
than six negative reports on Notre Dame, five of them quoting the book," Sheehan says. Even the sports pages, it seems, are not immune to the press's "deep structural bias in favor of discord, and its weakness for the disenchanting."

Ad Trek: The Next Generation

"Is Advertising Finally Dead?" by Michael Schrage, with Don Peppers, Martha Rogers, and Robert D. Shapiro, in *Wired* (Feb. 1994), 544 Second St., San Francisco, Calif. 94119-9866.

These days, we *always* seem to be poised on the brink of an utterly new era in which life will be very, very different. The latest new age on the horizon, according to Schrage, a columnist for *Adweek* magazine, and his fellow seers, is the "Interactive Age"—and in this brave new realm, advertising and the relationship between advertisers and potential consumers is going to be . . . very, very different.

"Yesterday, we changed the channel; today we hit the remote; tomorrow, we'll reprogram our agents/filters," Schrage proclaims. "We'll interact with advertising where once we only watched; we'll seek out advertising where once we avoided it. Advertising will not go away; it will be rejuvenated."

When "smart" cable converter boxes sit atop TVs everywhere (as John Malone, of Tele-Communi-

nications, Incorporated, has promised) and all video is digitized and carried on hundreds of channels, then "encoding and tracking all the ads becomes a snap," Schrage says. A sophisticated system "would be technically capable of offering its customers not just pay-per-view but TV-sans-ads." For an extra \$5 or \$10 a month, a viewer's local cable company might be willing to cut out all the ads. Or viewers could arrange to get only the types of ads they want, and screen out the rest.

The implicit "deal" that mass media advertisers have always made with viewers or readers—*Take our ads and we'll pay for the TV or radio programs, or heavily subsidize the newspapers or magazines*—"is likely to become decidedly explicit" in the new Interactive Age, claim Peppers and Rogers, co-authors of *The One-to-One Future: Building Relationships One Customer at a Time*. When they turn on their television, viewers will get such offers as "Watch this two-minute video on the new Ford Taurus, and we'll pay for the pay-per-view movie of your choice," or "Answer this brief survey from Kellogg and we'll pay for the next three episodes of 'Murphy Brown.'" The very character of these ads will be different, Schrage speculates: "Advertisements will feel and play like visual conversations, video games, and simulations."

In this interactive future, Peppers and Rogers believe, a significant shift in power will have taken place: "The consumer will be the one in the driver's seat, and the advertiser will be thumbing a ride."

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

The Importance Of Seeming Pious

"What the Polls Don't Show: A Closer Look at U.S. Church Attendance" by C. Kirk Hadaway, Penny Long Marler, and Mark Chaves, in *American Sociological Review* (Dec. 1993), Dept. of Sociology, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz. 85721.

Survey after survey since World War II has yielded the same finding: Roughly 40 percent of Americans go to church every week. This high

rate of church attendance helps (along with other survey data) to make the United States "God's country" in the eyes of some sociologists and historians. Hadaway, of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Marler, of Samford University, in Birmingham, Alabama, and Chaves, of the University of Notre Dame, believe that a lot of Americans are fibbing.

They examine actual church attendance among Protestants in Ohio's rural Ashtabula County, and among Catholics in 18 dioceses else-