

It wasn't German engineering only that made the Volkswagen Beetle an icon. It was a Manhattan advertising agency, too.

Created in 1959 by Doyle Dane Bernbach and continued through the 1960s and early '70s, the campaign for the Volkswagen Beetle is considered the best of all time. More than just promoting a car, it promoted a new kind of advertising: charming, intelligent, honest. And the Volkswagen ads didn't change the ethos of advertising only. They helped trigger the cultural revolution of the 1960s.

Based on exclusive interviews with a lot of the advertising greats involved in the campaign (as well as with Carl H. Hahn, head of Volkswagen of America from 1959 to 1964), *Ugly Is Only Skin-Deep* will change how you think about the art of persuasion and the power of creativity.

*"Dominik Imseng has done an amazing job of weaving personality, history and practice into a wonderfully written book"* —Steven Heller, design writer and co-chair MFA Design/Designer as Author + Entrepreneur, School of Visual Arts, NYC

*"Damn good book!"* —Ed McCabe, Co-Founder, President, Worldwide Creative Director of Scall, McCabe, Sloves, Inc.

## Ugly Is Only Skin-Deep



Dominik Imseng

Foreword by Carl H. Hahn  
Introduction by Amir Kassaei



The Story of the Ads  
That Changed the World

Dominik Imseng



ISBN 978-1-78889-317-9  
9 781785 189317

Matador®  
Twitter: @matadorbooks  
Troubador.co.uk

ADVERTISING £13.99

## PRAISE FOR THIS BOOK

“Dominik Imseng is a master of oral history. His brilliant piecing together of Volkswagen’s classic ’60s ad campaign is both illuminating and entertaining.”

–Steven Heller, design writer and co-chair  
MFA Design/Designer as Author and  
Entrepreneur, School of Visual Arts, NYC

“Dominik Imseng has not only given us a superbly written and well researched history of the unique DDB/VW Beetle relationship of the 1960s and ’70s, he has unequivocally reminded us of that oh so brief Golden Age of Advertising when agencies and their clients enjoyed a mutually beneficial business relationship based on trust and respect, rather than inherently false pecuniary ends. That’s why Imseng’s statement on the very last pages of his book rings so true in today’s data-driven environment: *Advertising must do more than simply try to get people’s attention—it must try to get their respect.* Amen to that. Recommended reading to everyone, but particularly for those who were not even born in the age of *Think small.*”

–George Parker, author of *MadScam*, *The Ubiquitous Persuaders* and *Confessions of a Mad Man*, [www.adscam.typepad.com](http://www.adscam.typepad.com)

“You’d think that everything that could be written about the iconic VW campaign had already been written. But Imseng’s book proves this wrong; he delves into the history and the connected (and frequently amusing) anecdotes with wonder and enthusiasm ... as if the work were a newly discovered oeuvre. I can’t recommend it highly enough. Get it!”

–Neil French, former Worldwide Creative Director of WPP  
and author of *Sorry for the Lobsters*

“In an age where the advertising industry seems to care little about the past, this forensic examination of the people and events surrounding DDB’s VW campaign is a timely as well as masterful piece of work. At last we have a painstakingly assembled account of what really happened in New York half a century ago in this revolutionary agency. No to mention a clear articulation of the lessons that we would all be wise to remember as we push the advertising discipline into newer and newer territory.”

–Richard Huntington, Chief Strategy Officer of  
Saatchi & Saatchi London, [www.adliterate.com](http://www.adliterate.com)

“Everybody in advertising knows the great Volkswagen ads: ‘Lemon, Think small ... Snow Plow ... er ... the one with the multi-colored Beetle ... and ... er ... erm ...’ Dominik Imseng goes deeper, helping us understand why the Volkswagen campaign changed advertising.”

–Dave Dye, *Stuff from the Loft*, [www.davedye.com](http://www.davedye.com)

“In the late 1950s, a handful of rebels transformed the advertising industry. They changed it from a soulless profession obsessed with numbers and blunt messages to a creative profession that produced adverts the public enjoyed consuming. In his book, Dominik Imseng has done a brilliant job of telling the stories of the misfits and geniuses behind that revolution. With any luck, it will inspire a new generation of revolutionaries. The industry appears to have gone full circle.”

–Dave Birss, Editor at Large of *The Drum* and author of  
*A User Guide to the Creative Mind*

“If the author’s command of his subject is masterful, then his ability to tell it as a story is even more impressive. There are

turns of phrase and whole passages here that make my heart sing. That he does all this in English—a language that is not his mother tongue—is awe-inducing. Dominik Imseng is the Joseph Conrad of marketing literature.”

—Steve Harrison, author of *How to Do Better Creative Work* and  
*Changing the World is the Only Fit Work for a Grown Man*

“Damn good book.”

—Ed McCabe, Co-Founder, President,  
Worldwide Creative Director of Scali, McCabe, Sloves, Inc.





## Which was your favorite?

You are looking at the winners. The famous Printers' Ink executive survey voted Volkswagen advertising the best in 1960.

The reasons? Listen to the voters: "Refreshing," "Off-beat believability," "Concentration on facts," "Sales results (just look at all the bugs on the road!)"

The award was made not just for one ad but for the entire series. This is important to an advertiser.

It means that ad after ad worked hard for him, it means that the agency which created these ads is able to make every ad count.

This agency—Doyle Dane Bernbach—has sustained the same continuity of provocative advertising in its work for Polaroid Cameras, El Al Airlines, Ohrbach's, Chemstrand, Schenley, French Government Tourist, Yardley, Coffee of Colombia, Thom McAn, ABC-TV Network, Dreyfus Fund,

Lane Furniture and others.

The record is quite clear. In another survey taken last year by News Front magazine, advertising experts were asked to choose the 10 best ads of the decade 1950 to 1960.

Of the 10 best campaigns chosen, one agency had created four. That agency is: **B** Doyle Dane Bernbach.

# Ugly Is Only Skin- Deep

The Story of the Ads  
That Changed the World

Dominik Imseng



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This book is the largely expanded version of  
*Think Small. The Story of the World's Greatest Ad*,  
published by Full Stop Press in 2011.

Matador  
9 Priory Business Park,  
Wistow Road, Kibworth Beauchamp,  
Leicestershire. LE8 0RX  
Tel: 0116 279 2299  
Email: [books@troubador.co.uk](mailto:books@troubador.co.uk)  
Web: [www.troubador.co.uk/matador](http://www.troubador.co.uk/matador)  
Twitter: @matadorbooks

ISBN 978 1785893 179

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data.  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY  
Typeset in 11pt Aldine401 BT by Troubador Publishing Ltd, Leicester, UK



Matador is an imprint of Troubador Publishing Ltd



*To Anna & Raoul  
and Petra, Finian & Linus*

“All of us who professionally use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarize that society. We can brutalize it. Or we can help lift it onto a higher level.”

–Bill Bernbach

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## FOREWORD

By Carl H. Hahn

In the course of its history, the Volkswagen Group has acquired merit and recognition in many areas. Less well known is that VW also triggered a revolution in the world of advertising.

It began in the summer of 1959 in a little-known ad agency called Doyle Dane Bernbach on a New York City backyard. DDB had just won the Volkswagen account to market the Beetle in the U.S., with a ridiculously small budget.

The agency managed to fascinate America with an entirely new way of advertising and redeem it from the monotony of the traditional ads of that period, which tended to show elegant ladies and gentlemen in front of expensive villas in beautiful parks. The ads for the Beetle were refreshingly different, as distinctive as the car itself: sober in appearance, almost plain, but always original and entertaining, with a dash of humor and disarming honesty. Ads like *Think small* or *Lemon* made understatement socially acceptable and gave the Beetle cult status. In 1999, *Advertising Age* voted *Think small* the best ad of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

By collaborating with DDB, Volkswagen not only had the lowest advertising costs per vehicle, but also achieved U.S. sales that helped grow VW in a dimension previously unimaginable for a European car manufacturer. As the advertising philosophy developed for the American market was universally applicable, the campaign secured

## UGLY IS ONLY SKIN-DEEP

the Volkswagen Group a uniform appearance. As a result, Volkswagen's product strategy, combined with Bill Bernbach's inexhaustible creativity, revolutionized the advertising world. More than half a century later, DDB still remains closely associated with Volkswagen—a unique collaboration in this fast-paced industry.

I am pleased that this book recalls the merits of VW in the field of advertising. It is also important for me to acknowledge the work of Doyle Dane Bernbach and not let fall into oblivion the spirit that inspired its team.

DDB has succeeded in a unique way to make the Beetle a symbol of quality and durability. The VW campaign set standards across all industries and is leading the way in the advertising world to this day.



*Professor Carl H. Hahn (b. 1926) began his career at Volkswagen in 1954 as assistant to then CEO Heinrich Nordhoff. From 1959 to 1964, he was CEO of Volkswagen of America and thus the original client of the campaign presented in this book. Hahn eventually acted as CEO of the Volkswagen Group until his retirement in 1992.*

## INTRODUCTION

*By Amir Kassaei*

Every industry has its supernova—a moment in time when something happens that changes everything, elevating everything to a higher level and inspiring people to go on a new path and make their own mark.

The supernova of advertising was the campaign for the Volkswagen Beetle, created by Doyle Dane Bernbach in the 1960s.

From that moment on, advertising became a different game.

All of a sudden, creativity in marketing and communications could not only seduce people in an intelligent way, but also move them and have an impact on society, art, music, design and everything else.

Until today, anyone who thinks about innovative, intelligent and game-changing advertising—and anyone who tries to create it—is inspired and led by the principles of the Creative Revolution.

And even with digital technology, which has changed and disrupted a lot of the aspects of our business and will continue to do so even more, the best advertising will always be based on a genuine human insight and the talent to deliver it in a fresh and magical way.

This is the legacy of Bill Bernbach and of his agency DDB. I am very happy and honored to work here, and to try and live the values of the Creative Revolution.

UGLY IS ONLY SKIN-DEEP

And I will make a bet: even in generations from now, people will look back and refer to the Volkswagen campaign as the bar of creative advertising—and be inspired by it.



*Amir Kassaei (b. 1968), Chief Creative Officer of DDB Worldwide, was born in Iran, raised in Austria and educated in France. He is one of the most lauded creatives in the world, working on brands such as Adidas, Apple, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Nike, Reebok—and Volkswagen.*

## PROLOGUE

The front, the back, the side—the original Volkswagen is the most iconic car ever. But it wasn't German engineering only that made the Beetle unique. It was a Manhattan advertising agency, too.

Created in 1959 by Doyle Dane Bernbach and continued through the '60s and early '70s, the campaign for the Volkswagen Beetle is considered the best of all time. More than just promoting a car, it promoted a new kind of advertising: simple, charming, intelligent and—most of all—honest.

In this book, we'll retrace the creation of Doyle Dane Bernbach, sneered at by the big players on Madison Avenue because of the 'ethnic' background of its founders and employees who were mostly Jewish.

You'll then learn how the agency won the Volkswagen account and how an unlikely creative team set the tone for the most admired campaign in advertising history.

Finally, we'll look at the evolution of the Volkswagen campaign and how it managed to convince more and more Americans that smaller was better.

In fact, the Volkswagen campaign didn't only fundamentally change the ethos of advertising—it also helped trigger the cultural revolution of the 1960s.

Ready for the ride? Then get into the Beetle.

*Dominik Imseng*

*July 14, 2016*

A circular, light-colored button with a slightly textured surface. The text "Think small." is printed on it in a bold, black, sans-serif font, slanted slightly upwards to the right. The button is centered in the lower half of the page.

**Think small.**

## CHAPTER I

# “I want those rules broken”

*Bill Bernbach discovers the power of great ideas*

Standing a mere 5'7" and soft-spoken, Bill Bernbach didn't look or sound like he would change the world. And yet he did.

Born in New York City on August 13, 1911, as one of four children, Bernbach would joke that his parents were too poor to give him a middle name. But that wasn't true: his father Jacob—a Jewish immigrant from Eastern Europe—was a successful designer of women's clothes.

Little Bill enjoyed reading and playing the piano. He developed an early appreciation for art and had a natural talent for writing. As a young man, Bernbach attended New York University where he received a bachelor's degree in English literature in 1933. At least that's what he would later tell reporters to give himself the aura of an artist. In reality, Bernbach graduated—somewhat more prosaically—from New York University's School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance, obtaining a bachelor's degree in commercial science with a major in marketing.

Either way, entering the world of work in 1933—right in the middle of the Great Depression—made it very hard to get a job. Bernbach eventually found one in the mailroom of Schenley Distillers in Midtown Manhattan, with a meager salary of \$16 a week. The office boy quickly became the head

of the mailroom, but had other ambitions, with a keen desire to break into advertising.

In between deliveries, Bernbach wrote ads for Schenley's various liquor brands and sent the one he liked best—for American Cream Whiskey—to Lord & Thomas, Schenley's respected advertising agency. He received no response, but sometime later, Bernbach opened up *The New York Times* and found his ad idea produced, the words exactly as he had written them. With the self-confidence that would become his trademark, Bernbach went to Lord & Thomas to get his letter back. Having proved his intellectual property to the secretary of Lewis Rosenstiel, Schenley's then President, the aspiring copywriter was given a raise and reassigned to the marketing and advertising department—much to the annoyance of its head, one Mr. Greenlee, who told him, “Don't think because you went to college you're going to be a big shot around here.”

“I don't think anything about my going to college,” Bernbach replied. “I just don't want it to be held against me.”<sup>1</sup>

It wasn't long before the young man became the protégé of yet another powerful Schenley figure: Chairman of the Board Grover Whalen. The prominent businessman and politician made Bernbach his personal assistant and took him along on a business trip to Washington, instructing Bill on the art of tipping and teaching him a little *savoir-faire*.

When Whalen left Schenley in 1935 to run the 1939 New York World's Fair, his assistant went along. First Bernbach worked in the Fair's PR department, producing articles and brochures, then he started writing speeches for Whalen and civic dignitaries who visited the Fair. His job would have a major influence on Bernbach's future advertising philosophy: not only did he learn how language could be used to effectively persuade people—he also learnt that people are persuaded more easily if you respect their intelligence.

“I want those rules broken”



*As a young man already, Bill Bernbach was convinced that people are persuaded more easily if you respect their intelligence.*

After the Fair closed in 1940, Bernbach was unemployed for a full year. With only his newly-wed wife’s small pay as a receptionist, the young couple’s financial situation became so bad that Bill had to ask his parents for help. But they refused, angry about their son’s marriage to a non-Jewish girl. On realizing the couple’s despair, a Schenley executive, who was friendly with them, recommended Bill to William Weintraub who had just started an advertising agency, with Schenley Distillers as one of its first clients.

“I have three guys applying for this copy job,” Weintraub told Bernbach, “why don’t you write me a letter telling me why you should have it?”

“I don’t know why I should have it,” Bernbach replied. “I don’t even know if I’m equipped.”

“Why don’t you write the letter anyway?”<sup>2</sup>

The letter must have been good: at age 30, Bill Bernbach landed his first real job in advertising.

PAUL RAND WAS 27 when Bernbach joined the Weintraub agency, yet the graphic designer was already a star.

Born Peretz Rosenbaum in the Brooklyn section of New York City, Rand was enrolled at Pratt Institute and Parsons The New School for Design, but was mainly self-taught. He would spend his days in bookshops flicking through *Gebrauchsgrafik* and *Commercial Art*, two European graphic arts magazines that introduced Rand to the modernist art school called the Bauhaus, founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar, Germany, in 1919. With artist lecturers such as Max Bill, Marcel Breuer, Lyonel Feininger, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, László Moholy-Nagy or Piet Mondrian, the unadorned Bauhaus style—seeking complete harmony between function and form—would have a worldwide impact on art, architecture, graphic design, interior design, industrial design and typography. This was despite Hitler shutting down the school in 1933, considering it a stronghold of communist propaganda.

In 1936, Rand was hired as a freelance designer for the quarterly men's fashion magazine *Apparel Arts*. The freshness of his page design and Rand's talent for transforming ordinary photographs into explosive compositions quickly earned him a full-time job plus an offer to work for the men's magazine *Esquire*. On top of this, Rand started to create covers for the cultural magazine *Direction*, which he designed without charge in exchange for artistic freedom. It was with these radically modernist covers—especially the December 1940 issue, looking like it had been wrapped in barbed wire—that Rand's work began to receive international recognition.

In 1941, the brilliant graphic mind took on yet another challenge: when William Weintraub started his own ad agency, Rand joined him as head of art. From the beginning, his work changed the look and feel of American advertising. Stark, witty

“I want those rules broken”



*The brilliant graphic mind Paul Rand made Bernbach realize the importance of art direction.*

and eye-catching, Rand’s ads did more than simply illustrate the headlines or slogans of copywriters—they were ideas in themselves, *visual* ideas.

Back then, this was something completely new. Traditionally, ads were conceived by copywriters who turned the advertising proposition—what the client wanted to communicate—into a headline and body copy. An account executive handed their typescript along with a drawing of the suggested layout to a ‘commercial artist’ or ‘visualizer’ to create the final ad. Since the copywriter and the commercial artist were usually working on separate floors, the two often wouldn’t even know each other.

Rand completely ignored this traditional gap between ‘conceptual’ copywriters and ‘executional’ art directors. This impressed Bernbach since he understood that treating the art director as an equal would make perfect sense. Bob Gage, another ingenious graphic mind whom Bernbach would later work with, knew why: “Two people who respect each other sit in the same room for a length of time and arrive at a state of ... free association, where the mention of one idea will



*Paul Rand's radically modernist cover for the 1940 Christmas issue of the cultural magazine Direction.*



*Paul Rand's ads did more than simply illustrate the headlines of copywriters—they were visual ideas.*

lead to another idea, and then to another.”<sup>3</sup> The art director might suggest a headline, the writer a visual. The entire ad is conceived as a whole, in a kind of ping pong between disciplines. The result, according to advertising historian Stephen Fox, is a “combination of the visual and the words coming together and forming a third bigger thing.”<sup>4</sup>

Blending their talents on ads for the aperitif Dubonnet, the milliner Lee Hats and the department store Ohrbach’s, Bernbach and Rand became close friends, visiting art galleries and museums during lunch breaks and talking about the need for a new kind of advertising that would always be focused on one great thing—a powerful *idea*.

The famous art director George Lois, who knew both Rand and Bernbach very well, recalls:

“I want those rules broken”

*“The seed for advertising’s Creative Revolution was planted when Bernbach met Rand at the Weintraub agency. Here was an art director who not only wrote and designed his own ads—he also didn’t take any shit from anybody. Meeting Rand, Bernbach had an epiphany about the whole creative process. He realized that advertising could be ten times better if a talented writer works with a talented art director. In fact, I told Rand once, ‘When Bill Bernbach met you, it was like Columbus discovering America.’”<sup>5</sup>*

And vice versa: “This was my first encounter with a copywriter,” Rand said, “who understood visual ideas and who didn’t come in with a yellow copy pad and a preconceived notion of what the layout should look like.”<sup>6</sup>

The remarkable fruits of Rand and Bernbach’s collaboration are still included in just about every book on the history of graphic design. A particular favorite is *Mechanized Mules of Victory*, a spiral-bound brochure with embossed cover for the armored vehicle manufacturer The Autocar Company. Produced in 1942, it contains a dozen blocks of perfectly set copy written by Bernbach, explaining how the company’s anti-tank vehicles and troop carriers were “helping to build for America a motorized Armada such as the world has never seen.”<sup>7</sup>

Shortly after, Bernbach was drafted to serve in the U.S. army, but the examining doctor at Fort Eustis, Virginia, found the new recruit’s pulse so elevated that he doubted Bill would survive military training. (Ever the image maker, Bernbach later embellished the truth, telling reporters that his stint in the U.S. army had lasted much longer.) The ad man returned to New York City, where Arthur Fatt and Larry Valenstein—founders of the successful Jewish agency Grey—hired him as a copywriter. After winning a host of new clients, Bernbach became Vice President in charge of copy and art in 1945.

*Bernbach's first creative team at Grey (and later at DDB): Phyllis Robinson (copy) and Bob Gage (art).*



Bernbach wanted to make the copy/art partnership he had so enjoyed with Rand the pillar of Grey's creative process (since then, the so-called 'creative team' has become industry standard). The first to combine their talents were Phyllis Robinson, formerly a copywriter in Grey's sales promotion department, and Bob Gage, a brilliant graphic designer whom Paul Rand had advised Bernbach to hire. Gage noted:

*"The night before I had the appointment with Bernbach, I removed everything from my portfolio that showed any compromise. Bill went through the work, liked it, and I got the job. Before I left, we discussed the future of advertising. How he saw it. How I saw it. His enthusiasm and his being so articulate had a profound effect upon me. I had at last found someone who not just tolerated new ideas, but demanded them."<sup>8</sup>*

Grey's clients were mostly Jewish retail outlets on Seventh Avenue. The low-priced department store Ohrbach's—an

“I want those rules broken”



*Rosser Reeves, whose brutal repetition of a ‘Unique Selling Proposition’ (USP) Bernbach absolutely wanted to avoid.*

account Bernbach had already worked on at the Weintraub agency—proved to be a particularly productive client. Constantly demanding new ideas and giving instant feedback on their sales power, Ohrbach’s became, as it were, Bernbach’s Research & Development account—a playing field for the creation of clever, witty ads, with sharp, conversational copy instead of advertising jargon, and clean minimalism instead of cluttered layouts.

There was something else Bernbach wanted to avoid: fellow ad man Rosser Reeves’ brutal repetition of a ‘Unique Selling Proposition’ (USP), getting a “message into the heads of the most people at the lowest possible cost.”<sup>9</sup> Seeing the fruits of this advertising philosophy—especially Reeves’ mind-numbing TV commercials for the pain reliever Anacin (*Fast, fast, incredibly fast relief!*) from the 1950s—Bernbach was reminded of Evan Llewellyn Evans, the grotesque soap tycoon in former copywriter Frederic Wakeman’s novel *The Hucksters*, turned into a popular movie in 1947. “Beautee Soap! Beautee Soap! Beautee Soap! Beautee Soap!”, Evans shouts in one scene. “Repeat it



*Maybe the most annoying ad in advertising history:  
Rosser Reeves' TV commercial for the pain reliever Anacin.  
Watch it on [tinyurl.com/ugly-anacin](http://tinyurl.com/ugly-anacin)*

till it comes out of their ears! Repeat it till they say it in their sleep! Irritate them, irritate, irritate till they never forget it, then knock them dead!”

What’s more, “ads were tested before they ran, while they ran and after they ran, in an attempt to make sure the sales message meant all things, to all people,” notes British advertising great Alfredo Marcantonio. “More often than not, though, the work that resulted meant nothing to anyone, except of course the agency and client involved.”<sup>10</sup>

For Bernbach, knowing the right thing to say was only the starting point—it was *how* you say it that made for an effective ad, and “if breaking every rule in the world is going to achieve that,” he demanded, “I want those rules broken.”<sup>11</sup>

By the late 1940s, though, Grey had grown so big that bureaucracy and procedural constraints produced an allegiance to science rather than art.

Which is why, in May 1947, Bernbach sent a memo to his bosses that could be considered the manifesto of advertising’s Creative Revolution:

“I want those rules broken”

*“I’m worried that we’re going to fall into the trap of bigness ... that we’re going to worship techniques instead of substance ... There are a lot of great technicians in advertising ... But there’s one little rub. Advertising is fundamentally persuasion and persuasion happens to be not a science, but an art ...”*

“Let us blaze new trails,” Bernbach concluded. “Let us prove to the world that good taste, good art, good writing can be good selling.”<sup>12</sup>

Arthur Fatt and Larry Valenstein ignored Bernbach’s memo.

AT GREY, BERNBACH WORKED closely with Ned Doyle, a Vice President of business accounts. Ten years Bill’s senior, Doyle—of Irish descent—was a former star quarterback and served as a captain in Marine Corps Aviation during World War II. Highly masculine and good-looking, he was the complete opposite of Bernbach who—according to famous ad woman Mary Wells Lawrence—was not much to look at, with a “wary half-smile, cow’s-milk eyes, pale skin, [and] soft shoulders.”<sup>13</sup> But there was one thing Doyle and Bernbach shared: their deep distaste for the conformity of Madison Avenue.

The street lined with ad agencies, nick-named ‘Ulcer Gulch,’ was populated by those who would come to be called ‘The Men in the Gray Flannel Suit,’ described by Sloan Wilson in his 1955 bestseller of the same title. A joke of the period says it all:

“What time is it?,” a client asks.

“What time would you like it to be?,” the agency man answers.

“Tales of a client admiring a pony for his daughter and the agency account executive delivering said pony to the client’s home the next day were not apocryphal,” remembered well-known ad man Phil Dusenberry who

started out as a copywriter in the early 1960s.<sup>14</sup> This devotion to brown-nosing—the litany of persuasive client gifts even included women—gave advertising an extremely bad reputation. TV shows and movies mocked the account executive desperately trying not to offend his clients, and it wasn't just the 'suits' who had a negative image. *The Hucksters*, again, best reflects the era's perception of advertising creatives, with copywriter Victor Norman, played by Clark Gable, knocking out a cheap, catchy slogan before enjoying another amorous adventure.

Bill Bernbach could not have been more different. Alongside Ned Doyle, he was ever-ready to dump clients when they didn't follow agency recommendations the same way they would accept the advice of a lawyer or the prescription of a doctor. Ned Doyle even fantasized ways of showing unwilling clients the door. "You go to a hardware store and buy a power mower," he suggested to an account executive who was complaining about a difficult client, "then shove it up his ass and turn on the power."<sup>15</sup>

Encouraged by Nathan M. Ohrbach, the founder of the department store, who promised Bernbach his account and even proposed to pay his bills in advance, so that the young agency would have enough money, Bernbach and Doyle began talking to Herbert Strauss, another Vice President at Grey, about starting their own business. When Strauss dropped out—he was offered the position of Grey President—Doyle contacted Maxwell Dane, an old friend and tennis partner who had been the advertising and promotion manager of *Look* magazine before starting his own small ad agency in 1944. After a few discussions the deal was closed: Doyle would get forty percent of the shares and run the account side, Dane would have twenty percent and handle administration and finance, and Bernbach would be given forty percent and free rein over the creative department.

“I want those rules broken”



*The founders of DDB: Bill Bernbach, Ned Doyle and Maxwell Dane.*

Doyle Dane Bernbach opened shop at the address of Dane's former agency: 350 Madison Avenue, a floor and a half above the last elevator stop. Phyllis Robinson noted: "It was June 1st, 1949. I tend to remember important dates. The day I was born, the day I had a child, and the day DDB started."<sup>16</sup>

It was also the first year that a strange little car from Germany was imported to the U.S.