



Decoding Advertisements

By Judith Williamson

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A fascinating account of how the admen achieve their effects.

Stuart Hood This book sets out not simply to criticize advertisements on the grounds of dishonesty and exploitation, but to examine in detail, through over a hundred illustrations, their undoubted attractiveness and appeal. The overt economic function of this appeal is to make us buy things. Its ideological function, however, is to involve us as individuals in perpetuating the ideas which endorse the economic basis of our society. If it is economic conditions which make ideology necessary, it is ideology which makes those conditions seem necessary. If society is to be changed, this vicious circle of necessity and ideas must be broken. Decoding Advertisements is an attempt to undo one link in the chain which we ourselves help to forge, in our acceptance not only of the images and values of advertising, but of the transparent forms and structures in which they are embodied. It provides not an answer, but a set of tools which we can use to alter our own perceptions of one of society's subtlest and most complex forms of propaganda. Other books...



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