

**Writing Advertisements and Stereotypes: The Impact of the 1950's Marketing Industry on  
Women**

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# **Writing Advertisements and Stereotypes: The Impact of the 1950's Marketing Industry on Women**

## **Process Paper**

The way that one person's small idea can be seized by many, spread so far, and be enforced so heavily as to become a 'normal' expectation, like a stereotype, has always fascinated me. After hearing that the 2021 NHD theme was about communication in history, I immediately knew that I wanted my project to be related to the topic of how stereotypes have been created and enforced through communication, so I decided to focus on how sexist advertising in the 1950s has affected women by creating negative stereotypes and expectations about them that have lasted for decades past the circuit of original advertisements. I chose the title "Writing Advertisement and Stereotypes" because it demonstrated that the men who made these sexist advertisements about women were simultaneously creating new expectations for them.

After participating in the NHD competition last year in the website division, I decided that I was confident enough in my abilities to compete in this category again. Thanks to this, I already had one of the hardest parts of my project behind me-- figuring out how to use the new website software and all of its features to make my ideas come to fruition.

I began my research by looking for primary source newspapers in Chronicling America, since newspapers were one of the main ways of communicating information and advertisements in the 1950s. I also found many other collections of 1950s advertisements from college archives and other websites that supported my thesis. Along the way, I also found many videos, papers, and studies that proved the major impact of advertising on what people expected of women.

During the research process, I used a separate document to organize all of the information I found.

As for the design of my website, I decided to keep it on the simpler side, replicating the look and feel of a newspaper with white background, black text, and the arrangement of images and text. After all, a newspaper is how many of the advertisements my project refers to were originally viewed and I felt that it would be impactful for my project to be experienced in a similar way.

The story of advertising, the stereotypes that women are incompetent and belong only in the home, and the impact that these stereotypes have had on society is an important one to tell because the limitations that these stereotypes have put on women have affected the accomplishments throughout history that they are given the opportunity to make and be recognized for. We are no longer oblivious to the way that the power of advertisement communication was abused to create negative stereotypes in history, and with them 'glass ceilings' that still affect society's understanding of women and their roles. Reflecting on the purposeful miscommunications of the past and their impacts is important so we actively make sure that the power of communication to affect history is not abused again to mutate society's views of a group like advertising has-- in the 1950s and beyond.