We Are What We Sell

How Advertising Shapes American Life . . . and Always Has

Volume 2: Advertising at the Center of Popular Culture: 1930s–1975

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Eisenhower and Political Advertising

Brian Doan

> Draper? Who knows anything about that guy? No one's ever lifted that rock. He could be Batman for all we know.
>
> —Harry Crane (Rich Sommer), "The Marriage of Figaro," *Mad Men*[1]

On August 14, 2006, Senator Barack Obama spoke at a town hall meeting in Massac County, Illinois. Just two years earlier, he had electrified the Democratic National Convention with a speech decrying the partisan divisions of the United States, "the spin masters and negative ad peddlers who embrace the politics of anything goes," and "the pundits [who] like to slice and dice our country into red states and blue states"; in contrast, then senatorial candidate Obama called for a politics of "one America," and a "politics of hope."[2] Four months later, Obama defeated Alan Keyes to become the junior senator from Illinois. Leaving the meeting, he was about to pose for a picture that would transform a routine day of local politicking into precisely the kind of iconic instance at which "spin masters and ad peddlers" might drool.

Massac County includes Metropolis, Illinois, which brands itself as the "birthplace" of Superman. It is not—Krypton and Kansas have a greater narrative claim, and Superman's creators actually hailed from Cleveland, Ohio—but the town's marketable name led to the creation of the Superman Museum, and the building of a famous statue of the superhero. It was in front of this statue that Barack Obama posed, his stance mimicking the heroic, fists-on-the-waist pose of the Superman behind him, his face a deadpan mask that betrays a slight amusement at his own geekery, as if a senator

really should not be doing such things. When Obama ran for president two years later, the image was widely circulated, celebrated, and parodied.

And yet, for all of the image's metaphorical power, the image suggests some gaps between the superhero and his imitator. There is something slightly off-center about Obama's tie: it is bent slightly inward, pushing against the creases of the man's shirt, and his stance causes the tie to push toward the right side of his chest. This draws attention to a slight slouch in Obama's stance, and a bit of a gut pushing out his shirt (in contrast to the literally rock-hard abs and ramrod stance of the super-statue behind him). Superman's "S" chest-piece sits solidly on his abs, like a small, taut flag. And while Superman is facing completely outward, perfectly balanced from left to right, Obama's body is turned just slightly left, as if the camera catches him about to respond to something he notices out of the frame.

The Superman memorialized by the statue is not the "original" image of Superman: when the character was created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster for *Action Comics* in 1938, Superman's costume was less sleek, the chest-plate was yellow with a crude, red "S," and he looked more like a circus strongman. That Superman, a product of the New Deal, primarily fought against racketeers and crooked businessman: he spoke openly about class politics and had no hesitation about throwing an unrepentant fat cat out a window to his death. As Larry Tye notes in *Superman: The High-Flying History of America's Most Enduring Hero*, "Those no-goodniks didn't deserve a Bill of Rights, and they wouldn't get one with Superman. His messages were simple and direct: Power corrupts."[3]

As the United States transitioned from a Depression economy to a wartime economy, Superman also underwent changes: businessmen and gangsters were replaced by aliens, mad scientists, and saboteurs, and Superman was aligned less with the working class and more with a general idea of American law: "truth, justice, and the American way," as his slogan would eventually proclaim.[4] That slogan was first hatched on the *Superman* radio show in 1946, where Superman's field expanded from battling flesh-and-blood villains to fighting against intolerance itself: Superman took on Klansman and anti-Semites, and the show itself was interspersed with PSAs preaching messages of inclusiveness (it also introduced Kryptonite, Superman's ability to fly, and such key supporting characters as Jimmy Olsen and Perry White). From radio to movie serials to television, each step in Superman's media expansion subtly changed the character, expanding his supporting cast, his powers, and his importance to America and the world; the tradeoff to this broadening of the audience was an increasingly staid superhero. In conjunction with the creation of the Comics Code in 1954, Superman was increasingly surrounded by sci-fi hijinks, wacky schemes

by Lois Lane to discover his secret identity, and an expansion of the "Superman family" to include Supergirl, Krypto, and the extended "family" of the Bottled City of Kandor. It is this more smoothed-over, Eisenhower-era Superman that the statue captures and celebrates, even as Senator Obama's mimicry calls attention to its contingent status.

The twist, however, is that this era of Superman, ushered in by new editor Mort Weisinger in 1957, also marked the beginning of "imaginary stories": Larry Tye notes that:

> This was a bid by National Comics to create fresh and arresting threads for writers who were running out of them. It was also an attempt to tap into the era's capsizing of conventions ... The very notion of tackling heretofore unthinkable topics and offering zany flourishes to timeworn plots was revolutionary, at least to the adolescent keepers of the Superman flame ... Titillate readers, yes, but not to the point where it toppled the pillars of the Superman biography and canon, which comic book connoisseurs called the "continuity."[5]

What resulted, Tye notes, were "counter-narratives," which opened up a world of imaginative possibility even as the "imaginary" status of the stories seemingly foreclosed it: "What would Superman have been like if his Kryptonian parents had come to earth with him? How about if he, like Tarzan, had been raised in the jungle?"[6] As a biracial man moving between multiple worlds as young man, and then as a politician constantly facing "imaginary stories" about his background generated by political enemies, Barack Obama might indeed identify with this notion of an always-contingent identity, and the ways in which iconography can be mutated. That these mutations happened during the 1950s, an age often codified as "conformist," suggests the ways in which media and imagination can shape our memories of national identity (President Eisenhower, like Superman and Barack Obama, also grew up in Kansas).

The first "imaginary" Superman story was published in August 1960,[7] in the midst of a presidential race to determine President Eisenhower's successor. The faceoff between Vice President Richard Nixon and Senator John F. Kennedy is sometimes marked as the moment when TV's impact was first felt, with Kennedy's boyish confidence in the debates giving him an edge on the more conservative Nixon. The AMC television show *Mad Men* weaves this race into its first season (set in 1960), involving the characters in the campaign and also incorporating that contest's style into the show's look and tone; Nixon versus Kennedy is offered as a marker of change, the harbinger of the tumult of the 1960s with which all of the show's

characters will wrestle. But the first presidential race to utilize television was actually in 1952, and it was the campaign of Republican Dwight Eisenhower that established many of the tropes of televised political campaigning that are used to this day.

In what follows, I would like to think about the decade between 1952 and 1962 (as well as the current political moment) as a kind of "imagined story," where fact and fiction, real political candidates and finely crafted media images (of politicians, television stars, ad peddlers, and costumed heroes) cascade hypnotically on top of each other like the advertising images in *Mad Men*'s credits; one falls through them like the silhouette in those shots, but also, in the end, finds one's proper "seat," a viewing position through which to process it all. Creating a kind of temporal and spatial fluidity might allow reflection on how quickly media images of politicians get embedded and carried among the voting populace, as well as how history is captured and memorialized through popular culture. *Mad Men*, which is not only about political advertising, but embodies that form's two poles—seductive style and stolid moralizing—within its own, ongoing visual and narrative approaches; it is what it is critiquing, and that seems like the best way to think about political advertising's mix of knowingness and earnestness.

Spots

> The President is a product—don't forget that.
> —Pete Campbell (Vincent Kartheiser), "The Long Weekend," *Mad Men*[8]

On January 17, 1961, 70 million viewers watched on television as President Eisenhower gave a farewell address to the nation from the Oval Office. The speech would look back on the highlights of his presidency, call once more for national unity, and urge the kind of slow, steady progress that Eisenhower saw as the hallmark of his tenure,[9] but would become most famous for its warnings about a "military-industrial complex," a "permanent armaments industry of vast proportions" that was both an "imperative need" and also held "the potential for a disastrous rise of misplaced power." Eisenhower warned, "only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together."[10]

The speech's impact, as Jim Newton notes, would come with hindsight, after the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, and other military conflicts had begun to focus the American public on the dangers Eisenhower noted.[11]

Still, the speech's broad audience and concise form (Eisenhower had warned his speechwriters, "Ten minutes, no more. People stop listening after ten minutes," even though the speech ended up lasting 16 minutes[12]) was a reminder of how effectively "Ike" had used TV throughout his political career, and how much that success would influence every campaign that followed.

In *The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television*, Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates observe, "The Republican party, especially in New York State, had traditional ties with the big advertising agencies: both were apostles of free enterprise, and both, at least in the first half of the century, drew from the same ranks of white, Protestant, upper-class males for their leaders."[13] (In *Mad Men*'s pilot episode, Roger Sterling asks his top man, Don Draper, "Have we ever hired any Jews?" to which Draper, without missing a beat, fires back, "Not on my watch"[14]). This gave the party a distinct advantage in money and talent in the 1950s: while a handful of agencies in New York and Chicago would work on television and radio spots for the Democrats in 1952 and 1956, the major firms were all allied with Eisenhower (it got so bad, Diamond and Bates note, that by 1956, some advertising industry leaders feared their reluctance to work with Democrats might look like a conspiracy, so "there was talk of putting together an outside task force of talented people from various agencies so that no one agency would have to work with the party, in much the same way that ad agencies share public service work for TB or Easter Seals"[15]).

"I'm a soldier and I'm positive no one thinks of me as a politician," Eisenhower declared in 1945,[16] when he was first approached by both major parties to seek their nomination. After serving a stint as president of Columbia University and later as head of NATO, his name was entered into the 1952 New Hampshire primary, which Eisenhower won easily. He continued to win throughout the primary season, until gaining the nomination at the Republican convention that summer.[17] Primary responsibility for the Eisenhower campaign's advertising was given to Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborne (BBDO), a firm with long ties to the Republican Party, whose senior partner, Bruce Barton, had been a media guru to Republican candidates since the 1920s.[18] They also received help from Rosser Reeves, a Madison Avenue legend whose work developing television "spots" (short ads ranging from 30 seconds to five minutes, at a time when political ads could often take the form of 30-minute paid advertising programs) in the early 1950s made him essential to the Eisenhower campaign.[19] It was Reeves who developed the Unique Selling Proposition (USP): it "boldly stake[s] out a claim untouched by the competition."[20] Reeves, who had made millions for Lever Soap and Anacin, among others, had tried to sell

Thomas Dewey on the USP spot, but was rejected; Dwight Eisenhower would be much more receptive to the work of Reeves and BBDO, and their collaboration would forever transform American political advertising.

Five years after Eisenhower's first presidential victory, director Elia Kazan and writer Budd Schulberg made the film *A Face in the Crowd*. Based on a Schulberg short story called "The Arkansas Traveler," the film documents the rise and fall of a media personality named Lonesome Rhodes (Andy Griffith), a sly "country boy" who is first discovered by a local radio show called *A Face in the Crowd*. Rhodes's art is seduction: seduction of radio and television audiences, of powerful media figures, and of a broader American public. His first mark is Marcia Jeffries (Patricia Neal), the talented young radio producer who finds him passed out in an Arkansas jail, and makes him a star. She becomes the audience's surrogate, while Walter Matthau finishes out the trio as writer Mel Miller; his horn-rimmed glasses link him both to Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson and Superman alter ego Clark Kent.

In one extraordinary scene, Rhodes stops by Marcia's hotel room—having moved up from radio to hosting his own Memphis-based TV show, he has mocked the show's sponsor and thinks he will be fired. Rhodes is framed in long shot, the hotel room doors stretching out to infinity as if to mock his limited life choices. He scratches his head, adjusts the guitar case on his pack, and knocks on her door. There are shadows everywhere, blending with the naturalism of the performances like an eerie combination of documentary and film noir. Rhodes can barely look at Marcia, who is still in her nightgown. They are framed together in a medium shot, pushing them up against the frame of the door; as Rhodes walks down the hall, the camera pulls back to capture him, to be closer to him, but it also blurs his foreground image a bit, while keeping Neal's background image crystal-clear, playing with viewer sympathies. There is a close-up of Marcia's charged face, and her call for him to return to her. The film moves back to long shot, framing Rhodes's slow mosey back, then returns to the medium shot that framed them earlier by the door: Marcia's face is increasingly covered in shadow as she pulls Lonesome Rhodes into her room.

Rhodes is a master seducer, and the film quickly moves from showing how he seduces one woman, to showing how those talents extend to seducing the world. His show gains a national audience through a new sponsor, Vitajex. In a montage that parodies 1950s television advertising, the jingle "Vitajex, whatcha doin' to me!" is played in a rockabilly style, while visually there is a blend of animation, dancing girls, and a grinning Andy Griffith ("Applause" signs flash in neon, and a voice-over yells, "Keep your eye on that rating!"). Vitajex is manufactured by General Haynesworth, a corporate

titan with bigger goals on his mind: like the Republican businessmen backing Eisenhower, Haynesworth wants to be a presidential kingmaker. "I'm in the business of putting the public in a frame of mind," Haynesworth declares, and his candidate is the hapless isolationist Senator Worthington Fuller. By the time Rhodes finally sits the senator down to teach him the finer points of seduction, he is at the peak of his power and influence, and he treats Fuller like a dog that must be trained to not sully the national carpet. They watch a dull campaign film of Fuller pontificating in a high-pitched monotone. Savagely (if accurately) criticizing Fuller's speaking style, Rhodes constantly refers to Fuller not as a candidate, but as a television personality: he has demographic problems, needs a ratings boost, and needs to be recreated like a Hollywood star, with nicknames, new clothes, and even a different pet.

All goes well for Rhodes and Fuller, until Rhodes finally alienates Marcia; exhausted by the Frankenstein monster she has helped to create, she pushes the sound up as the television credits roll: instead of the voice-over that usually plays over the images of Rhodes talking to his cast on the set, America hears Rhodes calling the American public "a lot of trained seals" who will do whatever he tells them. Rhodes's career collapses, Fuller distances himself from the now-toxic media personality, and one good woman saves American democracy.

It is an oddly naïve ending to an otherwise brilliantly cynical and very observant film, and it is easy to read it as liberal wish fulfillment in the wake of Eisenhower's two landslides. In reality, it was Stevenson and the Democrats who lacked media savvy in 1952 (as Diamond and Bates note, the television-averse Stevenson had "formulated an advertising strategy ideally suited to the radio age"[21]), while Eisenhower took to it all immediately. Under the careful guidance of Bruce Barton, Rosser Reeves, and BBDO president Bernard Duffy, the Eisenhower campaign crafted forty 30-second television spots to run in battleground states, which boiled politics down to its essence: image, voter, candidate, and platitude. Reeves recommended spending $2 million to air the ads in a brief three-week window at the end of the campaign. Rosser wrote the following:

> The spots themselves would be the height of simplicity. People . . . would ask the General a question . . . The General's answer would be his complete comprehension of the problem and his determination to do something about it when elected. Thus he inspires loyalty without committing himself to any strait-jacketing answer . . . Putting the spots on for only a three-week period gives the following advantages: (1) It gives maximum effectiveness of penetration and recall without becoming deadly to the listener and viewer.

(2) It delivers this maximum just before election. (3) It occurs at too late a date for effective Democratic rebuttal.[22]

The filming strategy was similarly calculated in its structure: the ad team wrote the questions (about three focus-tested topics: Korea, inflation and taxes, and government corruption); Eisenhower filmed his answers; and then people were pulled off the street by Radio City Music Hall to "ask" the prewritten questions, their footage edited together with Eisenhower's answers to create a deceptively seamless whole.[23] The campaign also enlisted the Disney corporation to make a 40-second animated ad that showed a parade of people—young and old, rich and poor—marching and singing "I like Ike!" while a snooty-looking silhouette of "Adlai" rode a Democratic donkey in the wrong direction. Democrats complained that Reeves and BBDO were transforming candidates into just another product like soap,[24] which was entirely accurate and utterly missed the point: by boiling an already-popular candidate down to his "USP," the advertising agencies could sell not only Dwight Eisenhower ("ten minutes, no more ... The American people won't listen after ten minutes"), but their own power within this new media-industrial complex.

"Make no mistake," whispers Bert Cooper, the senior partner of *Mad Men* ad firm Sterling Cooper, in the episode entitled "Ladies' Room." "We know better what Dick Nixon needs, *better* than Dick Nixon."[25] Eight episodes later, in "The Long Weekend," the show offers evidence that Cooper is right: having agreed to help the Nixon campaign *pro bono*, Don Draper and the firm's copywriters view a short commercial for John F. Kennedy that seems right out of the Eisenhower playbook: a combination of advertising and glamour shots of JFK and Jackie, as a small vocal group sings "Kennedy, Kennedy ..." Draper expresses professional admiration: "It's bright, it gets in your head." In contrast, the Nixon film that follows is more like *A Face in the Crowd*'s Senator Fuller: Nixon, shot in black and white, stands in front a dull gray backdrop and drones on about the deficit. The Mad Men cannot even finish the ad, and Draper's take is much less optimistic: "An ad made by a public relations team," he says, as if it is a personal insult. "Message received, and forgotten."

Despite his professional disapproval at Nixon's rejection of Sterling Cooper's seductive technique, it is Nixon with whom Draper identifies. In an intriguing monologue, Draper muses about the candidates:

Kennedy: nouveau riche, recent immigrant who bought his way into Harvard. And now he's well-bred? Great. Nixon is from nothing. Self-made man, the Abe Lincoln of California, who was Vice President of the United

> States six years after getting out of the Navy. Kennedy, I see a silver spoon. Nixon? . . . I see *myself*.[26]

It is a revealing comment, because for both Nixon and Draper, the question of the self is an open one, mediated through advertising. When a *New York Post* headline late in the 1952 campaign said that Nixon had use of a trust fund financed by conservative businessmen, one that Nixon might have been using for personal reasons, it was a scandal that threatened to engulf the Eisenhower campaign and destroy Nixon's career. Ad man Ted Rogers bought time near the highly rated *Milton Berle Show*, hired the director of *The Eve Arden Show*, and produced the most remembered advertisement of the 1952 campaign.[27]

Kathleen Hall Jamieson calls it a "rhetoric of distraction,"[28] in which Nixon talked about certain amounts of money while ignoring, fudging, or lying about others; seemed to describe in detail his personal finances, but only those—like the debt he owed his parents, or his wife's "good Republican cloth coat"—which conveyed a certain pathos; and most of all, relied on the image of a dog, "Checkers," to tug at the heartstrings of the 48 percent of the American people watching.[29] "And you know," he said to the camera, "the kids love the dog, I just want to say this right now, that regardless of what they say about it, we're gonna keep it."[30]

In "The Marriage of Figaro," Don Draper also gets his kids a dog to paper over a "scandal"—abandoning his daughter's birthday party halfway through—but his identity issues go even deeper than Nixon's. At the start of the episode, he bumps into an old Korean War buddy on the train, but this man knows him as "Dick Whitman"; he deepens his affair with a client, Rachel Menken, whose Judaism stands in stark contrast to his own, seemingly WASP background; he kisses her, then pulls back, confused about what he wants; he becomes increasingly drunk throughout his daughter's birthday party and avoids his wife Betty; and finally gets in his 1959 Buick Electra (which resembles the Batmobile) to pick up the birthday cake, only to drive past his house on the way home, instead sitting and smoking moodily in the train station parking lot.

Don Draper is, in fact, Dick Whitman, raised in a dirt-poor Depression home in Kentucky by abusive parents. He serves in Korea—a war central to Eisenhower's election—and watches as the real Don Draper, his superior officer, is killed in action. Draper's body is burned beyond recognition. Whitman switches identification tags with the dead Draper, and returns home with "Whitman's" body. The coffin is removed from the train in Kentucky, but "Draper" cannot get off the train, especially when he sees his family waiting for him. He has a new identity, a finer pedigree, and, like

Nixon, another chance. All of this is revealed in an episode when Election Day 1960—with its constantly contingent outcome and shifting dramatics—is seen from TV sets dotting every office and living room, as if the struggle of lower-class Dick Whitman to become the heroic "Don Draper" is also playing out on a national scale through Nixon's battle with Kennedy.

When Pete Campbell discovers Draper's secret, the younger man runs to Bert Cooper's office to rat Draper out. Cooper, however, is unimpressed, noting that he does not care about Draper's supposed past, that "a man is whatever room he is in, and right now—Donald Draper is in this room."[31] "Don" may not be the actual Draper, but he has become a better version, one whose own mastery of advertising's seductive language has put an ironic spin on Eisenhower's warnings about how "security and liberty may prosper together."

New Frontiers

In August 1961, seven months after Eisenhower's farewell address to the nation, *Fantastic Four* #1 is published. Grant Morrison has described it as "the birth of the Marvelous," but not a birth without cost: "And with that recognition of the superhero's Promethean dimension came the acknowledgement of punishment, Fall, retribution and guilt . . . From now on, having superpowers would come at the very least with great responsibility, and at worst, would be regarded as a horrific curse."[32] Birthed in a "Silver Age," when superheroes returned to prominence in comics after a long absence, the Fantastic Four were the attempt of struggling Timely Comics (the Dick Whitman to DC's upper-class Pete Campbell) to match their rival's success with the Justice League of America. But in contrast to the Justice League's square-jawed, morally clear crime fighters, the Fantastic Four were something else: a literal family, without costumes, that had flaws and fought each other constantly. As Morrison notes, their powers derived not just from the Cold War space race and the "cosmic rays" that would have been familiar to a generation raised on monster comics, but from hubris[33]—scientist Reed Richards desperately wants to beat the Soviets into space and thus rushes the tests on his experimental craft; then he brow-beats his girlfriend, her brother, and his own best friend into testing it with him. When the cosmic rays break through the hull, and the ship crash-lands on Earth, each of them has mutated into something new: Richards can stretch his body like rubber, girlfriend Sue can turn invisible, her brother Johnny can turn to flame and fly, and Reed's best friend Ben is now an immensely powerful monster.

The rest of the book's 51-year history is, brilliantly, a saga full of superhero adventure, but it is also about coming to grips with that fall that Morrison notes. And it is about challenging the readers to, in Bert Cooper's phrase, recognize the room in which these stories take place: creators Stan Lee and Jack Kirby stretched the form of the comic to not only include deeper characterizations and ongoing, narrative arcs, but also asides to the reader, real-life figures like Richard Nixon, and the shifting physical format of the book itself, as Kirby's layouts exploded traditional comic design. If Superman, the original hero, was a fierce class warrior who developed into a more conservative icon of order, the Fantastic Four were Superheroes 2.0: stranger, messier, and very much about the reader's relationship to his or her own reading histories. Like Dick Whitman, "Timely" soon changed its name to "Marvel"—something grander, more mysterious, and more in line with the hopes of the age. Birthed in the beginnings of John Kennedy's New Frontier, the Fantastic Four heralded what came to be called "The Marvel Age of Comics" by marketing wizard Lee, and it is that age that birthed—literally and aesthetically—Barack Obama.

One of the brilliant marketing tools Stan Lee used was to create a sense of community: writer/artist credits (still rare in the period), letters pages, and above all the "Bullpen Bulletins" (which purported to give a behind-the-scenes glimpse at the Marvel creators) made readers feel like Marvel was a welcoming home. Within the books there was community, too—stories spilled into other titles, characters made guest appearances in one another's comics, and it all took place in the "real" city of New York, rather than a made-up town like "Metropolis." This gave the readers a greater investment in what happened—"Look! Up In The Sky!" suddenly took on a reality of which Superman could only dream. The more realistic heroes, interconnected plotlines, and sense of artistic personality catapulted Marvel from a tiny also-ran company in 1962 to the industry leader a decade later.

Despite his appropriation of Superman in that 2006 photograph, President Obama is actually a product of the Marvel Comics age, born the same year as the Fantastic Four, with a more fluid and postmodern take on American identity and cultural complexity. And his methods of campaigning, particularly his use of Facebook and Twitter in 2008, seem to draw on the marketing lessons of Stan Lee: if one initially lacks the resources of better-funded rivals, find other ways to connect your "readership," and make them feel like part of a larger groundswell of community. Eisenhower recognized that the age of "whistle-stop campaigns" and longer speeches had ended, overtaken by a new media form that thrived on elliptical imagery to, paradoxically, present a "coherent" political identity; Barack Obama recognized that new forms of media-connected voters more

rapidly, and also reversed the homogenization of candidates and audiences that advertisers in the 1950s worked so hard to smooth out. With Facebook, one is "networked" in a manner different from television—one is part of a broader community, while still maintaining an individual identity. In a virtual sense, the "whistle-stop" has returned—candidates and their surrogates can now communicate more directly with potential voters through online media, while still maintaining the mediating benefits of distance and control that television offered in the 1950s. Of course, the online "identities" of those potential voters might be as fake as Don Draper's, and may involve hiding behind an "avatar" every bit as imaginative as Superman; but that very gesture of self-creation also feels like the possibility of Don Draper, fulfilled: if Eisenhower was Superman and Obama is the Fantastic Four, Don Draper (and advertising more broadly) is Batman: mysterious, alluring, and holding in itself the possibility of being used for good or evil, a dark knight just waiting for its next moment of reinvention.

Notes

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8. Jon Hamm, "The Long Weekend," *Mad Men*, DVD, written by Bridget Bedard, Andre Jacquemetton, Maria Jacquemetton, and Matthew Weiner, directed by Tim Hunter (2007; Los Angeles: Lionsgate, 2008).
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15. Ibid., 76.

16. Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Packaging the Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential Campaign Advertising* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 40.
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26. Hamm, "The Long Weekend."
27. Jamieson, *Packaging the Presidency*, 69–71.
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29. Ibid., 72–74.
30. Ibid., 73.
31. Jon Hamm, "Nixon vs. Kennedy," *Mad Men*, DVD; written by Lisa Albert, Andre Jacquemetton, and Maria Jacquemetton; directed by Alan Taylor (2007; Los Angeles: Lionsgate, 2008).
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