



Drawing Power: A Compendium of Cartoon Advertising

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A unique mix of comics, pop culture and Americana.

Fantagraphics' new imprint Marschall Books presents *Drawing Power*, a lively collection of mass market print advertising from the 1890s to the recent past, starring both cartoonists and cartoon characters. While critics debate whether comics is high art or low art, the fact is that the comic strip was born as a commercial medium and was nurtured by competition, commerce, and advertising. *Drawing Power* will be the first book-length examination (and celebration) of the nexus of art and cartoons. It will focus on the commercial roots of newspaper strips; the cross-promotions of artists, their characters, and retail products; and of the superb artwork that cartoonists invested in their lucrative freelance work in advertising. *Drawing Power* is cultural history, chronicling a time in popular culture when cartoonists were celebrities and their strips and characters competed with the movies for the attention of a mass audience.

The book will examine cartoonists as public personalities, and their advertising efforts from the first heartbeat of the comic strip as an art form. Here are surprising and familiar examples of products, accounts, memorable ad campaigns, and examples of widely known catch-phrases. Examples of individual cartoon ads through the years include:

- Yellow Kid advertising
- Buster Brown Shoe campaigns
- Dr Seuss' "Flit" cartoons and his longtime career hyping motor oil
- WWII ads
- Pepsi and Pete by Rube Goldberg
- The best-looking comic strip ads ever: Milton Caniff and Noel Sickles (under pen names!) depicting characters' personal crises relieved by a coffee substitute
- Little Orphan Annie's famous Ovaltine campaign, and Mickey Mouse as pitch-man
- Peanuts shilling Falcons and B.C. shilling Dr. Pepper
- Dagwood selling atomic energy
- and virtually every super-hero trafficking in the mortal realm to shill every product imaginable

A special section will showcase ads that featured cartoonists themselves as hucksters; can you believe *The New Yorker*'s urbane Peter Arno selling, not nightclub cocktails, but working-class beer? Walt (*Pogo*) Kelly selling cement? Illustrated throughout in color and black-and-white

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