those days there was still grumbling in the hallways. There seemed to be favorites and an occasional anarchist. DDB was not the highest paying agency either. That's the price we all paid for working there. Like all agencies we had our share of secret romances, fist fights, rumor mongers and cry babies. These frailties were over-shadowed by the joy of creating something you could be proud of.

The DDB process did not end with a good concept. Shooting the best photograph you could, writing the most unique body copy, casting the perfect actor and picking just the right music could make a good concept great. We considered ourselves craftsmen like precious diamond cutters. We might of had the luxury of showing only one



execution for each assignment but we plastered our walls with candidates, tooled each word until we decided we had a winner. It wasn't that we were more resilient than creative people today, we just enjoyed the process more.

At the expense of sounding like an old ballplayer sitting on the bench saying: "They don't play ball like they used to." "They don't." Gone in most agencies today is authorship. Replaced by gang bangs and creative directors taking a little bit from one team and some from another. Sewing them together like the Frankenstein monster. That's why everyone takes credit for everything. No one takes the blame. Accountability was the driving force behind the success of DDB in those days.

When Roy Grace and John Noble created all those wonderful Volkswagen ads and TV spots we were in awe. When Roy Grace and Tom Yobage created the 'Tickle' deodorant campaign we snickered.

We knew everyone's batting average, statistics filed in our minds like on the back of baseball cards. We knew who was great and heading for the advertising hall of fame. We also knew who was in the dog house.

Great work popped up everywhere. In the office next to me Jim Brown and Larry Levenson were struggling over a VW Karmen Ghia dealer ad when Neil Armstrong was headed for the first moon landing. To loosen up they created a Volkswagen newspaper ad showing the LEM landing craft on the surface of the moon with the headline: "It's ugly, but it gets you there." They showed it to the creative director and the account group that day. The client loved it and two days later it was on the back page of The New York Times. This brilliant non-scheduled ad won five gold medals at the annual Art Directors award show that year.

There is lots of great work being done today by some agencies. There is lots of terrible work done also, disguised by slick technique. Bill Bernbach once warned in a memo that too much emphasis was put on technique and not enough on coming up with a good idea. That was in 1947.



I'd like to think creative people today have what it takes to reach the heights of creative people back then. They should with all the stimuli surrounding them. The question is will the people who are in power allow them to reach those heights or even want them to. I owe everything I've learned about advertising and most about life working at DOYLE DANE BERNBACH in those golden years.

That debt I try to pay back by always keeping that memory alive.



Dom Marino
DDB Art Director
1966 / 1984

From Montgomery Ward to Doyle Dane Bernbach. Where did I go right?



I started at Doyle Dane Bernbach sometime in March of 1964. My first stop was in the Personnel Department where I was supposed to fill out some forms before I reported to the Creative Department.

I should like to say, before I go any further, that the Personnel Department was aptly named because I was, after all, a person. I find the current term, Human Resources, very impersonal as if those working in that department are dealing with Iron Ore or Magnesium.

But I digress, so let me get back to my entrance into the Personnel Department. When I stepped over the threshold I saw a man sitting down filling out forms. He looked up at me and without a beat we simultaneously said "What are you doing here". That man was Roy Grace and yes, we had already met before.

I was working at Daniel & Charles and an Art Director there was friendly with Roy and asked some of us if we would stay one night and help Roy with his portfolio so he could get a job at Grey.

When I mentioned it to Roy some years later, he said he was already working for Grey at the time and what we were helping him with was a campaign. Whether it was for a campaign or for his portfolio I'm not sure, but it was probably the last time Roy ever asked anyone for help.

After our meeting in Personnel, it was 5 years until Roy and I actually worked together at Doyle Dane. And just as we started on the same day, we left on the same day to join Gilbert Advertising and form Gilbert, Grace & Stark.

When one of my kids asked why my name came last on the door, I answered with a question of my own. "What's the name of the agency I'm leaving?". And the answer I got was Doyle Dane Bernbach. "And who was my boss?" was my next question and the answer I got was "Mr. Bernbach". My final question was "And where does Mr. Bernbach's name go?" and the answer was "Last".

And that, I explained was why my name also goes last.

I wouldn't be surprised if Bill's kids, John and Paul, asked him the same question when they were young.

By the way, did you notice how cleverly I wove this last bit in so that it appears to be an anecdote about Doyle Dane, rather than about Roy and I. I never would have been able to do that if I hadn't worked at Doyle Dane with so many bright and talented people.

I probably worked with about 30 or more Art Directors at Doyle Dane, from well known ones like Bill Taubin and Sid Myers to Assistant and Junior Art Directors like Larry Waxberg and Alan Frank and I was pleased with the work I did with all of them, even though the ads and commercials weren't always produced.

The most important aspect of the years I spent at Doyle Dane Bernbach is that I made a number of friends that are still my friends over 45 years later.

And now, if I haven't bored you enough, here are a few random episodes I remember from 1964 to 1972.

I remember walking down the hall 3 abreast with Nat Russo and Marvin Honig and encountering Leon Meadow coming from the opposite direction. Leon looked at us and said "You're all the same size". I looked at Marvin and Nat and thought to myself that Leon was wrong as wrong could be because I was obviously taller than either Nat or Marvin. And I'm sure that Nat and Marvin each thought that he was taller than the other 2 of us.

I remember entering the men's room and coming upon Bill Taubin standing in front of a urinal and turning to me and saying "I've been meaning to do this all week".

I remember Marvin Honig holding up 3 fingers and saying "This is Leon Meadow ordering 5 beers". If you never shook hands with Leon, you wouldn't have gotten the joke.

I remember talking to several other writers shortly after I joined Doyle Dane and Dave Reider, as he was passing us in the hallway, saying "Evan, in 3 years you're going to be..." and then pausing before saying "...a 3 year veteran." To this day, I still can't figure out how Dave was so prescient.

I remember Dave telling Mike Mangano and I, who were both proteges of his, how proud his was of our success under his tutelage, to which I replied "Yeah Dave, but you never could have done it without us". If Mike hadn't laughed, Dave would have thought I was serious.

I remember how fastidious and neat Mike Mangano was and is. One day, while he was out of the office in a meeting, several of us made everything in his office slightly off kilter. We moved his typewriter about 1/100th of an inch askew. We did the same with some magazines on his desk, the items he had pinned to the wall, his chair, his desk and just about everything else in his office. Anybody seeing his office after our slight alterations would not have noticed even the slightest difference, but when Mike came back he angrily said "Who the hell messed up my office."

I remember when Roy Grace and I were assigned to create advertising for a new gin from Seagrams called "Boodles".

Bill Bernbach met with us in his office to discuss the product and he told us that he had created the name for the brand and that he named it after a very famous club in London that went back several hundred years. One of the first ads Roy and I showed Bill was to feature a photo of the facade of the club and the headline I wrote was "Boodles is so exclusive that even Napoleon couldn't get in." Bill looked at the ad and said to me "Is that true, Evan? Napoleon couldn't get in?" And I answered "Sure, Bill. The French and the English were at war."

That was one of the many times I got the over-the-glasses look from those steely blue eyes.

One more little story about Boodles Gin. The client took the brand away from us and gave it to Wells, Rich, but they gave us a different gin to introduce, one called "Sir Robert Burrnet's



Original storyboard for Mama Mia's Meatballs



White Satin" gin. The client said that we should target the gin toward martini drinkers because that was how most gins were imbibed.

Before Roy and I did any conceptual thinking, the account group decided to conduct a focus group made up entirely of martini drinkers. They did a blind test by putting Beefeaters Gin and another popular gin on the table, along with a bottle of White Satin.

All of the bottles were covered with brown paper so the group would not know what gin brands they were drinking. They set 3 martini glasses on the table in front of each member of the group and each of them was supposed to pour a little of each bottle into each glass. As the focus group sampled each martini, the moderator went around the table asking the drinkers for their opinion of each. Well, it started out alright, but as the evening wore on, the answers that the group gave got less and less intelligible. What started as "I think this brand is just a little smoother" turned into "I shink tha boddle on tha right shide has a liddle mor someshing goin frit." And Roy and I were behind a one-way mirror watching a bunch of drunks make no sense at all.

After the session was over, Roy and I regrouped with the account guys and we all decided that there must be a better way to do a taste test for an alcoholic beverage. But I guess there wasn't because they did the same stupid thing again. Well, at least they made a few more martini drinkers happy.

I remember being turned down for a job at Doyle Dane by Jack Dillon, who told me I wrote like a "street corner wise guy".

I didn't know whether I should take offense or not because I had never heard the term before. Or since. I knew what each word meant by itself but not in a group.

I remember judging a job applicant's portfolio which unfortunately was so terrible I wrote a comment for his job jacket, "Words fail me" to which Larry Levenson added "and they fail him, too."

I remember how politically incorrect Roy Grace and I acted during a research meeting in the main conference room shortly after we got the Alka-Seltzer account.

Every "top gun" at the agency, starting with Bill Bernbach and Joe Daly was in the meeting. The leader of the outside research group was a Chinese gentleman who was dressed in a neat pinstripe suit with a navy blue shirt and a rep tie. On the hand-out we were given prior to the meeting's start was a list of the Chinese gentleman's credentials. He had degree upon degree after his name, Ph. D being the least of them.

He stood up, just before the first member of his research team was to start throwing figures at us and said "Anywun ha any quesions, you prease wai unti en of meing" at which point Roy and I burst out with laughter and ultimately had to step out of the conference room.

Later, after the meeting ended, Marvin Honig asked us what we were laughing at. "Didn't you think it was funny that the guy in the Ivy League suit and accessories, with a slew of degrees after his name, spoke like the waiter in a Chinese restaurant", either Roy or I said, to which Marvin replied "I don't know what you guys are talking about". At that point, I realized that the reason Marvin hadn't laughed when Roy and I did was because he wasn't listening to a word in the meeting.



I remember going into the men's room and, from time to time, encountering Alan Mond doing isometric push-ups against the tile wall. One day I said to him "Alan, why don't you join a health club?" Alan's response was "Are you serious? Do you have any idea how smelly those places are?"

I remember how Roy and I nearly had another episode of laughing when we went to an initial meeting with our newest client at the time, Schick blades. They were located in New Haven and we were to have one meeting in the offices, then have lunch and finally, go to their factory which was about a mile away for another meeting.

The man who spoke at the first meeting stood at the front of the room with his jacket unbuttoned. This guy has the longest tie I had ever seen anyone wear. It actually came down about 6 inches below his crotch. At lunch, Roy and I talked about how ridiculous it was and one of us said that it was a good thing that our afternoon meeting was at the factory and that we wouldn't see the guy with the tie again because we would burst out laughing, just as we did with the research guy.

When we arrived at the factory, we were led into an office where the guy with the tie was waiting to lead the second part of our day.

When we saw who it was, Roy and I each turned our eyes in opposite directions because we knew that if our eyes met, we would get hysterical once more. Fortunately, we made it through without a giggle between us, but we were breaking up on the ride home.

I remember how, at our lunch with the Schick people, I told the leader of the group how excited Roy and I were to be at that meeting with such a prestigious client. He smiled and said "I'm glad to hear that". I then said "I can't believe that only a week ago I was in the mailroom and Roy was in the bullpen". His face dropped and then he started laughing when he realized I was kidding.

I remember hearing that when Sid Myers and I were working on Whirlpool, Helmut Krone referred to us as a couple of Borscht Belt comedians. I was somewhat affronted because I had never even been in the Borscht Belt and the closest I had come was that Manny Lippman, a guy I knew in high school, became a well-known Borscht Belt comedian under the name Mal Z. Lawrence.

Some years later I ran into Helmut and we talked briefly and at some point he said "You were right all along". "About what?", I asked. And then Helmut threw me when he said "Comedy is the way to go". I don't know what comedy meant to Helmut, but it certainly couldn't have meant to Helmut what it meant to Mal Z.

I remember getting onto the elevator one day when I was leaving the office early and meeting Bill Bernbach there. Now creative people were always going in and out of the office for meeting, recordings, shoots and all manner of things, but I wasn't doing that. I was just leaving early, and for a very personal reason. So, feeling somewhat guilty, I said to Bill that I was leaving early because I wanted to get home for my son's graduation. Bill smiled, said that was wonderful and asked what my son was graduating from and I told him the truth. "5th grade." Fortunately, Bill joined in the laughter that my answer brought in the elevator, and I knew I was in the right place.

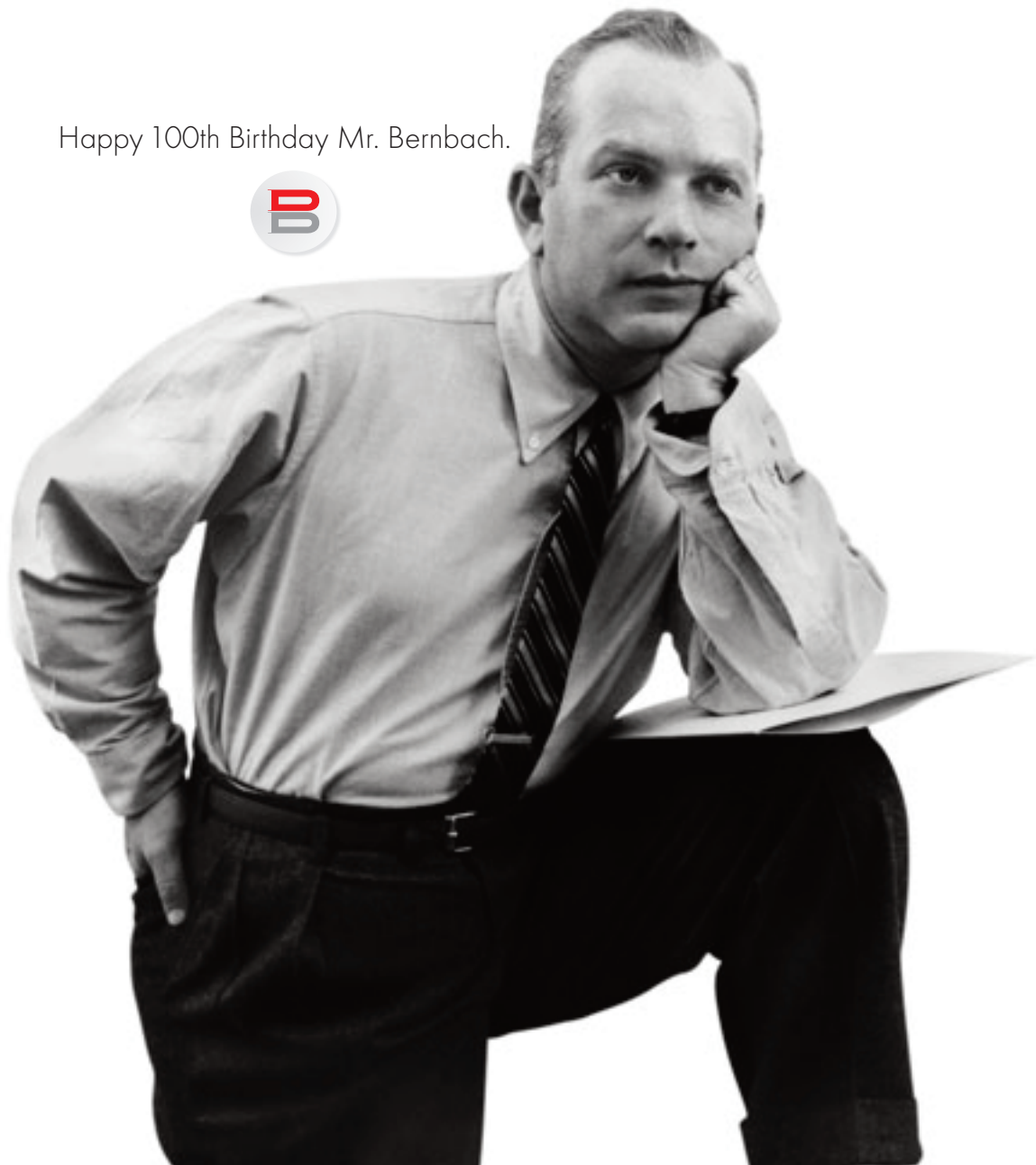
To anyone who had the forbearance to read this far, I leave you with three of the favorite words of our generation.

Th-th-th-that's all folks.



Evan Stark
DDB Copywriter
1964 / 1972

Happy 100th Birthday Mr. Bernbach.



1960s

The Golden Years of Advertising. Doyle Dane Bernbach.

*This book is dedicated to the art directors and copywriters who worked
at Doyle Dane Bernbach in the 1960s.
The ones who are with us. And the ones who are not.*