

The Rise of Mass Advertising **Law, Enchantment, and the Cultural Boundaries of British Modernity**

In this wide-ranging study, Anat Rosenberg brilliantly recasts the history of mass advertising by attending to the pivotal role of law in differentiating adverts from news, art, science, and immoral enterprises, which served at once to disparage and legitimate the imaginative appeals and promotional ploys of advertisers. Meticulously researched and richly illustrated, *The Rise of Mass Advertising* is a treasure trove of images, ideas, and ideals about the subject of consumption. Thinking across cultural fields and scholarly disciplines, Rosenberg compellingly demonstrates how the advertising industry and its legal regulators helped nineteenth-century Britons to negotiate the perils and potentialities of modern economic life. It is an important book that will be read with great profit by historians of capitalism, law, and the human sciences.

Susanna L. Blumenthal, University of Minnesota

In the nineteenth century advertising was a newly pervasive and multi-faceted form which, along with every kind of argument and amazement, gave rise to defining legal disputes. From quack doctors to dubious lotteries to men in tights – all the wild Victorian world is there, on the posters and in the court cases that Anat Rosenberg's original book takes on, as she tracks the adjudication of advertising's rational and affective modes. An engaging combination of information and surprise—like the best kind of ad.

Rachel Bowlby, author of *Back to the Shops: The High Street in History and the Future*

A brilliant work of interdisciplinary humanistic scholarship, one that transforms the historical study of advertising and enriches our understanding of a much misunderstood subject. The discussion of enchantment and fantasy is complex and thought provoking, unerringly perceptive. Rosenberg provides a deep and convincing and clarifying challenge to Weberian and other modernizing perspectives that insist on disenchantment as definitive of modernity. And she models a variety of ways to explore how advertisements were received and read. She clarifies and illuminates much in various Victorian legal domains, including the laws of fraud and libel and speech and "puffery" and contests and games of chance. Meanwhile, it is hard to think of another work that so helpfully illustrates a constitutive understanding of law.

Scholars in a wide range of fields: law and humanities, legal history, British studies, economic history, art history, and medical history, among others, are going to find this an inescapable and necessary and challenging work.

And it needs to be added that in the face of the book's multitude of textual and disciplinary riches, I found myself often slowing down to spend time with some of the absolutely wonderful images, photographs, and paintings, some familiar but many not, that she has mobilized, and that grace the accompanying text. A treat for the eye as well as for the mind.

Hendrik A. Hartog, Princeton University

The onslaught of mass advertising in the nineteenth century established some central features of capitalist modernity with which we still live today. It posed challenges to the popular imagination, to norms of rationality and common sense, to conventional morality, and to sellers, buyers and regulators alike. Anat Rosenberg's artful enquiry shows how Victorian society met these challenges and accommodated them into everyday life. Only this determined interdisciplinary approach - combining law, economics, culture and politics - could help us make sense of the teeming variety of goods and claims that threatened to overwhelm contemporaries, and have overwhelmed many a lesser historian.

Peter Mandler, University of Cambridge

A richly-researched and originally conceived study, *The Rise of Mass Advertising* foregrounds the legal realm's disparagement of advertising as a fundamental part of Britain's modern disenchantment. By considering the differences between information and publicity; the uses of public spaces by commercial interests; definitions of puffery and quackery; the evolution of branding, and the rise of professional advertising knowledge, Rosenberg deftly unpacks the relation between economics and aesthetics that lay at the heart of Britain's evolution. She shows that advertising fed the public's desire for magic made in new ways, while simultaneously institutionalizing disenchantment as "modern." Finally, advertising is important not because it embodied changes in capitalism but because it in fact, produced them.

Vanessa R. Schwartz, University of Southern California

Drawing on an extensive archive of legal and cultural sources, many previously unexamined, this remarkable study provides a novel perspective on the role of law in shaping mass advertising and its place in society. It casts new light on the intricacies of legal presence, the criticisms that attended the expansion of advertising and their formalization through law, and the part law assumed in stabilizing contested boundaries between different fields and interests. Together these insights afford a new perspective on advertising's significance for modernity. Exhaustive, meticulous and post-disciplinary, almost every page is enlivened by a treasure trove of images.

David Sugarman, Lancaster University and Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London