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Fifty Years of Super Bowl Commercials, Thirty-Two Years of Spectacular Consumption

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ABSTRACT

This article will explore the role and visibility of advertising during the Super Bowl over the years as a model for strategies of modern advertising and the resulting commercialization of US society. It uses the concepts of 'spectacular consumption' derived from Guy Debord and the 'commodity audience' from Dallas Smythe to frame the commercials' cultural transformation and influence. The spectacular nature of Super Bowl commercials and the special commodity worth of its audience were not present in the early days of the event, but gained momentum with Super Bowl XVII and its airing of Apple's '1984' commercial that became mythologized in the advertising industry. After 1984, both the rising inflation-adjusted CPM ('cost-per-thousand') and the increased media coverage indicate an increased spectacularization. This also manifested in such phenomena as the influential, decades-long Doritos user-generated content contests and the *Greatest Super Bowl Commercials* TV specials, and was a forerunner of such post-millennial advertising strategies as branded entertainment and content marketing, all designed to integrate advertising as a legitimate form of entertainment culture and prevent the avoidance of advertising by audiences.

KEYWORDS

Super Bowl; advertising; commercials; spectacle; audience commodity

On 15 January 1967, the day of the first AFL-NFL World Championship – what the press called even then the Super Bowl – an article in the *New York Times* announced, 'A Super 60 Seconds Costs $85,000', an alarming-enough figure to justify a headline.[1] Many advertisers at the time thought this was an outrageous amount. The year before, a vice president (VP) for advertising agency Foote, Cone & Belding (FCB) called pro football TV ad prices 'ridiculous' and argued that, '[at] some point in time, advertisers just won't be able to go along with the higher prices that result from competitive network bidding without commensurate increases in audience values'.[2] This feeling was shared by the automaker Ford: before the first Super Bowl, the automaker held out until the last minute, trying to negotiate a lower price from Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), one of the two television networks that broadcast the first Super Bowl.[3]

So was the VP at FCB correct? Did advertisers balk at high football ad prices? When adjusted for 2016 inflation, the $85,000 figure would be over $600,000. Although this

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increase would certainly be shocking to those in 1967, imagine their disbelief if told that $600,000 would buy less than 4 seconds of Super Bowl commercial time 50 years later – even when adjusted for inflation – given its $5 million per 30-s price tag (see Table 1). The longevity of the Super Bowl and its advertising obviously show that advertisers did not abandon the event, despite prices rising much more than would have been predicted in 1967.

However, from another perspective perhaps the VP *was* right: maybe advertisers have gone along with this unimaginable (in 1967 minds) increase because, somehow, the 'audience values' have become more attractive to advertisers. From an advertiser perspective, the value of the Super Bowl has indeed increased for advertisers over the years. Yet, this value did not significantly increase until a specific historical moment that not only transformed advertising, but also came at a social and cultural cost that has continued throughout the modern Super Bowl era.

The Super Bowl is clearly a key event for the advertising industry, being by far the most expensive US televised event each year in which to place advertising and is a much discussed venue within the advertising industry. Super Bowl commercials, though, are more than this: they are themselves a highly visible, anticipated, and influential cultural event, one that explicitly celebrates and promotes commercialism. The Super Bowl is not just a football game; it is a beloved 'Ad Bowl', a commercial status that according to historians Peter Hopsicker and Mark Dyreson in an analysis of this mega-event represented 'an unprecedented development in American consumer culture'.[4] In many ways, the Super Bowl has permanently raised the bar for intrusive commercialism. This article will explore the role and visibility of advertising during the Super Bowl over the years as a model for strategies of modern advertising and the resulting commercialization of US society. It uses the concepts of 'spectacular consumption' derived from Marxist theorist Guy Debord and the 'commodity audience' from political economist Dallas Smythe to frame the commercials'

Table 1. Super Bowl commercial prices, 30-s spot, select years.

Year	Then-current cost	Adjusted for 2016 inflation	Viewers (mil)	CPM (adjusted)
1967	$40,000	$289,000	24.4	$11.8
1970	$78,200	$482,000	44.2	$10.9
1975	$107,000	$476,000	56.1	$8.5
1980	$222,000	$649,000	76.2	$8.5
1984	$368,200	$848,000	77.6	$10.9
1985	$525,000	$1.17 mil	85.5	$13.7
1995	$1.15 mil	$1.81 mil	83.4	$21.6
1999	$1.6 mil	$2.30 mil	83.7	$27.5
2000	$2.1 mil	$2.92 mil	88.5	$33.0
2005	$2.4 mil	$2.94 mil	86.1	$34.1
2015	$4.5 mil	$4.54 mil	114.4	$39.7
2016	$5.0 mil	$5.00 mil	111.9	$44.7

Sources: For all cost and ratings from 1970 to 2009, and ratings from 1967 to 2009: http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2009/01/18/historical-super-bowl-tv-ratings/ Costs for 1967 are an average of NBC and CBS; see 'Sponsors Sign for Super bowl TV', *Broadcasting*, 32.

Costs for 2015–2016: Nick Schwartz, 'Stunning Infographic Charts the Skyrocketing Cost of a Super Bowl Ad', *USA Today*, 6 February 2016, http://ftw.usatoday.com/2016/02/how-much-does-super-bowl-ad-cost (accessed 19 July 2016).

Ratings for 2015: Scott Collins, 'Super Bowl 2015: Sunday's Game a Ratings Winner for NBC', *Los Angeles Times*, 3 February 2015, http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-et-st-super-bowl-2015-ratings-20150203-story.html (accessed 19 July 2015).

Ratings for 2016: F. Pallotta and B. Stelter, 'Super Bowl 50 Audience is Third Largest in TV History', *CNN.com*, 8 February 2016, http://money.cnn.com/2016/02/08/media/super-bowl-50-ratings/ (accessed 23 May 2016).

To adjust for inflation, the CPI calculator at the US Bureau of Labor Statistics was used: http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm. Calculations for CPM were done through the ClickZ CPM Calculator at https://www.clickz.com/static/cpm-calculator.

cultural transformation and influence.[5] However, the spectacular nature of Super Bowl commercials and the special commodity worth of its audience were not present in the early days of the event, but gained momentum, as many have argued, with Super Bowl XVII and its airing of Apple's '1984' commercial that became mythologized in both the advertising industry and recollections of Super Bowl advertising. The subsequent spectacular nature of the Super Bowl commercial and its surrounding cultural discourse manifested in such phenomena as the influential, decades-long Doritos user-generated content (UGC) contests and the *Greatest Super Bowl Commercials* TV specials has served as a crucial forerunner of such post-millennial advertising strategies as branded entertainment and content marketing, all designed to integrate advertising as a legitimate form of entertainment culture and prevent the avoidance of advertising by audiences.

Spectacular Consumption and the Audience Commodity

The idea of modern spectacle originates from the work of Guy Debord, an activist and scholar associated with the 1960s' French Situationalist movement.[6] For Debord, modern capitalist society is exemplified by spectacle: large-scale manufactured and visually dominant events, driven by commodity logic. The concept therefore combines elements of McLuhan-esque medium theory with Marxism and the Frankfurt School.[7] For Debord, spectacle was inherently ideological, depoliticizing citizens and falsely separating spectacle from the commodity relations that gave rise to it. Later, Debord argued that the collapse of the cold war introduced a combination of US- and Soviet-style 'integrated spectacle', a concept that often is applied to large-scale coordinated media events/franchises that may involve multiple outlets and tie-ins.[8] As early as the mid-1970s, sports media scholar Michael R. Real saw the connection between the Debordian 'mythic spectacle' and sporting events like the Super Bowl.[9]

Spectacle that is especially tied to saturation advertising or promotion is a form of 'spectacular consumption' where a marketing campaign or pervasive brand takes on a broad cultural resonance, and has been applied to Hollywood films, music, and children's entertainment.[10] Spectacular consumption often involves the use of multi-modal and integrated marketing forms, including advertising, public relations, merchandising, sales promotion, media coverage, and web outlets such as social media. Scholars have also used the concept to critique large-scale sports-related marketing, including the athlete-oriented Niketown promotions of the late 1990s and 2000s, and the Budweiser 'Whassup' campaign that originated as a 2000 Super Bowl XXXIV commercial.[11] The racial politics of the 'Whassup' commercial – seeing black friendship as both universal, authentic, but still racially stereotyped – is embedded in the sizeable scope of the campaign, its (transient) creation of celebrity for the campaign's actors, and its many promotional manifestations.

Modern Super Bowl commercials certainly seem to qualify as spectacular consumption.[12] Super Bowl commercials transcend their 30-s commercial space as other media forms, including news and television specials discuss, celebrate or are influenced by the commercials, as well as the growing percentage of viewers who report watching the broadcast exclusively for the ads.

The spectacularization of Super Bowl commercials is tied to the political economy of sports broadcasting. Specifically, a key element in understanding how a Super Bowl commercial went from being simply the ad in a highly watched event like the Oscars or

the World Series to becoming its own highlighted and anticipated cultural event is tied to television's revenue model and its economic relationship with advertising. Dallas Smythe's concept of the 'audience commodity' is particularly useful for understanding the spectacularization of Super Bowl ads.[13] Influenced by Marxist theory, Smythe theorized the role of the audience in advertising-supported media content, arguing that the audience serves as the key commodity being sold by the media to advertisers. But not all audiences, Smythe contends, are equally valuable. The most valued audience commodity is that which is plentiful (so a mass viewership, in the case of television), 'pure' in terms of desirable demographics that advertisers wish to reach (such as 18–49-year-old males; those with disposable income and the willingness to spend), and 'pliant' consumer audiences (or those especially receptive to the advertisers' persuasive messages).[14] This form of commodification skews the programming that broadcasting and other ad-supported media offer, both privileging content that attracts some audience commodities over others and offering content that flows well with the consumption-oriented messages of advertising (thus encouraging an 'advertising-pliant' mindset). Smythe also argued that audiences may be seen as a form of labour in advertising systems, given that advertising exposure is not normally the goal of media users (with viewing ads being then a form of labour), and the promotional functions that audiences may fulfil by disseminating advertising messages through their thinking of advertising messages, talking about them with others, and their own consumption behaviours. In the era of data-mining digital advertising, where digital media systems are designed to collect user information with the goal of creating targeted advertising, Smythe's audience labour metaphor has seen a resurgence in critical political economy of the media.[15]

Spectacular consumption and the audience commodity intersect especially in the case of the modern Super Bowl, where motivated viewing of advertising is seen as a key part of the event, and this drives the value of the audience commodity before and during the event. However, such a dynamic was not always the case. As the next section describes, before the mid-1980s, the Super Bowl was a valuable way to reach audiences as was any high-profile sporting event, with large audiences and desirable demographics. But audiences did not become the pliant super-commodity until several years after the Super Bowl began.

Pre-Spectacular Super Bowl Advertising

Information about commercials during either the NFL or AFL championship games before the first 'Super Bowl' in 1967 is sparse. Much of the footage of early championships is lost, especially the commercials. Articles in the popular press were rare, and, when they wrote about it at all, the business press discussed the nature of the audience commodity: how much it cost to advertise during the championship, and how much the networks paid for football broadcasting rights to be able to offer this commodity.[16] One exception is a notable advertising campaign that aired during the 1959 NFL Championship between the Baltimore Colts and the New York Giants – the latter making their second consecutive trip to the championship game. According to a report in *Advertising Age*, five Giants players including future Hall-of-Famer Sam Huff appeared in commercials for Philip Morris-owned cigarette brands (or 'cigaret' as was spelled in the article), all comically interacting with TV personality Max Shulman. As an early version of integrated marketing, these TV commercials were teased by complementary radio spots airing before the game, and by the Giants players

who toured the country touting brands such as Marlboro and Philip Morris. Alpine and Parliament cigarette commercials also aired during that game.[17]

In the 1964 NFL Championship, major sponsors included Ford and Philip Morris, each of which, according to the trade journal *Broadcasting*, had advertising time for one quarter of the championship.[18] Other signed sponsors included Union Carbide, and Socony Mobile (later ExxonMobil), and beer brands Ballantine, Falstaff, Hamm's, Schmidt, Wiedmann, and National Brew. The latter, a sponsor of the Baltimore Colts, may have advertised Colt 45, named after running back Jerry Hill,[19] who played in that game. Although no specific sponsors were listed for the AFL Championship game, season sponsors – which may have included the championship broadcast – included Champion Spark Plugs, Goodyear, Pearl Brewing, and R.J. Reynolds.[20]

Beginning with the first Super Bowl in 1967, advertisements began to garner a bit more press attention. However, through Super Bowl XVIII in 1984, the limited coverage mainly focused on the list of advertisers or the nature of the cost of Super Bowl ads.[21] Simulcast on two networks (the only Super Bowl to do so),[22] deals with advertisers for the inaugural Super Bowl included Chrysler, R.J. Reynolds, and American Airlines for NBC, and Philip Morris, Falstaff, and Ford – eventually, after last-minute negotiations – for CBS. McDonald's was among the sponsors signed to advertise on both broadcasts.[23] In one way, though, Super Bowl I was prescient about how much advertising could eventually influence the broadcast of the game. The second half had to be kicked off twice, likely because the officials did not wait long enough for NBC to return from its commercial break (for Winston cigarettes), although apparently audience members were not informed that the irregularity stemmed from the television networks' advertising schedules.[24]

It is telling about the early Super Bowls that the most noteworthy commercials *as* Super Bowl commercials featured football stars, signalling that the sports element was still perceived as much more dominant than the advertising per se. From 1972, three years after his upset victory in Super Bowl III, Joe Namath was slathered in Noxzema shaving cream by a then-unknown Farrah Fawcett, and helped establish male-fantasy, double-entendre humour as a trope in the game ('I'm so excited, I'm about to get creamed'); this commercial became celebrated as the Super Bowl's 'first high-profile spot',[25] but at the time it received little press.[26] The other especially recognizable ad is the Coca-Cola commercial featuring Pittsburgh Steeler 'Mean' Joe Greene tossing his jersey to a young fan as he exits a tough game. That spot was ranked by *USA Today* in its 50th anniversary coverage as the greatest Super Bowl commercial of all time.[27] However, the Coca-Cola commercial actually debuted during the regular NFL season, three months before its broadcast during Super Bowl XIV in 1980.[28] While the ad also spawned two sequels and a parody, they all were produced well into the spectacular consumption era of the Super Bowl, more than 20 years after the original aired.[29] Nevertheless, these commercials and their celebrated status solidified links between advertising and professional athletes in the television age.

Triggering Spectacularization: '1984', Audience Commodity Values and Media Coverage

Through the early 1980s, advertisers saw the Super Bowl as a valuable, but not especially celebrated, vehicle for marketing campaigns. In the estimation of most industry-insiders, the Academy Awards broadcast represented a more prestigious venue.[30] As many have noted,

1984 marked a key year in the ascendance of Super Bowl commercials. One particular advertisement from 1984 has received much of the credit for this transformation, a spot for the Macintosh computer. Called by various writers 'The Big Bang',[31] 'the most storied Super Bowl spot of all time',[32] 'the best TV commercial ever',[33] the commercial 'that changed advertising',[34] and 'the first "event" ad',[35] this commercial illustrated the power of the Super Bowl to draw attention from viewers and the media as an advertising-centred venue. Directed by Ridley Scott, a then-rising star in Hollywood for his science fiction epics *Alien* (1979) and *Blade Runner* (1982), the minute-long '1984' ad aired during the Super Bowl's second half. Scott's vision cost between $400,000 and $600,000 to produce, and $1 million to broadcast.[36] The complex cinematic semiotics of the commercial – most clearly referencing George Orwell's Big Brother but also *The Wizard of Oz* – has been analysed by rhetoricians and advertising critics.[37] Significant press attention followed throughout that year given its cinematic nature and cost, and its introduction of the easily dramatized PC/Mac market battle. As a result of it being covered in the news and the commercial's replay during television news segments, Apple may have received as much as $150 million in free publicity.[38] In the computer industry, the brand image that the commercial established – Apple as rebellious and youthful, IBM/PCs as establishment and old – was profoundly successful and continued for decades afterward.[39] The next year, Apple followed '1984' with 'Lemmings', a notoriously ill-received commercial that nevertheless generated significant attention.[40]

The '1984' Macintosh commercial moved Super Bowl commercials into spectacularizing status in two significant ways. The advertisement created enhanced audience commodity values and it also generated increased attention to Super Bowl ads by the media – trends that began to take off the following year. Table 1 illustrates trends in the advertising rates, ratings, and audience commodity value during the 50-year history of the Super Bowl. Several factors influenced the ad rates and the cost to reach a thousand viewers (CPM) in particular years and to various degrees. These include the 1969 upset victory by the AFL's New York Jets in Super Bowl III, a victory that sparked additional publicity and made the games more compellingly competitive,[41] the removal of cigarette advertising from all television broadcasting in 1971,[42] the placement of the game into primetime beginning with Super Bowl XII in 1978,[43] and the ebb and flow of the digital economy, including the 'Dot-Com Super Bowl' that featured 17 different Internet companies buying commercials in 2000 but just three the next year.[44]

Despite these often short-term influences, the Super Bowl historically generated steady growth for the categories of then-current advertising prices for a 30-s spot and size of audience. The cost of a 30-s ad, for example, crossed the $1 million mark in 1995, an event that received coverage in newspapers across the country.[45] However, when one adjusts the CPM for inflation – adjusting the price for 2016 equivalents – then a different pattern emerges. Specifically, adjusted CPM is mostly flat during the first 18 years of the Super Bowl, basically between 8.5 and 11 (factoring in the additional cost CBS charged during the Super Bowl I compared to NBC). This figure began to climb steadily starting in 1985, the year after the Macintosh commercial. This shift clearly shows that the audience commodity became more valuable after this year. Since 1985, advertisers have been willing to pay more each year, even when accounting for inflation.

What accounts for the increase in adjusted CPM beginning in 1985? Recall the earlier discussion that the value of the audience commodity involves the size, demographics, and

consumption receptiveness of that product. In this case, the increase in CPM starting in 1985 is likely not because the audience grew – if anything, this should make the cost per person less expensive as efficiencies of scale apply. Nor is it necessarily only about the demographic makeup of the audience, given that the Super Bowl audience is less likely to be male-dominated than a typical football broadcast. Females made up 46% of the audience for the 2011 Super Bowl, compared to 43% nine years earlier; the 18–34 age demographic remained constant at 23%.[46]

What seems to be the most logical explanation for the increase is the creation of a revered commercial cocoon during Super Bowl broadcasts, an environment cultivated especially starting in 1984. After this year, the advertising and broadcast television industries realized that the commercials were a unique element of the broadcast and for television generally – offering commercials to be watched along with, or maybe even instead of, the game, rather than as a necessary evil for audiences to receive the game.

The historical timing of this transformation also reveals some of the unique factors about the Super Bowl as unique commodity. The Super Bowl became an advertising-centred event that mitigated long-term trends in the television and advertising industries. Broadcast television faced competition from cable and satellite systems, both offering basic channels such as MTV but also advertising-free premium channels, including HBO. These premium channels featured original programming and drained especially desirable demographics that could afford such options.[47] A fourth broadcast network, Fox, would debut just a few years later, and afterwards smaller networks like The CW appeared. In addition, the remote control and VCRs (and eventually DVRs and streaming options) allowed audiences to avoid exposure to advertising by easily changing the channel or fast-forwarding through previous-recorded programmes.[48] For advertisers, cable networks and later the Internet allowed more effective demographic targeting. However, they also complicated media buying, especially for brands seeking a large audience and impact.[49]

Essentially what the Super Bowl does is freeze the network television system in the age where the TV commercial – and its audience commodity logic – was the pinnacle of mediated selling. In the 1960s, there were only three commercial networks sharing the entire audiences, ratings were high, and very few people had remote controls for easily avoiding the commercials. There were no video game systems or Internet access to distract viewers. During the Super Bowl, no one uses the remote control to avoid ads. The Super Bowl is often watched in group settings at Super Bowl parties, perhaps a throwback to the early days of television family viewing. A huge percentage of people watch the game, so diverting alternatives are put on hold; the Internet is used as a 'second screen' to complement viewing, including advertising viewing, rather than detract from ad exposure.[50] The Super Bowl, then, remains as broadcast network television's 'last hurrah'.[51]

As a result, audiences in this commercially protected environment are more expensive than those out in the wild. While watching the modern Super Bowl, viewers become advertising attentive, not only tolerating advertising but actively watching it, seeking it out in advance and after the game, and discussing it with others. In this way, the Super Bowl audience is the most desirable kind of ad-centred audiences in the current media environment that has been labelled 'the marketplace of attention'.[52] The '1984' ad and its philosophy of epic marketing also plugged into the Super Bowl as an unofficial holiday that manifests in group viewing, often-elaborate parties, network promotions of programmes, and conspicuous consumption of food, beer, and football fandom that flows with the

commercial images between plays.[53] This translates into increased revenue for the networks: the spectacular consumption of the Super Bowl, triggered by the '1984' ad, enhances the political economy of the basic system.

Predictably, then, the rise in the price (and value) of the audience commodity is linked to a second trend that can measure the impact of '1984': the increased media coverage of Super Bowl commercials. Table 2 surveys 50 years of Super Bowl coverage in three major American newspapers – the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Los Angeles Times*. These three newspapers were chosen both for their prominence and for their geographic distribution – East Coast (*New York Times*), Midwest (*Chicago Tribune*), and West Coast (*Los Angeles Times*). Articles represented in this table included mention of Super Bowl advertising in the headline, abstract, or lead paragraph.[54]

The findings indicate a post-1984 cultural shift in the importance of Super Bowl advertising. As seen in Table 2, pre-1984 coverage was both minimal and inconsistent. In particular, *Los Angeles Times* gave Super Bowl advertising no dedicated coverage until the mid-1970s and then only devoting an average of one article per year pre-1984.

Post-1984, the amount of coverage devoted to Super Bowl advertising begins to slowly rise. This rise continues through the 1990s and into the 2000s. It should be noted that while this growth has seemingly plateaued in recent years, this table does not include new, non-print forms of coverage. While currently not indexed within most research databases, newspaper-produced blogs such as *Company Town*, the *Los Angeles Times* entertainment industry-focused blog, and *Media Decoder*, the now-defunct *New York Times* advertising and entertainment blog, have produced Super Bowl advertising coverage not included in the physical editions of their parent newspapers.[55]

This pattern of coverage seems consistent with the trade press. Taking coverage of Super Bowl advertising in the most visible journal of the advertising industry, *Advertising Age*, from 1967 to 1984 (17 years), this outlet produced four stories about the Super Bowl, but none appeared on the prestigious front page. During the next five years – 1985–1990 – it offered 10 stories, 5 of them on the front page. Television news coverage, too, is now a significant part of Super Bowl commercial discourse: the cable and network morning news programmes cover the commercials with multiple and extensive segments before and

Table 2. Number of articles primarily about Super Bowl advertising in *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Los Angeles Times* in five-year intervals, 1967–2015.

Period	NY Times	Chi Trib	LA Times	Totals
1967–1970	3	2	0	5
1971–1975	6	2	1	9
1976–1980	1	2	4	7
1981–1985	5	5	8	18
1986–1990	12	17	12	41
1991–1995	32	25	12	69
1996–2000	31	35	34	100
2001–2005	40	33	26	99
2006–2010	44	40	30	114
2011–2015	50	41	24	115
Totals	224	202	151	577

Notes: Search terms used were the phrases 'Super Bowl and advertising' and 'Super Bowl and ads'. Newspapers were accessed through multiple databases. *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times* through ProQuest using publication-specific search. *New York Times* through ProQuest (for articles through 2013) and NYT.com (for articles published 2014 and later). In the light of the Super Bowl's shifting dates and the possibility of post-event advertising coverage, a year was defined as running from March 1 to March 1.

after the game.[56] After the Super Bowl broadcast in 2004, the NFL Network repeated the commercials in consecutive order, *removing* the game itself from the commercial spectacle.[57]

The nature of the coverage also has changed. Early articles tended to focus on the price of Super Bowl ads, how the ratings indicated the cost efficiency of advertising during the Super Bowl, and a list of the advertisers.[58] But with the post-1984 era of spectacular consumption, specific campaigns, advertisements, and strategies are previewed before the Super Bowl and reviewed after the event.[59]

Symbolic of the attention that newspapers began paying to the commercials beginning in the 1980s is *USA Today*'s Ad Meter feature. Beginning in 1989,[60] the newspaper rated and ranked the commercials based on evaluations from focus groups. In 2012, the national daily added input from Internet users by employing social media via a partnership with Facebook where commercials were posted, rated, and shared by users.[61] Using a device that measures viewer reactions, commercials are given a numerical score that signifies scientific measurement. The first 'winner' of Ad Meter ranking was an American Express commercial featuring comedic actors Dana Carvey and Jon Lovitz with a score of '7.52'.[62] As with many such ad ratings, their criteria centred not on what commercials were effective at persuasion but rather on what ads were most entertaining. Humorous or poignant ads scored especially high in this metric.

Ad Meter itself has become part of the spectacle. As indicated by the use of the LexisNexis database, over 270 stories or features appeared in *USA Today* that mention the Ad Meter from January 1989 to February 2016, an average of 10 per year. The Ad Meter feature is also significantly covered in other news outlets.[63] A low Ad Meter rating has been known to cause advertisers to change agencies.[64] A high score could deliver an ad executive bonus.[65] High scores could even affect the value of stock for corporations that advertised their brands at the Super Bowl.[66]

This increase in news coverage is sparked by both advertisers' realization that high-profile ads can be supplemented by other marketing techniques including media placement, and the receptiveness of the media to offer exposure to such promotional efforts. The movement towards advertising treating Super Bowl placement as the lynchpin of a larger coordinated campaign involving public relations, sales promotion, and eventually teaser spots and webpage and social media support arguably began with or was greatly influenced by '1984'. In its 10-year retrospective of the Apple commercial, *Advertising Age* noted that the news coverage the commercial received 'would change the advertising game' (as is supported by Table 2). An advertising industry leader noted '1984' marked 'the beginning of the new era of integrated marketing communications'.[67] Just after the commercial aired, Apple placed 20-page inserts in the magazines *Newsweek*, *Time,* and *Fortune*, thus complementing the buzz and free media coverage the commercial received.[68] The next year, in 1985, the *Wall Street Journal* asked: 'When is a TV ad not an ad? When it's hyped as an event'.[69]

In addition to clever marketing tactics, a receptive media system is essential for such hype to work. In the mid-1980s, before the Internet and social media created additional competition for ad dollars, traditional media such as broadcast television and newspapers were concerned about their shrinking piece of the advertising pie. As mentioned earlier, cable television and the Fox broadcast network increased the outlets that could carry advertising and offered targeted demographics.[70] Ownership concentration of newspapers and television outlets – many diversified into cross-media ownership that included entertainment subsidiaries – both increased corporate debt because of acquisitions and

created an environment friendly to large-scale advertising buys.[71] A Reagan-era deregulatory environment of media industries also emboldened commercial trends.[72] As media became incentivized to cater to advertisers to maintain revenue, the 1980s saw the growth of hybrid advertising and promotional forms such as infomercials, college football bowl sponsorship, advertorials, toy-based children's programming, and home shopping channels.[73] In this environment, the willingness of the news media to cover Super Bowl advertising was financially encouraged. For advertisers, media coverage of Super Bowl commercials offered a double benefit: the 'value-added' bonus of additional exposure for Super Bowl advertisers to justify the expensive costs of the event and an enhanced consumption-friendly environment for advertisers who place their ads around such news coverage.

These two factors – the increase in the audience-commodity and the increase in news coverage – illustrate the idea that well before their 50th anniversary, Super Bowl commercials were not seen as ads per se, but as celebrated forms of culture in-and-of-themselves, on par with blockbuster movies for generating audiences coveted by the media/adverting industries. From the standpoint of Super Bowl 50, the commercials have become spectacularized forms of media. They feature Hollywood talent who normally avoid routine advertising. In 1984, Ridley Scott pioneered the new format. Since then, Clint Eastwood and other A-listers have joined the Super Bowl ad-making lineup.[74] These spots are teased by pre-event commercials (ads for ads) as part of integrated campaigns using traditional and digital media.[75] They are viewed outside of the Super Bowl context. In 2015, consumers spent more than 800 million min watching Super Bowl commercials on YouTube, with over one-third of these views coming before the game. The Star Wars-themed VW commercial (with a Darth Vader-costumed kid seemingly starting his dad's car with the Dark Side) was a key advertisement for revealing online exposure. Internet users viewed it online 17 million times before the game, generating a huge buzz well before kickoff.[76] Recent ads are shared by users throughout social media. In 2015, the top-10 most viral Super Bowl commercials were shared 4.5 million times.[77] They are previewed and reviewed in the media, through Ad Meter and other metrics. They influence and inspire other forms of culture, including the films *Little Giants* (1994) and *Space Jam* (1996).[78] They benefit the media's marketing efforts. The Super Bowl provides an important platform for the broadcasting networks to promote their own programming during the event,[79] and for Hollywood to launch the hype for forthcoming summer blockbuster films.[80] Given these trends, it should not come as a surprise that the advertisements encourage an increasing number of viewers to watch the Super Bowl *exclusively* for the commercials. According to surveys, the percentage of the audience that tunes into the Super Bowl solely for the commercials has risen from 2% in 1996 to 10% in 2005 to 22% in 2010.[81]

Doritos' 'Crash the Super Bowl' and the *Super Bowl's Greatest Commercials*

Two particular case study histories illustrate the depth of how Super Bowl advertising perpetuates spectacular consumption trends. One is the decades-long 'Crash the Super Bowl' campaign for Doritos (ending with Super Bowl 50), and the second the *Super Bowl's Greatest Commercials* CBS television specials that aired nearly every year beginning in 2001 and continuing at least through 2016. As with many trends initiated or refined by Super Bowl commercials, these two continuing artefacts have normalized trends in the commercialization of everyday life and US culture.

The Doritos' 'Crash the Super Bowl' (CTSB) campaign is one of the most notable and unique examples of Super Bowl advertising in the 2000s. Organized around a contest for the best consumer-created Doritos ad, CTSB was an early and particularly successful UGC campaign. Running from 2006 to 2016,[82] the contest received over 36,000 entries, most from inside the United States as international submissions were not allowed until 2013.[83] Many of these entries were made available on both YouTube and the Doritos website. In 2016, for example, the top 50 entries as pre-screened by Doritos were posted for user viewing, voting, and sharing at their specially designated CTSB site, and supported by social media such as a Facebook page.[84] In this way, the campaign extends, de facto, the number of commercials seen by viewers from the ones airing on the Super Bowl to literally hundreds over the life of the campaign. The contest is designed to be viral, and the CTSB winner for Super Bowl 50 was the most shared commercial of that year.[85] The contest was also known for revealing the winner live during the Super Bowl itself and for airing the ads of the top two or three finishers (rather than just the winner). Additionally, the campaign managed to produce multiple ads that took first place in *USA Today*'s Ad Meter survey, an achievement for which Frito Lay monetarily rewarded participants. Joe and Dave Herbert, producers of the first CTSB spot to top the Ad Meter survey, were rewarded with $1 million dollars and a day-long celebration in their hometown.[86]

A rare example of an ongoing Super Bowl campaign, CTSB received a considerable amount of media coverage over the years. Within this coverage, there is a notable emphasis on the amateur nature of the contestants and on the contest's ability to provide crucial Hollywood connections for finalists. However, like many UGC contests both before and after CTSB, finalists tended to come from backgrounds in advertising or film. In the 2007 contest, four out of five finalists were either film-makers, employed by advertising agencies, or had previously produced commercials.[87] This was a pattern that not only continued but was seemingly embraced by Doritos as later editions of the contest included opportunities to work with film-makers such as Michael Bay and Zack Snyder as part of the grand prize.

Although the campaign was discontinued after Super Bowl 50, Frito Lay and Doritos did not entirely abandon the idea of UGC. Rather, they launched a new, year-round campaign, 'Legion of the Bold', which 'involves asking the general public for creative ideas throughout the year on everything from Vine videos to banner ads' and winning entrants are 'paid based on the complexity of the brief'.[88] Further, in an interview in *Advertising Age*, Frito Lay North America Chief Marketing Officer Ram Krishnan pointed to the generational shift that has occurred since the inception of CTSB, with Gen Z consumers 'earning success by putting out their own YouTube channel and creating content for that' – a trend that Krishnan sees as altering the ways in which the brand can offer value to the consumer.[89]

As *Advertising Age* declared, Doritos' 'Crash The Super Bowl' contest 'is widely seen as a groundbreaking program that put crowdsourced ads on the map',[90] thus serving as a role model for the advertising industry of how to involve consumers not just in the reviewing and sharing of commercials, but also as creators of commercials, further encouraging a consumerist (or, for the contest submitters, advertiserist) mindset. It also illustrates the ways in which digital media have shaped the nature of commercial content presented within the Super Bowl.

Super Bowl's Greatest Commercials (*SBGC*) is a series of television specials that traditionally air on CBS the week before the Super Bowl, starting in 2001 and appearing every year since – except 2003.[91] Typically, the 60-min, primetime specials collect and report user votes about

past commercials (available on a tie-in website) to determine which is the 'greatest'. They also feature other entertaining commercials organized by themes ('Animals', 'At The Office'), entice viewers with previews ('sneak peeks') of commercials to be aired on that particular year's Super Bowl, include interviews with the stars of the commercials, and offer 'behind-scenes' or 'making-of' features of the upcoming commercials. The specials air on CBS whether the network carries the Super Bowl that particular year or not. They have also been rerun on The NFL Network.[92] Although the content of the specials themselves are all about the celebration of advertising, the specials sell ad time to other advertisers (that may or may not be advertisers for that year's Super Bowl) and, as with all broadcast network programmes, are interrupted by these commercials throughout the special. In fact, these specials are ads within ads, a perfect advertising-friendly environment. The existence and rhetoric of the specials clearly situate commercial culture as a legitimate form of popular culture.[93]

The *SBGC* specials were not the first television specials devoted to advertising, but the Super Bowl influenced perhaps the earliest series of specials, *The Best Commercials You've Never Seen (And Some You Have)*, which debuted on ABC in May 1998, with new or rerun episodes airing until 2002. The host for the first instalment was Ali Landry, a former Miss USA who was made a national celebrity by her appearance in Super Bowl Doritos commercials.[94] Later versions were hosted by two actors made famous by the Super Bowl Budweiser 'Whassup' ads.[95] In one of its last versions, ABC aired the special immediately after the *SPGC* on CBS in 2002, in a kind of inter-network lead-out programming strategy.[96] Other manifestations such as *World's Funniest Commercials* on the cable network TBS, airing in 2006 through 2010, and *Greatest Animal Commercials Countdown* on The CW network in 2016, typically include commercials from the Super Bowl. These ad-related specials are produced by the same company, Robert Dalrymple Productions.[97]

From the first airings in 2001, *SPGC* has been promotional not just for old and new Super Bowl commercials, but also for the networks. Co-hosts often include a star of a CBS programme, such as Mike O'Malley and Anthony Clark from the then-hit sitcom *Yes, Dear* in 2002 to Katharine McPhee of the crime procedural *Scorpion* in 2016.[98] The specials are also supported by tie-in news stories on morning news programmes, thus serving as a double promotion for the specials and the upcoming commercials. The public relations efforts of the brands recognized in the specials provide additional layers of support.[99] Obviously, the programmes themselves are a celebratory environment for the commercials, arguably more so than the Super Bowl itself, and explicitly frame the ads as a form of entertainment. The hosts and 'behind-the-scenes' features talk admiringly about the commercials, and certain categories of commercials which with modern eyes appear unseemly, such as cigarette commercials, are not included in the programmes.[100]

Ratings have generally increased for these specials. The audience for the first 2001 special was 6.5 million viewers.[101] In 2015, the *SBGC* special attracted 10.8 million, at a time when broadcast audiences were generally smaller than 15 years earlier.[102] Although many of the specials since 2001 were broadcast during the ratings-challenged nights of Friday and Saturday before the game, in 2016, for Super Bowl 50, CBS aired two specials: one on Tuesday, 12 February, at 8:00 pm as a 2-h special, and then a follow-up 1-h special – a new version, not a rerun – on Saturday night.[103] At one point, a promo was aired for the second special during the first Tuesday night *Super Bowl's Greatest Commercial* telecast, creating an intricate onion-layering of commercialism in which a promotional spot for a programme

about commercials, featuring images of ads, aired along with ads during the commercial break of another programme about commercials featuring images of ads.

Just as the Doritos' 'Crash the Super Bowl' became a leader in the integration of UGC in advertising, so might the *SBGC* help normalize the idea of advertising-based content as a form of entertainment. This trend is often referred to by such names as 'brand entertainment', 'product integration', and 'content marketing', where a brand becomes the centre of a film, web feature, television episode, or even a whole programme.[104] In the case of CBGC, it is not one brand that comprises the programming, but several. Nor is it the brand that is the hero, but the advertisement ('advertising entertainment'?). Regardless, since 2001, the commercial-based specials have shown how economically and promotionally successful such hybrid forms can be.

The 'Ad Bowl' and the Transformation of Commercials from Sales Pitches to Entertainment

The main characteristic of the post-1984 era was to offer an event that spectacularized consumption – reinforced by the rising economic value of the commodity audience – and as a result celebrates brands, advertising, and consumerism by constructing the ads as simultaneously more than ads and therefore denying their own 'ad-ness'. Through elaborate production values including the involvement of movie stars; media coverage of campaigns; fan involvement through sharing, rating, and in some cases creation of ads; teaser ads and larger promotional support; online access to the ads; and decades of television specials specifically celebrating the commercials, the Super Bowl has elevated the commercial. The Super Bowl, then, has been a vehicle, and perhaps a justification, to raise this persuasive form on the hierarchy of 'taste cultures'[105] from a crassly promotional nuisance designed to persuade consumers to the equivalent of film and television programming designed to please audiences. A 2016 survey found that 77% of respondents felt that Super Bowl commercials were 'entertainment', and only 5% reported that ads bothered them during the game.[106] Although ads are no doubt still disliked by many media users, the Super Bowl has nevertheless been a long-term public relations campaign for the industry and its artefacts.

Just as the Super Bowl ad has gradually become a form of entertainment, so has the event and its ads extended the commercialization of everyday life and culture. Integrated marketing, viral marketing, user-generated campaigns, and content marketing all have some roots in Super Bowl commercial innovations. In these ways, a form of commercial selling is taken out of its selling context where it becomes more difficult to recognize, categorize, and thus evaluate commercial persuasion. Of course, Super Bowl commercials are forms of persuasion that are intricately tied to the political economy of televised sports, as is other sports-connected advertising. Other forms of mediated sports, such as sponsored college football bowl games, arguably represent similar 'groundbreaking' forms of commercialism, or even 'hypercommercialism'.[107] But given the Super Bowl's 50-plus-year legacy in promoting advertising, it has perhaps been the single biggest force in moving contemporary American culture into a digital world in which the categories of advertising, promotion, and media content are increasingly blurred, and where this blurring is more anticipated and accepted.

Notes

1. 'A Super 60 Seconds Costs $85,000', *New York Times*, 15 January 1967, S2.
2. 'Professional Football Games Are Too Expensive, Says FC&B's Stern', *Advertising Age*, 7 February 1966, 50.
3. 'Ford Wants Better Super Bowl Price', *Broadcasting*, 2 January 1967, 103–4.
4. Peter Hopsicker and Mark S. Dyreson, 'Super Bowl Sunday: An American Holiday?', in Len Travers (ed.), *Encyclopedia of American Holidays and National Days*, vol. 1 (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2006), 31–54.
5. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995); Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Verso, 1990); Dallas W. Smythe, 'Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism', *Canadian Journal Of Political and Social Theory* 1, no. 3 (1977), 1–27; and Dallas W. Smythe, 'On the Audience Commodity and Its Work', in *Dependency Road: Communication, Capitalism, Consciousness & Canada* (New Jersey: Ablex Publishing, 1981), 22–51.
6. Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*; for a review and application to modern media phenomena, see Douglas Kellner, *Media Spectacle* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
7. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964); Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).
8. Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*; and James R. Compton, *The Integrated News Spectacle: A Political Economy of Cultural Performance* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004).
9. Michael R. Real, 'Super Bowl: Mythic Spectacle', *Journal of Communication* 25, no. 1 (Winter 1975), 31–43.
10. Kathy Hamilton and Beverly Wagner, 'An Exploration of Spectacular Consumption at the Movies', *Journal of Customer Behaviour* 10, no. 4 (Winter 2011), 375–90; Eric King Watts, 'An Exploration of Spectacular Consumption: Gangsta Rap as Cultural Commodity', *Communication Studies* 48, no. 1 (1997), 42–58; and Matthew P. McAllister, '"Girls with a Passion for Fashion": The Bratz Brand as Integrated Spectacular Consumption', *Journal of Children and Media* 1, no. 3 (2007), 244–58.
11. Lisa Penaloza, 'Just Doing It: A Visual Ethnographic Study of Spectacular Consumption Behavior at Nike Town', *Consumption, Markets, & Culture* 2, no. 4 (1998), 337–400; Eric King Watts and Mark P. Orbe, 'The Spectacular Consumption of "True" African American Culture: "Whassup" with the Budweiser Guys?', *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 1 (March 2002), 1–20.
12. Much of the scholarship on Super Bowl advertising focuses on their effectiveness as marketing – see for example Jason Y.C. Ho, Tirtha Dhar, and Charles B. Weinberg, 'Playoff Payoff: Super Bowl Advertising for Movies', *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 26, no. 3 (September 2009), 168–79 – or on issues of gender and/or racial representation in the ads. Examples of this latter body of research include Michael A. Messner and Jeffrey Montez de Oca, 'The Male Consumer as Loser: Beer and Liquor Ads in Mega Sports Events', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30, no. 3 (2005), 1879–909. Work that focuses on the cultural impact of the large-scale scope of the consumption and commercials includes Matthew P. McAllister, 'Super Bowl Advertising as Commercial Celebration', *The Communication Review*, 3 no. 4, 403–28; Lawrence A. Wenner, 'Super-Cooled Sports Dirt: Moral Contagion and Super Bowl Commercials in the Shadows of Janet Jackson', *Television and New Media* 9, no. 2 (2008), 131–54. General overviews of the history and social issues of Super Bowl commercials include William M. O'Barr, 'Super Bowl Commercials: America's Annual Festival of Advertising', *Advertising & Society Review* 13, no. 1 (2012), https://muse.jhu.edu/article/477906 (accessed 22 May 2016); and Bernice Kanner, *The Super Bowl of Advertising: How Commercials Won the Game* (Princeton, NJ: Bloomberg Press, 2004).
13. Smythe, 'Communications'; and Smythe, 'On the Audience Commodity'.
14. Matthew P. McAllister, *The Commercialization of American Culture: New Advertising, Control, and Democracy* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996). In refining Smythe's concepts, scholars have

also argued that how the audience is measured – the audience ratings system – could also be viewed as a commodity of broadcasting, especially given that such measurement systems lean towards likely consumers rather than a pure audience measurement per se. See Eileen R. Meehan, *Why TV Is Not Our Fault: Television Programming, Viewers, and Who's Really in Charge* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

15. Lee McGuigan and Vincent Manzerolle (eds), *The Audience Commodity in a Digital Age: Revisiting a Critical Theory of Commercial Media* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014).
16. In terms of pre-Super Bowl NFL championship coverage, see 'CBS' Buy of National football League Championship Game Startles Other Nets', *Advertising Age*, 27 April 1964; and Val Adams, 'Football TV Ads Will Cost More', *New York Times*, 6 January 1966, 34.
17. 'Shulman, Grid Stars Sell on TV for Philip Morris', *Advertising Age*, 4 January 1960.
18. '$29 Million for 1964 Football', *Broadcasting*, 10 August 1964, 27–31.
19. David G. Moyer, *American Breweries of the Past* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2009), 61.
20. '$29 Million for 1964 Football', *Broadcasting*.
21. The web archive adland.tv does not begin its inventory of Super Bowl commercials until Super Bowl III in 1969. See http://adland.tv/SuperBowlCommercials. As Kanner notes, the audio of the NBC broadcast, including the commercials, is available at what originally was the Museum of Television and Radio (now known as The Paley Center for Media) in New York; Kanner, *The Super Bowl of Advertising*, 13.
22. CBS and NBC each claimed to have better advertising efficiencies – CPMs – given what was seen as a very high cost to advertise. See 'Who Took the Super Bowl CPM title? It Depends on Which Network's Version You Accept', *Broadcasting*, 13 February 1967, 46.
23. 'Sponsors Sign for Super Bowl TV', *Broadcasting*, 26 December 1966, 32–3.
24. 'TV Ad Timing Was Off in Super Bowl, CBS McPhail Says', *Advertising Age*, 23 January 1967, 2, 68; and Robert Raissman, 'The Super Bowl: Two Decades in the Spotlight', *Advertising Age*, 20 January 1986.
25. 'Close-up: The History of Advertising in Quite a Few Objects – No 69: Joe Namath's Super Bowl Commercial', *Campaign*, 5 July 2013, 16.
26. A search through *The New York Times*, *Advertising Age*, or the *Chicago Tribune* did not uncover discussions of Joe Namath commercial the year it aired, although it appears on lists of the greatest Super Bowl commercials. See for example Mackenzie Carpenter, 'Highlights and Fumbles from Super Bowl Commercials', *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 6 February 2005, E8.
27. '50 Best Super Bowl Ads Ever – USA Today Ad Meter', *Dayton Daily News*, 7 February 2016, Z5.
28. Robert Philpot, '"Mean" Joe Greene Reunites with "Kid" from Super Bowl Ad', *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 29 January 2016.
29. The 2009 sequel featured then-Steeler Troy Polamalu reprising Joe Greene's role: Ed Bouchette and Jerry Micco, 'Step Aside, Mean Joe; Polamalu Will Star in Ad Reprise', *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 21 November 2008, D3. The parody did have Joe Greene in it, coupled with comic actress Amy Sedaris, for Downy fabric softener, in 2012: Bruce Dowbiggin, 'NBC Dresses in its Sunday Best: Super Bowl Marketing Machine Clicks into High Gear', *Globe and Mail*, 4 February 2012, S3. CBS's promotion of the commercials during Super Bowl 50 featured a reunion spot with the Greene and the now-adult actor of the original commercial: Philpot, '"Mean" Joe Green Reunites with "Kid"'.
30. Stephen Battaglio, 'The "Shut Up and Watch" Standard: Super Bowl Advertisers Are Judged as much as the Players', *Los Angeles Times,* 4 February 2016, http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/cotown/la-et-ct-super-bowl-ads-20160204-story.html (accessed 20 July 2016).
31. Kanner, *The Super Bowl of Advertising*, 25.
32. Chuck Barney, 'Super Bowl 50: The 10 Best Super Bowl Ads Ever', *San Jose Mercury News*, 1 February 2016.
33. Steve Hayden, '"1984": As Good as It Gets', *Adweek*, 30 January 2011, http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/1984-good-it-gets-125608 (accessed 18 July 2016).
34. Bradley Johnson, 'Ten Years After Apple's "1984": The Commercial and Product that Changed Advertising', *Advertising Age*, 10 January 1994.

35. Charlie McCollum, 'The Ad Lineup', *San Jose Mercury News*, 30 January 2004, F1.
36. Alice Z. Cuneo and Richard Linnett, 'Apple Concocts Homage to "1984"', *Advertising Age*, 8 December 2003, 1, 37.
37. Sarah R. Stein, 'The "1984" Macintosh Ad: Cinematic Icons and Constitutive Rhetoric in the Launch of a New Machine', *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002), 169–92.
38. Karis Hustad, 'Why Apple's "1984" Commercial Is Still Talked about Today', *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 January 2014.
39. Daniela Hernandez, 'Tech Time Warp of the Week: 30 Years of Apple Ads, 1984 to the Present', *Wired*, 29 November 2013, http://www.wired.com/2013/11/tech-time-warp-of-the-week-apples-commercials/ (accessed 18 July 2016).
40. Douglas M. Bailey, 'Those "Epic" Computer Ads', *New England Business*, 17 June 1985, 70.
41. 'Jets Super Bowl Victory May Lead to Price Boost of AFL TV Minutes', *Advertising Age*, 20 January 1969, 20; and Raissman, 'The Super Bowl'.
42. 'Rozelle says N.F.L. Will Add Six Clubs for a Total of 32 in Coming Decade', *New York Times*, 3 January 1971, S2.
43. Kanner, *The Super Bowl of Advertising*, 23.
44. Stuart Elliot, 'In Super Commercial Bowl XXXV, The Not-Coms Are Beating the Dot-Coms', *New York Times*, 8 January 2001, C15.
45. For example, 'Super Bowl Ad Prices Topping $1 Million Level', *Cincinnati Post*, 11 January 1995, 4B; and 'Super Bowl XXIX Ad To Top $1 Million Mark', *Daily News of Los Angeles*, 1 November 1994, L18.
46. 'Gap Between Number of Male, Female Super Bowl Viewers Is Shrinking', *Sports Media Business Daily*, 1 February 2012, http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Daily/Issues/2012/02/01/Research-and-Ratings/SB-demos.aspx (accessed 17 July 2016). Those who had a household income of over $100,000 increased during this time, but given that older viewers also increased, it is unclear if these demographic trends would increase the cost of advertising.
47. McAllister, *The Commercialization of American Culture*.
48. Robert V. Bellamy Jr. and James R. Walker, *Television and the Remote Control: Grazing on a Vast Wasteland* (New York: Guilford, 1996).
49. Joseph Turow, *Breaking Up America: Advertisers and the New Media World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).
50. Stephen Battaglio, 'Super Bowl Ads Whetted the Appetites of Viewers, Who Watched Them Again on Smartphones', *Los Angeles Times*, 10 February 2016, http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/cotown/la-et-ct-superbowl-youtube-ads-20160211-story.html (accessed 20 July 2016).
51. 'Close-up: The History of Advertising in Quite a Few Objects – No 69: Joe Namath's Super Bowl Commercial', *Campaign*.
52. James G. Webster, *The Marketplace of Attention: How Audiences Take Shape in a Digital Age*. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2014).
53. Hopsicker and Dyreson, 'Super Bowl Sunday'.
54. In-brief style articles were an exception to this. While Super Bowl advertising was discussed in each piece included in this table, this was not always mentioned in the title or abstract or at least not as both are presented on the databases used.
55. 'Company Town', *Los Angeles Times*, http://www.latimes.com/business/hollywood/; and 'Media Decoder', *New York Times*, http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/author/the-new-york-times/
56. McAllister, 'Super Bowl Advertising as Commercial Celebration'.
57. Bill Doyle, 'For Some, It's All About the Commercials', *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, 30 January 2004, 22.
58. One early example is 'A Super 60 Seconds Costs $85,000', *New York Times*.
59. See, for instance, Super Bowl soft drink coverage in Stephen Chapman, 'The Cold War's History, but the Cola Wars Drag On', *Chicago Tribune*, 6 February 1992, D23; Denise Gellene, 'In Super Bowl of Commercialism, Pepsi Ads Score Best with Viewers', *Los Angeles Times*, 31 January 1995, 1; and 'Coca-Cola Flexes Muscles for a Blitz', *New York Times*, 21 January 1998, D9.

60. The first *USA Today* Ad Meter articles that report results were 'Ad Meter Ratings', *USA Today*, 23 January 1989, 4B. Other articles supporting Ad Meter appeared on the same page, such as Stuart Elliott, 'Funny, Furry Ads Win Hearts of TV Viewers', *USA Today*, 23 January 1989, 4B.
61. Stuart Elliott, 'Super Bowl Commercials Rated by Social Media', *New York Times*, 8 February 2012, B3.
62. 'Ad Meter Ratings', *USA Today*, 23 January1989.
63. Elliott, 'Super Bowl Commercials Rated by Social Media', among hundreds of others by various media outlets.
64. Elliott, 'Super Bowl Commercials Rated by Social Media'.
65. Battaglio, 'The "Shut Up and Watch" Standard'.
66. Jin-Woo Kim, Luther Trey Denton, and Tien Wang, 'Assessing Stock Market Response to the Release of Ad Meter Rankings of Super Bowl TV Commercials', *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications* (2015), http://www.ijimc.com/ (accessed 20 July 2016).
67. Johnson, 'Ten Years After Apple's "1984"'.
68. Richard L. Cohen, 'Making News Is Good News for an Advertising Campaign', *San Francisco Business Journal*, 25 February 1985, 9.
69. Ronald Alsop, 'When is a TV Ad Not an Ad? When it's Hyped as an Event', *Wall Street Journal,* 21 March 1985.
70. McAllister, 'The Commercialization of American Culture'.
71. Robert G. Picard, 'Commercialism and Newspaper Quality', *Newspaper Research Journal* 25, no. 1 (2004), 54–65.
72. Tom Engelhardt, 'The Shortcake Strategy', in Todd Gitlin (ed.), *Watching Television* (New York: Pantheon, 1986), 68–110.
73. McAllister, *The Commercialization of American Culture*; Robin Andersen, *Consumer Culture and TV Programming*. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995); Matthew P. McAllister, 'College Bowl Sponsorship and the Increased Commercialization of Amateur Sports', *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 15, no. 4 (1998), 357–81; Engelhardt, 'The Shortcake Strategy'; and Judi Puritz Cook, 'Consumer Culture and Television Home Shopping Programming: An Examination of the Sales Discourse', *Mass Communication & Society* 3, no. 4 (2000), 373–91.
74. Dan Farber, 'Clint Eastwood's Super Bowl "Halftime in America"', *CBS News*, 6 February 2012, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/clint-eastwoods-super-bowl-halftime-in-america/ (accessed 20 July 2016).
75. See, for example, *USA Today*'s collection of short teaser spots that touted commercials in advance of Super Bowl 50 at http://admeter.usatoday.com/2016/01/28/watch-5-super-bowl-50-ad-teasers/ (accessed 20 July 2016).
76. Battaglio, 'The "Shut Up and Watch" Standard'. For a discussion of viral advertising, see *Michael Serazio, Your Ad Here: The Cool Sell of Guerrilla Marketing* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).
77. Tim Nudd, 'The 10 Most Viral Ads of Super Bowl 50', *Adweek*, 8 February 2016, http://www.adweek.com/news-gallery/advertising-branding/10-most-viral-ads-super-bowl-50-169532 (accessed 20 July 2016).
78. McAllister, 'Super Bowl Advertising as Commercial Celebration'.
79. CBS devoted nearly 9 min of commercial time to promote its own programming; Nick Niedzwiadek, 'Super Bowls Broadcast by CBS Feature the Most Network Promos', *Wall Street Journal*, 11 February 2016, http://www.wsj.com/articles/super-bowls-broadcast-by-cbs-feature-the-most-network-promos-1455222395 (accessed 20 July 2016).
80. Ho, Dhar, and Weinberg, 'Playoff Payoff'.
81. These figures are from two different polling/survey firms (Eisner and Harris). For the 2% figure, see Eric Fisher, 'Ad Buyers Bet on Winners', *Washington Times*, 21 January 1998, B7. For the 10%, see Nathan Slaughter, 'Souping Up for the Super Bowl', *The Motley Fool*, 2 February 2005, http://www.fool.com/investing/high-growth/2005/02/02/souping-up-for-the-super-bowl.aspx (accessed 20 July 2016). For the 22%, see Wayne Friedman, 'Super Bowl Fans Relish Ads as much as the Big Game', *Media Daily News*, 27 January 2010, http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/121428/super-bowl-fans-relish-ads-as-much-as-big-

game.html (accessed 23 May 2016). The fact that this statistic is measured at all is indicative of the importance of Super Bowl ads (thanks to Joseph Turow for this insight).

82. The 2007–2008 campaign focused on aspiring musicians, rather than traditional advertising, and offered a grand prize of having the winner's music video aired during the Super Bowl and receiving a recording contract.
83. Karen Robinson-Jacobs, 'As Doritos' "Crash the Super Bowl" Ends, North Texas Companies Look Back at Iconic Ads', *Biz Beat Blog*, 5 February 2016, http://bizbeatblog.dallasnews.com/2016/02/as-doritos-crash-the-super-bowl-ends-north-texas-companies-look-back-at-iconic-ads.html/ (accessed 20 July 2016).
84. 'Doritos Crash the Super Bowl Final Edition; Finalists', https://crashthesuperbowl.doritos.com/finalists (accessed 31 January 2016). 'Doritos Facebook Page', https://www.facebook.com/DoritosUSA/?fref=ts (accessed 31 January 2016).
85. Nudd, 'The 10 Most Viral Ads of Super Bowl 50'.
86. Stuart Elliott, 'Will the Key to the City Come in Nacho Cheese, Cool Ranch or Spicy Sweet Chili?' *Media Decoder Blog*, 10 February 2009, http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/will-the-key-to-the-city-come-in-nacho-cheese-cool-ranch-or-spicy-sweet-chili/ (accessed 20 July 2016).
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