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Abstract

Kodak’s name and its familiar yellow logo has remained one of the most well-known brands in the photography throughout history. Since the company’s founding, one of its main goals was to make photography easier and more accessible to consumers. For most of the 20th century, the company found great success achieving this goal with the help of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. Kodak and JWT saw a peak in their success in the 1960s when the two companies targeted efforts towards the global expansion of the personal photography industry. This thesis explores the decades immediately before and after this global expansion in order to understand Kodak’s understanding of itself as a company, its social and political environment, and its role in the personal lives of consumers. To do so, this thesis focuses on one product, the Kodak Instamatic, and Kodak’s attachment to advertising families and nostalgia from 1950 to 1970. As a result, it also provides a possible explanation for the more recent downfall of the once dominant company. The thesis relies on archival research from the J. Walter Thompson Company Collection at Duke University’s David M. Rubenstein Rare Books and Manuscript Library.
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My experience studying abroad in Prague, Czech Republic during the Fall of 2016 initially sparked my interest in writing a senior thesis on an American companies global marketing strategies. Studying in Prague was the first time I fully immersed myself in a new culture. With a consumer culture so different from that of America’s, I was fascinated by the presence of global brands and their marketing campaigns in Czech stores. This thesis combines my interests in Global and Comparative History, Marketing, and photography.

I am especially grateful for the guidance of my advisor, Dr. James Chappel and Professor Dirk Bonker throughout this past year. I would not have been able to complete what has become the most enriching academic experience throughout my four years at Duke without their knowledge and patience. Additionally, I am thankful for Joshua Larkin Rowley and the Rubenstein Library Staff at Duke University for their help in making my archival research for this thesis possible.

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Introduction

In 1888, George Eastman, founder of the Eastman Kodak Company, released the first Kodak camera along with the slogan, “You press the button – we do the rest,” which eventually became synonymous with Kodak’s brand and dedication to the spread of personal photography. This moment is important not only to the history of the Eastman Kodak Company but to the history of personal photography. Although personal photography is widely accepted as an integral part of people's lives in many parts of the world today, this is a recent phenomenon. From the launch of its first camera in 1888, The Eastman Kodak Company helped shape photography from a solely professional industry into one for any average American. This then laid the groundwork for the company's later efforts to spread amateur personal photography not only throughout America, but around the world.

Advertising remained essential throughout Kodak's efforts to develop and expand the amateur personal photography industry. Scholar Nancy Martha West notes the importance of George Eastman’s role as Kodak’s founder but also leader of the company’s advertising efforts. She argues that Eastman understood before any other leader in the industry that advertising had the immense potential to reach mass consumers and quickly and effectively create an amateur market for photography1. Through its marketing and advertising efforts, Kodak was able to create a desire for photography outside of the professional industry that had not existed prior to the late nineteenth century2. In a sense, the company had to teach consumers why they needed personal photography in their lives and why they should rely on Kodak products to provide it. With the task of creating a new consumer desire for the emerging market of personal photography, the company relied on advertisements to show consumers the ease and necessity of

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1 Nancy Martha West, Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 19.
2 West, Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia, 1.
integrating photography into their daily lives. In doing so, Kodak incorporated its brand and products into the lives of every consumer, as advertisements proved to be the most direct form of communication between the Eastman Kodak Company and its consumers. The success of Kodak’s advertising efforts led to the quick expansion of this new market for personal photography throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

While the Eastman Kodak Company created most of its own advertisements for the first 40 years of its business, this new expansion of personal photography pushed Eastman to seek additional help. In 1928, Kodak began working with J. Walter Thompson, the leading advertising agency in the United States at the time. Established by J. Walter Thompson himself in 1878, the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) agency was known as “the first modern advertising agency,” and one of the first to expand internationally with the opening of its London office in 1899. JWT’s early dedication to innovation and expanding its agency globally mirrored that of Kodak and its efforts to expand the market of personal photography. As Howard Henderson, former president of JWT, states, just like JWT, Kodak is “a world business, and became so long before it was the style to be international.” He highlights the importance of the two company’s advertising and marketing efforts outside of the United States as JWT and Kodak helped pioneer the global expansion of personal photography. Without a previous model to base their expansion off of, how did these two companies envision, and eventually carry out, their expansion?

In this thesis, I will research Kodak and JWT’s domestic and global marketing strategies starting from the late 1950s until the 1970s. I will do so specifically through the lens of the

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3 West, Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia, 11
global advertising campaign for the Kodak Instamatic camera, which Kodak and JWT released in 1963. The Instamatic camera’s new drop-in film cartridge is important because it helped further expand the amateur personal photography industry, however, the camera’s advertising campaign also holds even greater significance. The 1963 release of the Kodak Instamatic was the first global launch of a consumer product.\footnote{“J. Walter Thompson’s History of Advertising,” J. Walter Thompson, accessed September 23, 2017, \url{https://www.jwt.com/history/}} It was the first time that a company released the same exact product at the same time and following the same advertising campaign in multiple countries around the world. Kodak and other companies had advertised and sold products internationally before, but the Kodak Instamatic launch was the first to announce a product through one, uniform and simultaneous campaign across the globe.

Similarly to Bernhard Reiger’s research in The People’s Car which traces one product, the Volkswagen Beetle, and how its political and cultural significance changed over time, I will research how the Kodak Instamatic’s meaning, both in America and abroad, developed and changed between 1950 and 1970.\footnote{Bernhard Reiger, The People’s Car (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013).} While other scholars have studied how Kodak shaped the personal photography industry and the meaning of photographs, no scholars, to my knowledge, have studied just the Kodak Instamatic and its global marketing campaign. The goals of my research are to understand first how Kodak understood itself and its connection to American consumer society, and then how it incorporated this understanding into its domestic and global marketing strategies. The campaign did prove extremely successful for sales of the Kodak Instamatic, but I am more specifically interested in understanding the implications of implementing such campaign. What does the campaign uncover about JWT and Kodak’s view of their global expansion? Did the two companies understand the unique differences between
consumerism in each country, or did they simply view their global expansion as an expansion specifically of American consumer preferences?

I argue that Kodak’s advertising tells us more than just how Kodak tried to sell their products. Kodak’s advertising explains how the company understood their connection to the personal lives of American consumers and further how the company envisioned the expansion of American consumerism. As two of the first companies to pursue a global launch of a consumer product, Kodak and JWT, envisioned their globalization as the spread of American consumerism and their ideal of the American consumer. Moreover, its advertising explains how Kodak responded to major changes in the world. With the companies connection to consumers’ personal lives, Kodak could influence the way people interpreted major social and political events happening in the world.

Throughout my research, I discovered that Kodak had a specific vision of how it would incorporate personal photography into consumers’ daily lives. As a pioneering company in the creation and spread of the personal photography industry, Kodak had the unique ability to shape the way people incorporate photography into their lives. It became increasingly clear to me that Kodak was invested, above all, in the American family. Kodak could have envisioned photography as a tool for scientists, political engagement, or sports fans. But Kodak wanted to people to associate personal photography with a connection to family life. The company did so by advertising to families, and supporting a specific ideal of the American family and one that excluded many groups of consumers. In this thesis, I will trace Kodak’s efforts to spread personal photography advertising families from 1950 to 1970.

This thesis is structured chronologically into three chapters to further examine the JWT and Kodak partnership and the companies’ global expansion through the lens of the Kodak
Instamatic. The first chapter will focus on the emergence of a new family ideal in America in the 1950s. My analysis of 1950s print and television advertisements will show how Kodak understood itself as an all American and family oriented company. By advertising family nostalgia, Kodak expressed its support for the white, middle-class and heteronormative family dynamic supported by media and popular culture during the time. In addition, my analysis of office files from the J. Walter Thompson Company Archives including meeting notes, account summaries, and correspondence between JWT and Kodak during this time will uncover how, in the years prior to the Instamatic’s global launch, Kodak’s image of their ideal consumer played into their goals for globalization.

The second chapter, focusing on 1960-1966, will cover the years of planning leading up to the Instamatic’s launch and the immediate results of the launch. An in-depth analysis of Kodak and JWT’s planning for the Instamatic’s launch in 1963, relying on JWT Account Summaries of the Eastman Kodak company from 1962 to 1964, JWT company newsletters from 1963 and 1964, and print advertisements, reveals the companies’ changes in advertising and their vision of expansion. Kodak briefly abandoned its former, time-honored strategy of advertising to families. The 1960s was a new time surrounded by technological and scientific advancement, and advertising families became less marketable. During these years, Kodak, like America itself, became infatuated with advancement and science and wanted to reestablish itself as a progressive company.

This change in marketing strategies and the abandonment of advertising families was brief. In the late 1960s, Kodak and JWT returned to advertising family nostalgia. The world was undergoing many major changes during this time, from the United States’ involvement in the Vietnam to students leading political protests across America, and this return to family was a
strategic decision. From Kodak’s perspective, as from the perspective of many of the middle-
class white families they targeted, the world had gone mad in the late 1960s. By returning to
their roots as a company connected to the American family ideal, Kodak strategically catered to
this audience. Analysis of JWT Company Newsletters and print advertisements explain this
strategic response to their changing environment in the late 1960s through both their
advertisements and company business practices.

Through analyzing the way Kodak and JWT advertised to consumers in their domestic
and global campaigns, I reveal how deeply connected consumer products, advertising, and
personal photography have become in the lives of consumers. We live in a time dominated by
technology and personal photography, both of which shape some of the most intimate aspects of
our lives. Apple is one of the most notable examples of a company today whose products, and
their connection to personal photography, have become an integral part of many consumers most
personal lives. Kodak was the Apple of its day, a leader of innovation and technological
advancements and a company with a deep connection to consumers personal lives. The
globalization of the Kodak camera played an important role in making everyday photography a
part of our lives today. Looking at JWT’s global Kodak campaigns allows us to understand the
major role Kodak played in how we understand memory, the family and personal photography in
both a historical and modern context.

Furthermore, Kodak’s strategy of connecting itself to a certain family ideal, abandoning
this strategy, and then eventually returning, helps us see how companies both shape, and are
shaped by, the political-social environment in which they live. We often think of major
companies as apolitical, as if they simply produce a good which they then sell to consumers. But
the way companies market their products is shaped completely by a variety of political and social
forces. By gaining an understanding of how Kodak, in marketing to families, gained influence over one of the most intimate aspects of consumers lives, we can also understand the impact many major consumer goods corporations have overt the way in which we interpret our political and social environments.
Chapter 1  

Preparing Global Kodak: Kodak, JWT, and the Ideal American Family in the 1950s

February 22, 1960, marked the beginning of a year-long exchange of letters between Axel Hornos, an executive at the Eastman Kodak Company, and Howard Henderson, an advertising executive at the JWT advertising agency. In his first letter, Hornos filled two pages detailing his growing concern with the trend of American consumerism becoming increasingly materialistic. He noted that “It is all around us -- the thirst for the new, the flashy and the expensive, even when it isn’t essential and strains the family budget to the limit; the unrelenting struggle for social recognition, even when it means sacrificing old friends and basic principles.”

As a Kodak executive, Hornos’ job was to sell products to the masses. Still, he feared the potential repercussions of this practice, knowing there was more at stake. He feared the day when material goods no longer satisfied consumers: a day when, he claimed, “greed, cynicism and mortal boredom will have taken over and our society will be left without the moral stamina necessary for survival.” Hornos ended the letter posing several questions about the consequences of advertising and encouraging a change in direction to prevent advertising from taking blame for America’s potential downfall, hoping Henderson will have the answers.

Henderson’s job as an ad man, of course, was to convince people to dismiss these anxieties and buy into consumption. In the context of this debate, his job extended beyond the consumers to convincing the company selling the goods. Ultimately, Henderson dismissed Hornos’ deep concern and viewed advertising as a guiding force which individuals could not hold accountable for completely controlling consumers decisions. He viewed the consumer as

2 Ibid.
free to make their own decisions in response to some influence from advertising. Furthermore, Henderson concluded that global advertising acted as a necessary and beneficial means to expansion.

It is difficult to know how to read this exchange: perhaps Hornos simply wanted Henderson to soothe his guilty conscience. All the same, the exchange is a remarkable one. It shows that the widespread debate over advertising, consumerism, and mass society took place not only in public, but also in private—and amongst the very executives and admen who played a key role in creating that new culture. During the 1950s, there were several public debates along these lines. For example, Dr. John Dollard, professor of psychology at Yale, wrote a popular article at the time in which he stated, “advertising may be at times a blessing and at other times a nuisance, but it can never be a menace to the free man.”

His view aligned more with Henderson’s dismissive view of anxieties surrounding advertising. Meanwhile, Robert Alden, shared a view more similar to Hornos’ in his 1960 New York Times article titled, “Advertising: Semantics and Today’s Poetry.” In this article, Alden agrees with Professor S.I. Hayakawa’s claims that advertising has the power to negatively shape consumer behaviors to revolve solely around frivolous material desires. Ultimately, the letter exchange between Hornos and Henderson was a portrayal of a larger debate over advertising in American society in the 1950s.

In addition to the juxtaposition of their views tying into a larger debate, the timing of the correspondence was important, too. These correspondence took place in the years immediately prior to one of Kodak and JWT’s greatest milestones: the global launch of the Kodak Instamatic.

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Kodak completed the engineering of the Instamatic camera in 1961, production of the camera began in 1962, and Kodak and JWT released of the official campaign in 1963. Hornos and Henderson may have been thinking about America when they had their exchange, but the ideas developed inside the American corporation of Kodak had global repercussions, too.

They were participating, therefore, not only in a domestic debate about advertising, but in a global one about the wisdom of “Americanization” (a concept that will be explored more below). Kodak and JWT were two of the first American companies to expand globally, which placed them at the center of debates surrounding not only the consequences of advertising in America but also abroad. Through Americanization and the spread of American values into Europe, advertising agencies are not only shaping consumer desires, they are replacing local consumerism with that of America.

In the 1950s, personal photography was a relatively new concept, and as a result needed to be sold to consumers. Furthermore, people needed to be taught how to use personal photography, and Kodak and JWT were crucial in doing so. It is conceivable that Kodak and JWT could have used any number of ways whether that be nature, war and politics, or sports, to sell and teach consumers how to use personal photography. Kodak and JWT chose to use family and nostalgia. They taught people to take family portraits and to think primarily in terms of familial emotions, fleeting memories, and nostalgia. Why? Because it fit in both with Kodak's self-image/history, and with the American project and their own hopes of global expansion.

This chapter will explore Kodak’s advertising strategies primarily in the United States in the 1950s. It will attempt to understand how the corporation attempted to position itself as, simultaneously, a force for technological innovation and a force for conservative family values—

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representing, in miniature, the contradictions of America itself in the Eisenhower era. In addition to the 1950s being a triumphant time for Americanization, it was also a time of great change surrounding family dynamics. Accompanied by economic prosperity after the war, the 1950s became a pro family period in America centered around new values and buying habits. Kodak and JWT uniquely remained committed to establishing Kodak as a great American company that was inseparable from American family values while also seeking to globalize.

Through analyzing these advertising strategies in the 1950s, I seek to understand Kodak’s understanding of itself as an American company and JWT’s strategies for expanding that American company globally. How did Kodak and JWT differentiate Kodak and its products from other American companies at the time? In what ways did Kodak’s unique position in American consumer culture play into the growing social acceptance of Americanization at this time? Further, how did JWT view Kodak in relation to its own goals for global expansion? I argue that in the 1950s, Kodak affirmed itself as a traditional American company and viewed its products as integral components of ideal family life. On the brink of expansion, this created their view of globalization as not only globalizing Kodak products but also Kodak’s image of the ideal family.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first focuses on America in the 1950s and the new ideal family image as well as triumph of Americanization. The second, on Kodak, shows how by marketing towards American families, Kodak integrated itself into the daily lives of American consumers while supporting the new image of the ideal family created in the 1950s. Lastly, the third, on JWT, shows how the advertising agency viewed Kodak’s relation to family life and unique position in the daily lives of American consumers as an opportunity to expand globally while spreading American ideals.

I. Americanization and the New American Family in the 1950s
World War II brought about many changes to American work and family life, such as more women joining the work force while men went to war, increased job and educational opportunities, and greater access to birth control. As a result, the triumph of Americanization and modernization immediately after the war might seem connected to new youth cultures, challenges to traditional gender roles, and experimental sexuality. In the 1950s, it was not. In fact, postwar American society overwhelmingly reaffirmed family life and domesticity with traditional gender roles. Technological and commercial modernization at the time and the desire to spread American consumerism abroad was linked with the consuming, nuclear family. According to scholar Elaine Tyler May, counter to its intentions, the return to domesticity actually encouraged materialism, consumerism, and bureaucratic conformity.

Historian Victoria de Grazia identifies Americanization in relation to America’s influence on consumerism in Europe. She describes Americanization as “the process of challenging Europe’s bourgeois commercial civilization and overturning its old regime,” which then led “the United States established its legitimacy as the world’s first regime of mass consumption.” Ultimately, De Grazia views America as a Market Empire that imposed American consumerism on European consumers.

Americanization and the spread of American consumerism abroad as an ideal also meant spreading an idea of the ideal consumer. Many Americans benefitted from economic improvements in the 1950s which then led to the unique establishment of the decade as a pro family period. As scholar Stephanie Coontz claims, the nuclear family became “the most salient

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7 Elaine Tyler May, Homeward Bound, 6.
8 Elaine Tyler May, Homeward Bound, 13.
symbol and immediate beneficiary” of these economic improvements for most Americans, as is supported by the dramatic increase in sales of household goods. 10 In addition to the new focus on the nuclear family in the 1950s, family values during this decade were also new. There was “an unprecedented ‘glorification of self-indulgence’ in the family life,” as families began to place higher priority on ‘livability,’ comfort,’ and ‘convenience.’” 11

The media, especially popular television shows and movies, focused on this new pro family phenomena. For instance, shows like “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet” praised a white, middle class, heteronormative family with a working father, mother who tends to the home and children. 12 Likewise, “Marty” showed people working through issues with family, friends, and marriages, almost always in support of the heterosexual couple rather than outside extended networks of friends and family. 13 While many Americans did benefit from these economic improvements which were reflected through a new support for the nuclear family, this was not the case for all Americans. Pop culture may have featured mostly all of the same white, middle class, and heteronormative families, but this homogenous image of the 1950s family was due in part to the media’s refusal to showcase of diversity in America during the period. 14

The “good life” and ideal family that the 1950s American media focused on was so important to American consumerism that Americanization had more significant implications than just the spread of American consumer culture. Americanization also meant the spread of the new ideal American family. Kodak plays a unique role in this spread of the American family, as its

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12 Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 23.
products appealed both to American consumer’s desire for convenience as well as their focus on family.

II. **Kodak: The Great American Company**

“From Christmas morning around the tree to June afternoon weddings, America has captured its memories on Kodak film.” Since its beginnings in the 19th century, Kodak established itself as an American company committed to the expansion of personal photography and connecting itself to the American family. In her book, *The Lens of Nostalgia*, Nancy Martha West argues that since the early 20th century, Kodak taught American consumers to use personal photography in domestic spaces to create their experiences through nostalgia, erasing any negative or painful aspects of their memories. Although West discusses Kodak’s strategy of connecting itself to American family life and nostalgia during an earlier period, the company continued with this strategy in the 1950s. In the 1950s, the rest of America caught on to Kodak’s nostalgia, and Kodak in the 1950s had the opportunity, unlike many other American companies, to take advantage of Americanization and the new pro family America. Analysis of Kodak’s appearances in 1950s pop culture as well as 1950s Kodak commercials shows how before globalizing in the 1960s, Kodak reaffirmed its brand and its products connection to a new American family ideal.

Although Kodak connected itself with the new American family ideal in order to sell its products in the 1950s with support from media popular culture, this family one was an extremely difficult one to replicate in reality. We should recognize, therefore, that the ideal seldom matched the reality. Family life in the 1950s, as at any other time, was messy, complicated, and challenging. The white, middle class family with a working father, stay at home mother, and

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dependent children that was accepted as the good life, was extremely difficult on the wife who held the burden of prioritizing her husband and children before herself. Additionally, the new 1950s family ideal portrayed on television supported more lavish or indulgent spending habits when in reality “a full 25 percent of Americans, forty to fifty million people, were poor in the mid-1950s.” Furthermore, people of color were widely excluded from suburban communities and denied economic opportunities that their white peers benefitted from, even if they could afford them. Still, this is the family dynamic that Kodak, the American company that consumers knew and trusted, supported.

Kodak supported this family dynamic, associating Kodak products with the ideal life that Americans should strive for, through frequent sponsorship of the “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet” show and commercials with the show’s cast. For example, a popular 1950s commercial for the Kodak Brownie movie camera opened with the line, “The Eastman Kodak Company is happy to bring you America’s favorite family, the Nelson’s,” and continued on to show how Ozzie, Harriet, and their kids enjoy using Kodak cameras. The narrator then claimed that “good times are twice the fun with pictures,” over a snapshot of the Nelson’s smiling happily together, with son Ricky holding a Kodak camera. Foremost, the commercial’s opening implied to viewers that the Nelson’s life, the life of a white, middle class family with traditional gender roles was the good life and one

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16 Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 36.
20 AMSOMmp, “Ozzi and Harriette Nelson Kodak Commercial.”
that all Americans should enjoy and document with Kodak cameras. The opening mirrored Kodak’s strategy from previous decades of advertising familial nostalgia as it encouraged consumers to use Kodak cameras to document only the good times, creating only positive memories of traditional families. Eventually, Kodak viewed this ideal as something that should be globalized to reach beyond American consumers.

Moreover, the latter half of the commercial showed Ozzie teaching his two sons how to win a girl’s heart by taking pictures of her. In doing so, Ozzie supported a heteronormative consumer society. This part of the commercial portrayed a man as the primary user of a product while using a woman to sell the product. Kodak furthered the idea that men shouldn’t just buy cameras to take pictures of anything, but to take pictures of the women in their lives. More importantly, Kodak supported an idea they created in which photographs hold significant emotional value. Prior to Kodak’s entry into personal photography, “no system existed to condition such a purely aesthetic and emotional response to photographs.”

Kodak wanted consumers everywhere to feel an emotional connection to their products and the family ideal it supported. It is also important to note that all actors in these commercials are white, middle class Americans, once again reiterating Kodak’s image of their ideal consumer. Kodak imagined creating this emotional connection for consumers everywhere, but did so with a focus only on white, middle class American consumers.

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in the 1950s. In the late 1950s, Kodak was only a few years of globalizing but did not view the spread of their products to a truly diverse consumer base.

Kodak aired another commercial before an episode of “The Adventures Ozzie and Harriet” in 1957 supporting the new American family ideal. This commercial was for Kodak Verichrome Pan film and gave suggestions for ways in which consumers can use Kodak’s products, all of which featured taking photos of family.²² The commercial even stated, “What better to keep your family together, even when you are miles apart?” and suggests using Kodak film to “keep family news up to date.”²³ Kodak’s advertising techniques show that the company understands itself as an important and inseparable aspect of the American family life which was portrayed in “The Adventures Ozzie and Harriet”. The company’s entire strategy for selling their product is to market to families and rely on nostalgia. Kodak suggests that consumers should use their cameras and film to maintain the ideal of happy, white and middle class family of the 1950s, even if the family is not physically together. The commercial ends describing Kodak film as dependable and familiar, stressing Kodak’s as an essential and established aspect of American life. Kodak established this idea of dependability and familiarity in 1950s America with goals of also spreading it, along with Kodak products, to other countries around the globe. Ultimately, through this commercial and its connection with “The Adventures Ozzie and Harriet,” Kodak established itself as a reliable, American company and encouraged consumers to maintain middle class American family ideals as it prepared to globalize.

Another example is a 1959 Kodak television commercial featuring the Nelson family was for Kodak Home Movie System and emphasized the same American ideals that were present in the previous mentioned commercials. In the commercial, Harriet Nelson stated, “what’s more

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²³ MattTheSaiyan, “1957 Commercial for Kodak Verichrome Pan film.”
fun when you bring it home with you in pictures” as she sits with her family enjoying memories from previous vacations. The advertisement shows that Kodak products are easy to use and gave users a range of options to choose from including snapshots, videos, black and white, or color. In doing so, the commercial reflects Kodak’s understanding of itself as an American company committed to supporting American ideals of family values and freedom of choice. Much of this commercial featured Harriet Nelson, an example for women in the 1950s of what was widely accepted as the ideal woman, who stayed at home and supported her husband and kids. By featuring a woman taking on traditional gender roles and focusing on family in this commercial, Kodak convinced its consumers that a family in which a woman tends to her husband and kids, a new family ideal in the 1950s, is the family dynamic consumers should desire. Furthermore, Kodak expressed to consumers that women should be content playing this role and document their happiness through pictures. Kodak took advantage 1950s society’s acceptance of traditional gender roles in the 1950s to position itself and its products as essential components of family life to be accepted in America and abroad.

Additional examples of Kodak television commercials in the 1950s, unrelated to the “The Adventures Ozzie and Harriet” show, exemplify how Kodak framed its brand and its products as an essential component to good family life. One example is a 1956 advertisement for Kodak film

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which featured a mother and son taking snapshots and filming home movies together in their home using Kodak products. The commercial emphasized the ease and convenience of using Kodak products to document memories for families to enjoy together. The advertisement ended on a note that Kodak is dependable and familiar, emphasizing that Kodak is a company that understands what is important Americans and that Americans know and trust. Kodak understood its products as necessary components of family life which it should spread globally. Once again, the mother and son in the commercial were part of a white and middle class family. Therefore, it saw its spread of its products as the spread of an accepted white and middle class consumer.

Ultimately, Kodak was founded as an American company tied to the pursuit of American values of family and consumption. During the 1950s, Kodak reaffirmed its connection to the American family, marketing to the new 1950s white, middle class, and heteronormative family dynamic as its target consumer. Because modernization and the desire to spread American consumerism abroad during the period was deeply connected the new ideal of the consuming, nuclear family, Kodak saw growing opportunities for expanding their products and their concept of family ideals abroad.

III. JWT and the United States of Kodak

Like America itself in the 1950s and 1960s, Kodak refused to confine their business by geographical limitations. Kodak’s goals were to become a global force through the sale of personal photography to consumers around the world, and JWT was the advertising agency that would help them achieve this goal. The second chapter of this thesis focuses on the Instamatic campaign of 1963, the first ever global launch of a product. This campaign was not an isolated effort. It came after years of Kodak attempting to establish itself globally, especially following

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World War II. JWT, as a global advertising agency, saw the financial profitability in Kodak’s globalization, while also supporting the spread of Kodak’s connection to American family ideals.

JWT was one of the first modern American advertising agencies. In its early years, it quickly established itself as a leader of the American advertising industry, continually producing innovative, creative content and providing clients with many new services.  

During the First World War, JWT dominated the advertising industry and became the first American advertising agency to expand abroad. Throughout the 1950s, JWT experimented with new psychological methods of advertising, provided increased opportunities for women, and also quickly secured themselves as a dominant agency in radio broadcasting, similar to their previous success with magazines as a new advertising medium. JWT observed a clear overlap between their own commitment to innovation and expansion and Kodak’s which made for an obvious partnership between the two American companies in their global ambitions.

JWT began taking more deliberate steps towards reaching their own global goals and Kodak’s in 1953 when executives from both companies took a trip to Western Europe. Although Kodak operated in Europe before this time, the goal of this trip was to develop a deeper understanding of Kodak’s international markets and how to best improve upon their advertising and promotional efforts abroad. F. Richard Holtz from Kodak and Howard Henderson from JWT visited 225 dealers in 55 cities and towns throughout Western Europe to meet with Kodak executives, visit retail shops, and reviewing advertisements to address their competitive advantage and selling strategies. The two executives then presented this survey to two

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28 Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes*, 151.
companies in London and Paris in 1954. This trip marks the beginning of Henderson’s 7 year push for Kodak to focus on global marketing of their products. Analysis of the presentation of their findings provides insight into Henderson’s mindset around globalization for JWT, Kodak, and American family values as a necessary and beneficial expansion for both companies. JWT understood and agreed with Kodak’s strategy to present itself and its products using familial nostalgia.

Their findings of the market situation in Western Europe at the time concluded that Kodak was losing business to local competitors. This was due in part to a decline in Kodak’s international presence during World War II. Kodak suffered from a lack of brand recognition in younger generations who do not know Kodak following the decline of Kodak product sales and advertisements during the war. Additionally, local photography dealers prioritized working with Kodak’s competitors after receiving little aid from Kodak during the war. In addition, Holtz and Henderson concluded that Kodak suffered as a result of their inability to convey a “clear-cut impression of what Kodak means today” while competitors benefitted from strong brands that conveyed strong and clear messages to consumers. If Kodak and JWT were going to succeed as global powers they needed to create the same familiarity and dependency surrounding Kodak products abroad as was present in American consumerism. The two companies planned to establish a clear understanding of Kodak’s brand globally, as they had done in America, by connecting Kodak with family and nostalgia.

Holtz and Henderson outlined 7 points regarding the steps they believed Kodak needed to take to remedy their declining status in international markets. Their recommendations included creating a unified advertising team, implementing an international advertising campaign “to meet

30 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” Presentation page 13.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
the very real need for a simple expression of what Kodak means today throughout the world,” and developing a publicity plan for Kodak in Europe “carefully tailored to the language and interests of each country” among others.\textsuperscript{33} All of these suggestions are centered around making Kodak a brand that consumers throughout the world recognize and prefer. Kodak and JWT viewed Kodak as integral not only to the lives of American families, but to the lives of families everywhere. The goal is for Kodak to transform into the dominant photography company around the globe and expand its commitment to American values of family abroad.

To address the second point of creating a simple expression of what Kodak means, Holtz and Henderson presented the saying “Today -- as on every day since 1888 -- more pictures are being made the world over -- with Kodak film and cameras than any other.”\textsuperscript{34} They emphasized their confidence in this saying because it clearly and simply stated Kodak’s position as the world leader, easily understood in any language, and emphasized Kodak’s competitive leadership over local companies.\textsuperscript{35} Holtz and Henderson frame their discussion of globalization around world leadership and remaining more successful than any local competitors. Even though they note the importance of their statement of the company’s meaning could be easily understood in any language, this was not because they aimed to cater to the unique cultures or preferences of consumers in various locations. Instead, it aligned with views of Americanization as Kodak and JWT diminished local influences to aid the success of Kodak’s American view of world leadership in the photography industry.

The presentation includes a variety of examples of potential print advertisements including the saying “Today -- as on every day since 1888 -- more pictures are being made the

\textsuperscript{33} Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” Presentation page 14.
\textsuperscript{34} Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” Presentation page 16.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}
world over -- with Kodak film and cameras than any other.” The goal of this slogan was to simply express what Kodak and JWT understood as what Kodak stood for in a manner which can be used in any country. The visuals of example advertisements also provide greater insight into Kodak and JWT’s view of their globalization. Foremost, several of the example advertisements featured children and emphasized capturing memories while they are young. For example, in the description of one possible advertisement, the report suggests the caption, “All too soon childhood is gone. There’s no turning back…..except in pictures.”

Kodak and JWT planned to market an idea to consumers around the world that the ideal family life when children are young is quickly fleeting. The companies emphasized in their advertising that pictures using Kodak cameras must be used to document the “good life” before it is gone. Furthermore, the companies claimed that pictures are the only way to return to this time in their lives, therefore teaching consumers to think of personal photography and Kodak products in terms of family emotions and nostalgia.

36 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation page 18.
In addition, the report included a second possible advertisement of a smiling father and
daughter with the suggested caption, “In memory, little arms cling tightly round your neck
again…because someone took a picture.” With this caption, Kodak and JWT implied that the
memory is not enough. Instead, the only way people can remember the best times of their
lives with their children is to take a picture. Again, JWT supported Kodak’s strategy of marketing
their products to consumers around the world by using familial nostalgia and teaching people to
associate Kodak products with positive memories of family life. The companies
created an idea of capturing lost moments of family. They suggested that just a memory was
not enough, and that people needed to use Kodak cameras to physically document
memories of childhood and family life before they disappeared.

Additionally, a third example advertisement in the report included two young, white boys. The
suggested caption read, “The picture you’ll want tomorrow, you must take today.” This
caption told families that in the future they would miss the memories of their young
children playing together and that they have to take a picture to keep the memory. Like the previous two advertisements, it showed that Kodak

Example advertisement from Howard Henderson’s “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation

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37 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation page 19a.
38 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation page 18c.
and JWT wanted to convince consumers that simply a memory was not enough to satisfy them. They wanted consumers to believe that Kodak cameras were the only satisfying way to not lose family memories. All three of these examples sold an idea of lost memories and looking back on life to sell Kodak cameras and film. Furthermore, all three examples featured white, children, once again showing that Kodak and JWT lacked a diverse view of their target consumer, even when planning their strategy for globalizing.

Following Kodak and JWT’s goal for consumers to recognize and purchase Kodak over any competitors, a successful implementation of these example print advertisements would also mean the absorption of American family ideals by consumers from a variety of cultures with potentially conflicting preexisting ideas surrounding family. By only featuring white, middle class families in their plans for future international print advertisements, Kodak and JWT viewed the globalization of their companies as the spread of white, middle class, and heteronormative American consumerism and family values abroad.

Similar to many of the 1950s television commercials, many of the example print ads in this presentation for globalizing Kodak featured women. Just as Kodak’s domestic view of its brand and its products was gendered, so was its global approach. Furthermore, even if the example advertisements did not explicitly include images of children or families, they were often
tied to ideas of family and nostalgia in some way. For example, the suggested caption for an advertisement of an image of a young woman was “Girl into woman...a picture to treasure always.” Kodak and JWT, in yet another advertisement, wanted to sell the idea of needing to capture lost moments using Kodak products. This advertisement suggested that as people grow older and families change, photographs will be the only way to keep special memories of youth and the past.

Other potential advertisements included in the presentation featured images of different travel destinations with captions such as “That long-dreamed of trip will last forever...in pictures,” which again relied on nostalgia while also encouraging individuals to share the memories they create with Kodak cameras with friends back home. When planning Kodak’s globalization in the late 1950s, JWT was on board with Kodak’s strategy of presenting itself as a company of nostalgia. It wanted consumers around the world to use Kodak products to capture memories and distant dreams that they could always look back on. Furthermore, this strategy in relation to “long-dreamed of trips” fell in line with Kodak’s role in Americanization. Kodak and JWT emphasized the benefits of

39 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation page 18b.
40 Howard Henderson’s copy “Kodak Survey in Western Europe” presentation page 18d.
experiencing and sharing new cultures, but this is ultimately an uneven exchange. It is the experience of different people and cultures through a strictly American perspective. Kodak encourages Americans to go abroad, take pictures, and show other Americans without ever really fostering a real exchange and understanding of different cultures.

In addition to the company statement, the ten examples of potential advertisements included in the presentation all include the Kodak logo alongside an image of the iconic yellow Kodak box. These elements may not seem simply and not necessarily impactful, but combined, they push a strong brand for Kodak that is quickly and recognizable by consumers. All of Kodak’s decisions are strategic. Though decisions such as the color of a box of film may seem minute, they play a significant role in Kodak’s overall strategy for expansion. Kodak and JWT wanted consumers to be able to recognize Kodak products and subsequently associate Kodak with family and nostalgia. These decisions create Kodak as a unique and unavoidable company to consumers in all locations. Small but important strategies such as including the iconic yellow box and Kodak logo on every advertisement shape Henderson’s vision for globalization which he strengthens over the seven years following this presentation.

On February 26, 1958, five years after Henderson and Holtz’s trip to Western Europe, Henderson gave a speech to the Kodak International Group on the partnership between the two companies. As a veteran of the advertising industry, he understood the art of persuasion and approaches convincing the Kodak International Group of the benefits of going global in the same manner that he approaches selling a Kodak camera to a consumer. Analysis of the notes from this speech reveals Henderson’s view of globalization and how he addressed the anxieties from Kodak surrounding expansion.
He started by emphasizing their commonality of acting as pioneers in their respective fields. He states, “We are both a world business, and became so long before it was the style to be international. We both came up the hard way.” Already, he is emphasizing the two companies global reach and framed this reach in a positive light. Similar to de Grazia’s discussion on the Market Empire, Henderson views Kodak and JWT without geographical borders. This idea is central to the JWT philosophy. In his talk, Henderson quotes J. Walther Thompson himself, who stated “The field in which the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency operates is unrestricted. It has no geographical limitations.” Henderson argues that if both Kodak and JWT were American companies founded on the principle that their expansion is limitless, both companies needed to continue to take advantage of this precedent by going global. Henderson believed that the globalization of these companies and their ideals was necessary and beneficial to other consumer cultures.

He continued his talk by emphasizing the sole objective for both Kodak and JWT. Henderson views their job as increasing consumer desires to purchase Kodak cameras by informing potential users in advance of the satisfactions they will gain. Henderson did not leave determining the product's benefits to the individual consumer who will be using the camera. Instead he claimed Kodak and JWT must tell them these benefits and convince them the products satisfactions justify and encourage its purchase. He is eager to use to power of advertising over consumers to shape their desires, unlike Hornos who fears the moral implications of doing so. In the 1950s, these benefits were centered around the family. Kodak

42 “THE KODAK-THOMPSON PARTNERSHIP Notes on talk for the Kodak International Group from Rochester” page 3.
43 “THE KODAK-THOMPSON PARTNERSHIP Notes on talk for the Kodak International Group from Rochester” page 4.
products were used to document an ideal family life, and Henderson saw a moral good in spreading these ideals globally.

Immediately after making these claims about telling the consumer about satisfactions, he pointed out that they are ultimately operating in the realm of free competition, one of Kodak’s important American values. He acknowledges that “the growth of your Company and our Company depends on winning the user’s free choice.” Henderson’s focus on free choice and ultimately anti-communist rhetoric in a later discussion of the Human Factor of the Kodak and JWT partnership reflected his outlook on Kodak’s globalization. Henderson knows that there is more at stake to Kodak’s globalization than just increasing sales by reaching new consumers. Through the globalization of Kodak products, Kodak and JWT would globalize the values related to the great American company. While many feared the implications of this transfer of values, Henderson morally justified globalization by believing American consumerism and family values should be adopted by consumers around the globe.

Kodak and JWT dedicated marketing efforts throughout the 1950s around their belief that the new 1950s family ideal and Kodak products associated with it should be globalized. Kodak’s marketing strategies are representative of Americanization and the domination of American consumerism and American family values over local cultures. In the next chapter, I will focus on the 1963 campaign for the Kodak Instamatic, in which Kodak and JWT put their plans for globalization into action. The next chapter will show how the changing social and political environment of the 1960s forced Kodak and JWT to take a new approach to globalization, leaving the expansion of American family ideals on hold.

44 “Ibid.”
Chapter 2


In 1963, Kodak and JWT created the first simultaneous global launch of a consumer product for a personal camera called the Kodak Instamatic. The Instamatic was Kodak’s newest camera and a model that made picture taking simpler to use than any Kodak camera before it. Rather than sell the Instamatic to American consumers using one marketing campaign and to consumers abroad using different international campaigns, Kodak and JWT wanted to release the Instamatic to the world simultaneously around the globe using the same marketing campaign.

A launch of this magnitude and coordination raised a lot of questions for the two companies. As with any marketing campaign, the two companies had to think about who they would sell the product to and what strategies they would use to sell it. But the added element of the Instamatic launch being the first simultaneous global launch of a consumer product raised new questions as well. How could JWT and Kodak disassociate Kodak from the limits of being known as the all-American company with products deeply engrained in American family life? How could Kodak become a dominant global company with products used and trusted by consumers everywhere?

In the previous chapter, internal meeting notes and correspondence demonstrated that Kodak was aware of serious anxieties about the spread of American values through global advertising and consumerism. This chapter will show how the discussions between Kodak and JWT surrounding the company’s expansion abroad came into fruition with the global launch of the Instamatic. I will argue that Kodak and JWT wanted to establish the Instamatic as a universal

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product, one that any consumer could use, but in creating the launch, they had a particular idea of universal, one that was middle class and modern. Ultimately, their idea of global was limited, only including select countries around the world and only targeting consumers of a certain income level.

I will use confidential JWT Account Summaries of the Eastman Kodak company from 1962 to 1964, JWT company newsletters from 1963 and 1964, as well as domestic and global versions of print advertisements from 1963 to demonstrate that, with the release of the Instamatic, Kodak and JWT abandoned their strategy of advertising families, one that proved successful for the decades prior in America. They abandoned this strategy in attempts to keep up with broader trends in advertising and popular culture and to in a sense rebrand Kodak as a global rather than all-American company.

I. The Instamatic and Kodak’s Ideal Middle Class Consumer

The Instamatic was one of Kodak’s many attempts since its founding in 1888 to make photography as convenient, quick, and easy as possible for consumers. The camera’s most notable feature was its drop-in film cartridge which helped make the Instamatic Kodak’s most successful camera since the Brownie. This cartridge meant amateur photographers no longer had to go through the tedious and time-consuming process of manually loading film into the camera. They could simply drop a Kodapak film cartridge into the Instamatic and in a few seconds, the camera would load the film itself and be ready for picture taking.

46 Kodak released its Brownie camera model in 1900. The Brownie was essentially a cardboard box with a lens that required nothing more from users than simply pointing at a button and pressing a button. Although incredibly successful for decades, the Brownie eventually began its decline in late 1950s and 1960s.
Although the Instamatic only modified existing picture-taking technology, the Instamatic was revolutionary in its engineering and packaging.\textsuperscript{47} The Instamatic was more sophisticated than previous Kodak camera models. It had a plastic-mold body rather than a cardboard one and additional controls including the shutter-release and film advance button. Later Instamatic models also had the capability for flash photography and automatic exposure. While these are all basic features included in cameras we are familiar with today, this was not the case in the early 1960s. Kodak added these new features to the Instamatic while ensuring the camera remained a basic and easy to use camera. It was uniquely simple yet sophisticated. Kodak had created a camera with the most basic abilities following the company’s intentions of making picture taking so easy and quick to use that anyone could do it without making users feel like they were using a low-quality product.

If the Instamatic was really so easy and for anyone, that means Kodak and JWT could have sold the camera to children or older, retired consumers or people in the military. But this is not what the companies wanted. They wanted young and middle class adults around the world using their camera. In 1963, an Account Summary prepared by JWT stated that the “Instamatic cameras have clearly taken over the under $50 market.”\textsuperscript{48} The Instamatic’s success in this market reflects that Kodak had a specific target for the consumers they wanted to sell the Instamatic to. Middle class consumers could afford the under $50 market, but this market was definitely not accessible to anyone. The company was so successful because it created a camera that was sophisticated in its engineering and packaging but still basic, easy to use, and affordable to middle class consumers. This success continued to grow significantly in the immediate years


following the camera’s release. In just two years, Kodak’s domestic and overseas sales of the Instamatic cameras totaled over 7 ½ million, and the Instamatic became Kodak’s most successful camera.\(^{49}\) Kodak’s commitment to both ease and convenience of use, and quality and sophistication, underwrote to the Instamatic’s success in the United States and abroad.

Furthermore, the Instamatic was significant because it allowed Kodak to not only sell cameras to consumers, but to incorporate its brand and dependency on its products into consumers lives. For example, Instamatic required users to also purchase more film than for other Kodak cameras.\(^{50}\) Presumably, because the Instamatic made picture-taking so quick and simple, consumers took more pictures and therefore needed to continually purchase more film. This requires a certain level of affluence from consumers, establishes the potential for development of a strong brand loyalty to Kodak, and ultimately brings Kodak greater sales.

Furthermore, the 1964 Account Summary also discusses the success of the Carousel slide projector directly after discussing the Instamatic’s successes. When a consumer buys an Instamatic, they must also buy Kodak film, and even further they are likely to buy the Carousel in addition to share the photos they take on the Instamatic. Although the Instamatic, Kodak film, and the Carousel are all separate products, their functions are all intertwined. This is similar to Apple’s strategy as a contemporary technology company. The variety of Apple products are also interconnected and depend on each other. Just as Apple currently dominates technology and consumer electronics industry possesses the ability to charge premium prices for their products which they know consumers desire, Kodak followed a similar strategy to dominating the personal photography industry in the early 1960s.

\(^{49}\) Kalton C. Lahue and Joseph A. Bailey, *Glass Brass, and Chrome*, 328.

\(^{50}\) Eastman Kodak Company Confidential Account Summary, 1963, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.
The Instamatic was important because its drop-in film cartridge made photography feel simple and easy and also sophisticated but also because it attracted consumers to other Kodak products to use in conjunction with the camera. The Instamatic was tied to a number of consumption choices which required a certain income level to maintain and made consumers loyal to Kodak. This commitment to convenience, ease, and quickness of photography as well as creating a camera that was dependent on other Kodak products allowed Kodak to successfully tap into more affluent middle-class consumers around the world.

II. **Kodak Keeps Up with Changes in Advertising in the 1960s**

By the 1960s, America began to undergo numerous social and political changes. For example, in the early 1960s, the American public elected John F. Kennedy as president, America became more heavily involved in the Vietnam War, and the fight for civil rights continued. America was a radically different country than it was in the previous decade. Along with these broader social and political changes, advertising also underwent many changes in the early 1960s. These changes to advertising happening primarily between 1963 and 1965 also shaped Kodak and JWT’s idea of their ideal consumer for the Instamatic. Kodak and JWT wanted to keep up with the trends in advertising and popular culture by marketing the Instamatic primarily to young and “cool” consumers instead of families.

Two scholars, Juliann Sivulka and Thomas Frank discuss the changes in advertising in the 1960s. Sivulka claims that advertising, and America more broadly, took on a new style in the 1960s, moving away from a “literary culture” towards a more “visual culture.” Sivulka continues to argue that the result of this shift was more “inspiration, intuition, and creativity” with greater collaboration amongst young art directors and copy writers working together as

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51 Juliann Sivulka, *Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes*: 299.
equals.\textsuperscript{52} In addition, Frank claims that advertising mirrored the “revolutionary youth movements of the period, undertaking dramatic transformations of both the way it operated and the way it imagined itself.”\textsuperscript{53} Ultimately, between 1963 and 1965, advertising agencies started creating advertisements that reflected a “spirit of personal liberation” in the arts and were meant to shock.\textsuperscript{54} The emphasis on creativity and unconventional art and advertisements targeted the younger and more highly educated American consumer base which also benefitted from numerous technological advancements during the period. Kodak, in addition to targeting middle class consumers with the Instamatic, wanted to adapt to these changes in popular culture and advertising by selling the Instamatic to these young consumers.

\textsuperscript{52} Juliann Sivulka, \textit{Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes}: 302.
\textsuperscript{54} Juliann Sivulka, \textit{Soap, Sex, and Cigarettes}: 299.
Although not completely, Kodak began to abandon its previous strategy of advertising families in an attempt to keep up with the “cool” trend in popular culture and advertising. Numerous Kodak print and television advertisements from the period feature individuals instead of families using Kodak cameras and film. Often times these advertisements also relied on sex appeal, unlike Kodak’s more traditional family advertisements. The 1966 Kodak advertisement for Flashcube, a cube which users could add onto the Kodak Instamatic to take pictures with flash, television commercial is one example of an advertisement that takes on this new 1960s style. The commercial features all young people dressed in bright colors and dancing to upbeat popular 1960s music.\(^5^5\) The style of commercial is completely opposite from Kodak advertisements from the 1950s like those featuring the cast of “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet.” The camera angles, lively and design-filled set, and close ups on individuals’ faces are all part of Kodak’s attempts to keep up with the broader changes in popular culture and American advertising.

\(^5^5\) VIDEOBEAT dotcom, “Mod Go Go – Kodak Instamatic TV Commercial – 1966,” published June 8, 2011, YouTube video, 1:00, https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=XsLYE2d6XSQ.
the peoples’ clothes are all hip and modern. Furthermore, almost the full length of the commercial focuses entirely on the excited people dancing and having fun. Only for a few seconds towards the end of the commercial does the advertisement show a young man actually using the camera. The focus is therefore less on the camera itself and more on the young, hip consumers that Kodak and JWT wanted using their cameras, especially the Instamatic, in the 1960s.

III. Project 13 and the Launch of the Kodak Instamatic

In April of 1963 Kodak and JWT’s years of planning how to sell the Instamatic and who to sell it to came to fruition with the cameras global launch. The rapid global success of the Instamatic campaign may have come as a surprise to many, even to the people working for JWT. This is not because people did not believe in Kodak, but instead because most people did not even know the camera or campaign existed. Project 13 is the code name for the top-secret campaign for the Instamatic. This top-secret program lasted over a year under the direction of JWT executive Joe Boyle before the camera was finally announced to the public on February 28, 1963.56 Only thirteen people on the publicity team for JWT and Joe Boyle knew of its existence.57

While JWT places great significance on the launch being “global,” their understanding of what “global” meant was rather limited. An Account Summary of the Eastman Kodak Company from November 21, 1962 provides the most information regarding the goals and strategies for the project. This document states that Kodak and JWT would release the global advertising

57 Ibid.
campaign for the Instamatic in eleven European countries, eleven Latin America countries, and South Africa.\textsuperscript{58} This list of countries show that the global launch was not actually in every country around the globe. They intentionally did not advertise in communist countries or in poor countries. Kodak and JWT chose only to advertise in specific countries that they believed would best help them meet their goal of reaching as many young, middle class consumers as possible.

Kodak and JWT’s strategy related to releasing specifically to one campaign in these twenty-three locations simultaneously. Kodak had additional international advertisements for the Instamatic that were released in 1963 in other countries, such as Nigeria, but were not part of what Kodak and JWT considered their global launch. Furthermore, Kodak and JWT also explicitly stated that they would target families with average-to-above incomes as well as adult males primarily abroad.\textsuperscript{59} This shows that Kodak and JWT had a very specific vision for their globalization. It was not just to spread personal photography to any consumer, but to spread it to middle and higher-class consumers in specific countries around the world.

The 3 objectives for the Instamatic campaign stated in the account summary are:

“1. Make consumers aware of Kodak’s important contribution to picture-taking enjoyment.

2. Demonstrate dramatically the quick, easy loading and unloading and the effortless, assured results possible with the new products.

3. Emphasize that this new means of getting more pictures is a Kodak achievement.”\textsuperscript{60}

Only the second objective is specifically related to the camera and its technology. The other two objectives are about the Kodak brand more generally. This shows that Kodak and JWT are selling more than just a camera. The Instamatic and the advertising efforts behind its success


\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid.}
represent the ambitions of the Kodak brand becoming universally accepted and incorporated into the lives of more consumers around the world.

To achieve these objectives in a changing environment in America and abroad, Kodak and JWT made calculated decisions. The companies decided they would spread the Kodak brand through young, middle class consumers in different countries. Kodak and JWT believed that despite differences in country politics or consumer culture, the Instamatic was a product for young, middle class consumers. Through analyzing the print advertisements from the Instamatic global launch, I will uncover how Kodak and JWT tried to achieve these goals by no longer creating advertisements with nostalgia and family.

The strategy for the global launch included first creating simple print advertisements that emphasized the camera’s ease of use. Unlike many of Kodak’s typical advertisements featuring photos of families or young children, the Instamatic campaign took a new approach. The focus was completely on the user, and not the subject. This allowed Kodak and JWT to emphasize that anyone could use the camera regardless of age, race, gender, location or knowledge of photography. Even though Kodak’s strategy was based in this idea that anyone could use the Instamatic, the models they use and how they styled the models prove that they did not try to reach just anyone.

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Instamatic, the models they use and how they styled the models prove that they did not try to reach just anyone.

The advertisements in the global campaign were printed in *Reader’s Digest* magazines around the globe. The advertisement printed in *Reader’s Digest* in the United States included four pictures of a young, white woman. It is important to note that the advertisement featured just a young woman alone. It did not show her using the camera with her kids or her husband, which was more typical in the previous decade. This was part of Kodak and JWT’s strategy to keep up with changes in advertising and popular culture and show that Kodak was not stuck in the past but changing too.

The images show the progression of her holding Kodak’s new drop-in film cartridge, placing the cartridge into the camera, closing it, and pointing the camera to take a picture. These
copy underneath the four pictures reads “WITH THIS NEW KODAKPAK FILM CARTRIDGE...YOU LOAD INSTANTLY. AUTOMATICALLY...SO IT’S EASIER THAN EVER...TO TAKE GOOD PICTURES!” These pictures and copy showed consumers they could take quality pictures with just four simple steps using the Instamatic. It emphasizes Kodak’s pride in their achievement of making quality picture taking as easy as possible with the Instamatic. The copy at the top of the advertisement reads, “Now in the time it takes to read this sentence aloud, you can load the new KODAK INSTAMATIC CAMERA,” once again emphasizing that the Instamatic is so simple and easy to use, picture taking can now require nearly no time at all. Kodak and JWT wanted to create the Instamatic as a universal product and did so by stressing simplicity, ease of use, and the camera’s user regardless of where they were placing advertisements.

Even though Kodak and JWT are attempting to sell the Instamatic camera to as many consumers as possible around the globe, they still have a specific target. An account summary created on August 6, 1962 details noted general information about the Eastman Kodak Company, its products, and its future marketing plans for new products. In a section on Kodak’s consumers, this summary states that the “best prospects for inexpensive cameras and roll film are to be found in families with average or higher income, with babies or young children, in the metropolitan area.” Even though the companies say they are targeting families, fewer advertisements actually showed families using the Instamatic. The global launch was focused solely on showing individuals, and not families, using the camera. In addition, “women account for the bulk of the

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61 “Copy” is the term used in advertising for the text included in an advertisement.
film usage of this type. Even though Kodak branded itself as a company committed to creating personal photography into a skill that any consumer is capable of, they wanted to target middle and upper class consumers. The companies’ attempts to target a more affluent audience are present in this advertisement. The woman is wearing sleek white clothing, formal gloves, with her hair in a neat up do. If Kodak and JWT wanted to relate to the any consumer around the world, this is not the most relatable image. Kodak made these strategic decisions with the model’s image, especially with her clothing, to attract higher class consumers. With this advertisement, Kodak and JWT expressed their new focus on class rather than family as they had in most advertisements from previous years.

Kodak Instamatic Print Advertisement in Reader’s Digest (Nigeria) (1963)

This next advertisement was not technically part of the same global campaign as the previous advertisement which was released in eleven European countries, eleven Latin American

63 Ibid.
countries, and South Africa. This advertisement was published in *Reader’s Digest* in Nigeria and followed the same exact format as the previous advertisement in *Reader’s Digest* in the United States. Once again, the advertisement features four pictures showing the easy steps to using the Instamatic with the same copy underneath. One difference is the copy at the top of the advertisement which reads “Kodak opens a new era in picture-taking ease…with the new KODAK INSTAMATIC Camera.” Although the specific wording is different than the first advertisement from the global campaign, this Nigerian advertisement still emphasized the simplicity and ease of use as well as Kodak acting as a leader of innovation in the personal photography industry. The advertisement provides no context to anything other than the camera’s user. It features only the Instamatic’s user, and not it’s subject, and suggested that that this a camera for anyone’s use.

Essentially, the only significant difference between this advertisement in *Reader’s Digest* in Nigeria and the previous example is the model. Kodak and JWT may have changed the model in an attempt to cater to local consumers, but their overall strategy remains the same. First, the advertisement still emphasized ease and convenience of use as having universal appeal. Even though this advertisement was published in a completely different country than the previous advertisement, it still stressed how simple and quick the Instamatic was to use. Kodak and JWT saw the camera’s technology which made it easier than ever to use as a feature that would consumers across the globe.

Although they featured ease of use as if it was a universal appeal, this Nigeria advertisement was still meant to target consumers with average to above average income. While the model’s clothing may not be as formal as the model’s in the previous advertisement, she is wearing a dress with her hair neatly pulled back. Displaying her in this way was not just for
aesthetic purposes. It was to portray a certain image that Kodak and JWT hoped would attract a wealthier, higher class audience to purchase the Instamatic.

Furthermore, the subject is once again not important to this Nigeria advertisement. Kodak and JWT targeted Nigerian consumers in the same way as U.S. consumers. The companies wanted all attention to be on the Instamatic’s user and therefore provided no context regarding what she was taking a picture of. This was one of the advertisement’s most important features which allowed it to travel globally. Intentionally leaving out who the woman is taking a picture of allows the advertisement, and therefore the Instamatic, to reach a global audience and Kodak and JWT to establish themselves as leading global powers.

Young, nicely dressed women were not the only models Kodak and JWT featured in 1963 advertisements for the Instamatic. Kodak and JWT also released an advertisement in the United States following essentially the same format and copy but with an older man as the model. The copy, specifically the copy at the bottom of the picture states, “It’s instant. It’s automatic…And there’s nothing to think about but the picture” again follows Kodak’s outlook on the global spread of personal photography.

Kodak and JWT reinforced this idea that the Instamatic makes picture-taking so easy that any consumer can take nice pictures even without any prior knowledge of or skills related to
photography. The combination of the images and the copy are a clear effort to reinforce the idea created by Kodak that their products are superior because any individual can pick up an Instamatic and take a high-quality picture in seconds.

Even though the layout and copy advertisements claimed the Instamatic was easy enough for anybody to use, the man, with his nicely dressed and clean-shaven image, is meant to appeal to Kodak and JWT’s target of higher class consumers. The model in the advertisement is an older man, but that does not necessarily mean that the companies thought of older men as consumers. By featuring models from a variety of demographics in their Instamatic advertisements, Kodak and JWT give consumers the opportunity to imagine who the person is taking a picture of. Moreover, the advertisement was published in five magazines, two of which (McCall’s and Ladies Home Journal) were women’s magazines. One potential target for this particular advertisement could be a woman who wants to buy the Instamatic for her husband, who the man in the advertisement reminds her of, can take pictures of herself and their family. Ultimately, the variety of models and lack of context about who the models are taking pictures of furthers Kodak and JWT’s strategy of selling the Instamatic as a camera that can fit into any context and any consumer’s life.
Kodak and JWT released an additional advertisement as a global consumer campaign with a different visual layout for the Instamatic in 1963. The bottom half of the picture shows a completed English version of the advertisement, and the top half of the picture shows four examples of the copy into foreign languages. This advertisement would be circulated in Reader’s Digest magazines in the United States and other English-speaking countries. While Kodak and JWT translated the copy, the image remained the same when these ads were then featured in magazines globally. The left side of the advertisement was clean and simple with one image and copy in bold type only taking up a small portion of the page. The image includes only half of a white woman’s face and her hand in which she is holding the drop-in film cartridge for the Instamatic. This is likely the same model from the first advertisement, but displayed in an even simpler layout than the four images of a woman putting the cartridge in the Instamatic and showing how easy it is to use. The picture of the woman who is not even holding the Instamatic catches the reader’s attention, drawing them in to read the copy.

The copy, which reads “You are about to turn to a new page in the pleasure of picture-taking” is simple and bold and the use of the word “pleasure” in combination with the woman’s face brought a sexual appeal to the advertisement. The advertisement attracts males, the main overseas target audience, by featuring a woman and including copy with a sexual appeal. Unlike the visually bold and eye-catching left side, the right side of the ad focuses solely on the Instamatic camera itself. It shows the four different models available to consumers with detailed descriptions and prices. The left side of the ad catches the viewers’ attention while the right side specifies all of the different models and features which Kodak believed made it superior to any other company in the personal photography business.
The most unique aspect of the global advertising campaigns is that they were displayed in twenty-three different countries in Europe, Latin America, and in South Africa.64 All of these locations are very different, yet the only feature of the advertisement that changed was the language of the copy. Kodak and JWT viewed the Instamatic with such universal appeal that they did not find it necessary to change the image included in the advertisement to better address local consumers. The companies’ view seemed to be correct, sales for the Instamatic camera were higher than for any other previous sales for Kodak products. One of the most significant achievements listed in a 1964 Eastman Kodak Account Summary is that the Instamatic “has succeeded in ‘sophisticated camera markets such as Germany, to the same degree as in ‘photographically primitive’ markets such as Latin America.”65 Kodak and JWT in these internal reports discussed German and Latin America as opposites in terms of the countries’ respective photography markets, yet they conclude that these differences proved to have no negative consequences on the Instamatic’s sales. The two companies did not perceive any limitations to their global success with the Instamatic. Ultimately, Kodak and JWT successfully completed the first global launch of a consumer product and convinced consumers around the globe that personal photography was a necessity by focusing on the camera’s technology rather than the subject of the picture to target every consumer, regardless of their social, cultural, or political differences with the exact same strategy.

64 Account Summary of The Eastman Kodak Company, 21 November 1962.
This next advertisement for the Instamatic follows a completely different format than the previous advertisements. It was published in *Boy’s Life* magazine in December of 1963 and emphasizes the number of things a man can do with the Instamatic camera. This ad is focusing on the technology of the camera and how it benefits the consumers life, using the Instamatic to connect consumers to the science and technology of the future rather than nostalgia of the past. It provides six different uses of the Instamatic: filming sporting events and parties, entering photo contests, making reports to trace a newspaper’s progress, recording consumer reactions for customer research, taking pictures in museums and exhibits for cabinetry inspiration later, and even to collect evidence and help solve crime. Not one of these six different scenarios relates to nostalgia or families. Kodak wanted to emphasize that the Instamatic was different than any other Kodak camera before it. It wanted to convince consumers that the Instamatic was the new and modern camera for young, modern middle class consumers.
IV. The 1964-1965 New York World’s Fair and Aftermath of the Instamatic’s Success

One year after the launch of the Instamatic, more than 51 million visitors and exhibits from over 100 international businesses gathered at the 1964-1965 New York World’s Fair. From General Motors’ Futurama ride which took fairgoers to see different displays of the moon, Antarctica, and The City of Tomorrow (an imagined futuristic world), to the U.S. Space Park’s replicas of rockets used in America’s space program, the fair was centered around the idea “that science, technology, and a free society were the keys to building a better tomorrow.” Covering over 600 acres, every corner of the fair provided people with the chance to see the possibilities for the future of their world. Robert Moses, the president of the 1964-1965 New York World’s Fair, drew inspiration from the Disney theme park in California and created “a safe bubble that was virtually free from worldly concerns” in planning the 1964-1965 World’s Fair. The fair presented people with a hopeful and optimistic outlook for America’s future. Standing at eighty feet tall and displaying thirty by thirty-six foot photographs, the largest colored outdoor prints of the time, the Kodak Pavilion was one of the largest buildings at the World Fair which attracted thousands of visitors. Kodak’s placement and popularity at the fair mirrored the company’s dominant position in the personal photography industry and as a

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leader of the expansion of American consumerism abroad immediately following the launch of
the Instamatic. A New York Times advertisement featuring the tower read, “Come to the fair
‘Meet me at the Kodak Picture Tower!’ Walk Right Into Adventure – The Kodak World of
Picture-Taking.” This advertisement did more than attract people to come to the New York
World’s Fair, it positioned Kodak at the center of an international gathering, towering over the
rest of the exhibition. Similarly to Moses’ goal of creating the fair as a safe escape, the Kodak
Pavilion and Picture Tower portrayed Kodak as a company that would provide adventure and
new possibilities for people through personal photography.

The popularity of the 1964-1965 New York World’s Fair showed that people in the early
1960s were intrigued by the future. There was a new interest in science and technology, but also
in youth and music and a changing popular culture. Kodak’s prominence at a fair which
represented this changing world with new interests allowed the company to rebrand itself. Kodak
wanted to adapt to its changing environment, to remain relevant rather than a company tied to the
past.

Robert Moses, in his welcome address printed in the Official Guide to the 1964 World’s
Fair, claimed that the fair “aims to be universal, to have something for everyone.” He mirrored
the exact strategy of Kodak’s global expansion in the early 1960s. Kodak created and marketed
the Instamatic as a camera that was for everyone in order to incorporate its product and brand
into the lives of consumers across the globe. Whether it was a consumer in the United States or
in South Africa, the Instamatic’s technology made personal photography accessible and easy to

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Domestic Advertisements Collection, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.
use for all consumers. Less than a year after its release, Kodak sold over 6 million Instamatic cameras around the world by October of 1964. The Instamatic exceeded Kodak’s sales goals and expectations while helping establish Kodak as a company representing globalization and the future.

Kodak took significant steps in the early 1960s to achieve their ambitious goals of globalization through rebranding as a company focused improve the convenience and quickness of photography through innovative technology. They worked to disassociate themselves from their previous brand of family and nostalgia and remembering the past through photos. While this strategy did help them ignite their global expansion, it did not prove to be sustainable. By the late 1960s, Kodak started refocusing back on families and nostalgia. The next chapter will explore why Kodak and JWT made this return back to past family values following such a significant shift away from this tradition.

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Chapter 3

A Return to Family: Kodak’s Response to Changes in the Late 1960s

According to historian Jeremy Suri, “The entire world shook in 1968.”¹ The world underwent major changes in 1968, and nations around the globe became increasingly divided between groups of established elites and groups of social activists.² 1968 was a year of political and social unrest in America and abroad, and photography played an important role in documenting this turbulent time. Some of the world’s most famous images were taken in 1968.³

² Ibid.
Whether it was the fight for civil rights in America, the brutality of the Vietnam war, or the first time man stepped foot on the moon, people began documenting and spreading awareness of major events through photographs.

As a result of these major changes to the world and photography, 1968 to the early 1970s became a period of reaction both in America and abroad. This chapter is about how Kodak and JWT reacted and chose to portray themselves during this turbulent time. I argue that Kodak and JWT viewed the changes starting in 1968 as chaotic and temporary, and as a result, chose to portray Kodak as a company that would remain a stable and reliable amongst the turmoil.

This strategy becomes clear through the dramatic reinterpretation of the Kodak Instamatic camera for the entirely new social, cultural, and political environment in the late 1960s. While they could have chosen student protests, political campaigns, or space and technology they chose family. Although it was not entirely the same representation of family that Kodak and JWT incorporated in their 1950s advertisements, Kodak advertisements featured families more from 1968 to 1970 than they had in the mid-1960s.

First, in order to understand how Kodak was forced to confront and respond to the fact that the 1960s are changing, this chapter will analyze the Kodak v. FIGHT controversy. Kodak had to deal with the turmoil and political changes in the late 1960s, and the Kodak v. FIGHT case is one of the most direct and public ways they do so. In addition, this chapter will show Kodak’s strategic response to the late 1960s through analysis of print advertisements from 1968 to 1970.

I. **The Eastman Kodak Company 1968 – 1970**

In 1968, the world of photography and filmmaking was also changing and quickly becoming more technologically advanced, leading to new business opportunities for Kodak. For
example, the development of RC (resin coated) paper in 1968 simplified the process for mass printing of pictures taken using Kodacolor film. Additionally, a new color reversal intermediate film was developed in 1968, allowing a faster moviemaking process with sharper and finer images on Kodak motion-picture film. Even with these advancements, the Kodak Instamatic camera remained one of the companies’ most successful products.

Kodak introduced two new still cameras to the Instamatic line in May of 1967 which combined all of the previous Instamatic features in a smaller and easier to handle design. The S10 market sold in the under $30 market and the S20 in the under $60. The Instamatic’s camera/film cartridge system designed to make personal photography quicker and easier worked so well that numerous competing camera companies began manufacturing cameras with a similar design. Despite the increased competition, the Kodak Instamatic dominated the amateur photography market for the decade after its introduction. Furthermore, Kodak planned in to introduce a restyled line of Instamatic cameras in September of 1968 to maintain this upward trend in consumer preferences for still cameras.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Kodak sold 70 million Instamatic cameras, and even more importantly, “it was estimated that while the average snaphooter exposed four rolls of film a year, Instamatic camera owners used eight.” In other words, not only did Kodak sell more Instamatic cameras, but as a result, they also sold more Kodak film. This success in both camera

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and film sales led Kodak to develop different editions of the Instamatic, such as the Pocket Instamatic camera in 1972 which created a trend favoring the production of more small reliable cameras.\textsuperscript{10} Additionally, Kodak’s advertising expenditure in 1968 was $17,700,000, more than a $3,000,000 increase from that of 1963 and 1964.\textsuperscript{11} In August of 1968, JWT focused its advertising for Kodak on Instamatic still and movie cameras, while noting that Polaroid, their most serious competitor, also increased their advertising dramatically to match that of Kodak’s.\textsuperscript{12}

The entirety of the 1968 JWT account summaries for the Eastman Kodak Company related to the domestic Consumer Markets Division focuses solely on the Instamatic, showing the importance of this camera to Kodak in the late 1960s. In addition to the Instamatic’s success in American consumer markets, the Kodak Rochester International Markets Division predicted a 20\% increase in sales for 1968 compared to those of 1967.\textsuperscript{13} Kodak and JWT’s advertising expenditure in their international division also increased by over $500,000 in 1963 to $1,141,661 in 1968. Clearly, in the late 1960s, Kodak and JWT remained committed to maintaining the Instamatic’s earlier success.

Although Kodak benefitted from Instamatic sales and remained dominant in the personal photography industry, the company was not exempt from responding to the broader political changes occurring in the world around them. Kodak, like every other company, had to make choices in the late 1960s beyond just what products they would sell or where. Especially as a global company, Kodak had to actively engage with and respond to political, social, and cultural changes in order to remain dominant in their industry. How would they confront civil rights

\textsuperscript{10} Douglas Collins, \textit{The Story of Kodak}, 309.
\textsuperscript{11} Account Summary Eastman Kodak Company (Consumer Markets Division), February 1968.
\textsuperscript{12} Account Summary Eastman Kodak Company (Consumer Markets Division), August 1968.
issues in America in their employment practices? Would they encourage student protests across college campuses with their marketing and advertising? Should they continue support the US Army efforts abroad through supplying film? These are just a couple of questions Kodak was forced to answer in the late 1960s.

II. Kodak v. FIGHT

One of the most high-profile ways instances in which Kodak had to respond to the changes happening around the world in the late 1960s was the Kodak v. FIGHT controversy. Even as Kodak expanded their dominance to a global market with the Instamatic’s success in the 1960s, the company remained deeply connected to the Rochester community in New York. Rochester was where the company was founded in 1880 and where Kodak most directly engaged with the intense changes of the late 1960s. Kodak v. FIGHT was more than just a symbolic issue in Kodak’s past. It is an important event that provides greater insight into how the changing world in the late 1960s effected the dynamic between a dominant global business and its local community. Kodak had to take engage with the late 1960s, but this scandal demonstrates how the company was weary and cautious with their engagement. The company did not take a strong stance in a contentious debate. It did not want to align themselves with something controversial, a strategy which is later mirrored in their advertisements which return to a familiar past and hopes to represent stability amongst chaos.

Kodak v. FIGHT was one of the first major scandals of its kind, pitting a major global corporation with successful sales and a reputation for social responsibility against a small, local community activist group, Kodak v. FIGHT.14 FIGHT (Freedom-Integration-God-Honor-Today) was founded in 1964 in response to race riots in Rochester as a combination of inner-city

religious and community groups which shared the common goal of speaking as a collective voice for the black poor people in Rochester.\textsuperscript{15} In its first year, FIGHT recruited more than 1,000 inner-city organizations and proved its commitment to supporting Rochester’s poor by confronting slumlords to demand improvements to housing options, protesting urban renewal plans that would leave many of Rochester’s poor homeless, and implementing a civil service exam training program with $65,000 of funding from the office of Economic Opportunity.\textsuperscript{16}

FIGHT was known for its aggressive and confrontational tactics, and in the late 1960s it used these tactics in a debate with Kodak lasting ten months in which it demanded Kodak implement a new, large-scale training and employment program to aid the city’s poor population.\textsuperscript{17} Although, employment in the black community had increased since 1960, as the population also increased, this increase meant “the city [was] almost a boom town, but not for the black man.”\textsuperscript{18} Fighting against the affluent whites in their community, Rochester’s black community viewed benefitting from these employment opportunities as an unattainable dream. Therefore, the choice to target Kodak was a deliberate one. Kodak acted as “a symbol of prosperous, philanthropic Rochester and challenging the company promised potential for serious improvement to Rochester’s problems of urban unemployment and poverty while also securing FIGHT’s political legitimacy.\textsuperscript{19}

The first meeting between Kodak and FIGHT took place on September 2, 1966 at the Eastman Kodak Headquarters. Minister Florence entered the building “wearing a black power button in his lapel and flanked by fifteen of his associates” demanding, “I want to see the top

\textsuperscript{18} Prakash Sethi, \textit{Business Corporations and the Black Man}, 15.
man.” At their second meeting about two weeks later, Florence proposed to Kodak’s Chairman William S. Vaughn that Kodak hire 600 unemployed individuals from Rochester over the following 18 months that FIGHT would recruit and offer counseling and assistance if needed. FIGHT even acknowledged in this proposal that these individuals would be “largely unemployable by any normal industrial standards and would require extensive motivation and remedial education in reading and arithmetic as well as job training.” Kodak denied this proposal on the grounds that they could not work exclusively with any one organization in their recruiting and hiring process and that they were already in a similar manner with other local organizations representing minority groups such as the Urban League, the Monroe County Human Relations Commission, and the New York State Employment Service to name a few. Additionally, they did not want to commit to the hiring process and timeline that FIGHT proposed because they claimed their employment varied constantly depending on demand for products and larger economic factors. Vaughn did not agree to FIGHT’s demands but did acknowledge the importance of FIGHT’s concern and agreed to continue discussions with the organization.

After four months of meetings and correspondence, FIGHT stopped discussions with Kodak and turned instead to slandering Kodak through a campaign in local news media and threatening “dire consequences for peace of the city and other ghettos all over America.” As a result, Kodak Vice President John Mulder stepped in with hopes of bringing better negotiations with FIGHT. Mulder knew the chairman of FIGHT’s jobs committee through his own church

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
group, and in December Vaughn appointed Mulder to take over the responsibility of representing Kodak.\textsuperscript{24} Despite this new and more hopeful atmosphere, Kodak was still hesitant to agree completely to FIGHT’s demands. Still, Florence and Mulder signed an agreement on December 20, 1966 in which “Kodak agreed to the following: join with FIGHT in a firm agreement to

A. Continue semi-monthly meetings between Kodak and FIGHT to increase the effectiveness of the program.

B. Kodak will familiarize FIGHT counselors with the foremen and work skills required, and in turn FIGHT will familiarize Kodak foremen with life and environment of poor people

C. Kodak and FIGHT will share information on the referrals.

D. Kodak and FIGHT will issue a 60-day community progress report.”\textsuperscript{25}

After two days of debate amongst Kodak’s board of directors, Kodak published a press release on December 22, 1966 nullifying the agreement on the grounds that “no authorization to sign any agreement was given.”\textsuperscript{26} Florence was infuriated and held a rally which 150 religious leaders of a variety of faiths attended to voice their disagreement with and distrust of Kodak. As a result, Kodak spent [time] in attempts to rebuild it’s positive public image through local advertisements in the Rochester daily newspapers and on a much larger scale in reports from major newspapers such as the \textit{New York Times}, the \textit{Washington Post}, and the \textit{New Republic}.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{25} Prakash Sethi, \textit{Business Corporations and the Black Man}, 32.  
The public’s backlash and unfavorable response to the scandal was an issue that Kodak would have to continually deal with even years after the height of tensions in 1966.

This scandal and Kodak’s response is extremely important in understanding Kodak’s interaction with changes in the late 1960s. Even though the majority of debates between Kodak and FIGHT took place before 1968, they still show how Kodak was forced to make tough decisions during a changing time and engage with political and social and unrest. Kodak was not confident in the best way to do so and there was a great deal of disagreement within the company on how to respond to FIGHT’s demands. Ultimately, Kodak wanted to avoid the chaos of the late 1960s and was hesitant to take a firm stance with or against FIGHT. While this was an opportunity to work with the Rochester community towards reaching a common goal, the company’s concern over public image prevented them from bringing real positive change.

James Farmer, one of the most prominent figures of the Civil Rights Movement and co-founder of the civil rights group the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) which organized nonviolent protests throughout the 1960s, warns American businesses from making decisions like Kodak did with FIGHT. He brings up Langston Hughes question, “to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun…or does it explode?” in the forward to Business Corporations and the Black Man, claiming it is up to America’s institutions of power to respond to “the demands of the powerless for shared power – politically, economically, institutionally.”

Kodak shied away from the demands of the powerless, too afraid of the potential repercussions during such a tumultuous time in history.

III. Family Focused: Kodak Advertising and Marketing Plans in the Late 1960s

Kodak’s weariness of engaging with the controversial changes of the late 1960s exhibited in the Kodak v. FIGHT scandal can also be seen in Kodak’s advertisements from this period. Kodak could have chosen to strategically associate itself with any of the more controversial aspects of the late 1960s. For instance, Kodak could have advertised their cameras in combination with support for student protests, certain political campaigns, or the Civil Rights Movement. Rather than doing so, Kodak chose the more cautious option of focusing on family and youth in their advertisements in the late 1960s. Analysis of account summaries as well as advertisements and marketing campaigns from the years immediately following Kodak v. FIGHT show how Kodak’s goal was to emphasize family and youth in reaction to the turmoil of the late 1960s.

Since JWT obtained Kodak as a client, the agency kept annual confidential account summaries detailing important information related to Kodak such as overall market trends, product variations, distribution methods, advertising and marketing strategies, and account personnel. There were few changes to these account summaries from 1960 through 1967. In fact, the account summaries from 1960 through 1967 match each other almost verbatim. For example, since the beginning on the 1960s, a section titled “Advertising Summary” which listed the “Strategic Goals, Targets, Creative and Media Approaches” for the products Kodak was selling at the time, stated that for Instamatic still cameras, “The creative approach [was] to present simplicity, low cost and sure results as a reason to buy.” Kodak sold Instamatic cameras using this technique in countries around the globe including America, “eleven in Europe, all in Latin America and more than half of the in Africa, the Near and Far East.”

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advertising programs did technically cover Australia, Canada, France, Germany and the United company. Kodak had manufacturing subsidiaries in all of these countries that advertised the Instamatic cameras through their own advertising operations completely independent from Rochester. Kodak and JWT stayed consistent with their approach to relying on convenience and ease of use to sell the Kodak Instamatic against their main competitors including Polaroid in America and Agfa, Ferrania, Perutz, and Ansco internationally.30

While Kodak and JWT wanted to highlight the same features of the Instamatic cameras, namely the convenience and ease of use, starting in 1968 with the changing politically environment, they also wanted to take a more targeted approach to their marketing. Print and television advertisements from the early 1960s were primarily focused on the American family. With the launch of the Instamatic in 1963, Kodak began taking a more modern and technology focused approach to their advertisements. In 1968, along with the changes rising political tensions and conservatism, Kodak returned back to a strategy more similar to their earlier, family-based approach.

Despite the consistency in overall approach, there were other major changes to Kodak and JWT’s marketing strategy for the Instamatic. Some of the first major changes to these account summaries, and therefore Kodak’s planning for engaging with consumers and selling their products began in 1968. Starting in 1968, JWT began noting that “youth and women are two markets that Kodak will increasingly develop into a new market” under the “Future Opportunities” section in the Eastman Kodak Company Account Summaries for the Consumer Market Division. JWT included this note in all of the account summaries for the following years through 1970. In the 1950s and early 1960s, youth and women represented important

components which supported their ideal of a white, middle class and heteronormative family in advertisements. Although they did not plan to return to the exact same advertising strategy as in previous years, Kodak and JWT’s still viewed focusing on youth and family as the safest and most promising strategy.

In addition to these account summaries seen only by Kodak and JWT executives, JWT internally circulated and produced a company newsletter which documented important account information on accounts, clients, and JWT staff. In a newsletter from October of 1969, JWT published an article on a Kodak campaign targeting college students. The article opened with a question: “How do you talk business to the college youth today, face with the revolutionary changes on campus and ever-widening generation gap?”

Claiming that the youth on college campuses represents future consumers and picture-takers, JWT and Kodak strategy was to highlight the necessity of taking pictures of these youth before quickly approaching adulthood. Whether it was through involvement in student protests or the social rowdiness of sororities and fraternities, college was an exciting and rebellious time for much of America’s youth in the 1960s. Kodak and JWT did not want these aspects to be the focus of their advertisements. These advertisements purposefully depoliticized America’s youth at the time and pushed the message that the excitement and rebelliousness of America’s youth was quickly fleeting, so take a picture using a Kodak camera before it’s too late. Rather than engaging with the changes of the late 1960s by taking a firm stance and acknowledging their legitimacy, Kodak and JWT treat the changes as if they are just a phase which will come and go.

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The advertisements from this campaign included in the newsletter exhibited Kodak and JWT’s dismissal of the rebellious nature of youths in the 1960s and therefore dismissal of larger political issues. For instance, “Take Gene before he goes from fraternity to paternity” conveyed the idea that the rebellious stage in the lives of the youth of the late 1960s was so temporary that it needed to be captured now before it was too late. Not only did it assume that this stage in the lives of America’s youth was temporary, it assumed that the next step for male youth was paternity. Kodak relied on family, something that was familiar and safe for the company according to its past, to advertise during a time of unfamiliar and potentially threatening changes in the world. Additionally, the overall style of the advertisement was much more traditional than many Kodak advertisements from the mid-1960s. The image of Gene purposely portrayed a specific image of the typical college youth. It did not show him at a party or participating in one of the many student protests. Instead, it showed Gene conservatively dressed and holding books in his hands, showing that although much of the youth was going through a rebellious phase, they would soon transition into a more conservative future.

32 Ibid.
Similarly, the “Take Carol before she goes from ΔΣΔ to PTA” and “Take Penny before suburbia takes her” advertisements acknowledged the rebellious phase of young women in the late 1960s, but presumed that following college, they would adopt a life of family and suburbia. Carol may have been in a sorority at the time, but according to the advertisement, that will soon be a distant photo memory. Additionally, the style of this advertisement was also much more conservative. Even though the advertisement showed Carol making a funny, playful face, it did not rely on sex appeal to gain viewers interest in a product, a strategy that was commonly used in advertisements featuring women in the 1960s. Kodak is confronted with the challenge of selling the same products they sold in previous years in a different and rapidly changing world. These advertisements showed their weariness of these changes and desire to return to a dynamic surrounding a certain family ideal which they viewed as stable. Although the advertisements did
not focus on solely white families like in the late 1950s, they still supported a middle class, heteronormative, and conservative ideal.

Other Kodak domestic advertisement campaigns from the late 1960s emphasized a certain ideal from American youth. Unlike the college campus campaign, which acknowledged rebelliousness of American youth in the late 1960s, the advertisements above which were featured in Reader’s Digest only portray America’s youth in a very care-free and even complacent light. There is no mention of the protests or outrage over America’s involvement in the war in Vietnam which concerned much of America’s youth in the late 1960s. Kodak did want to portray itself as a company connected with the negative aspects of the late 1960s. Like
its reaction to FIGHT’s demands in the same year these advertisements were published, Kodak was hesitant to engage with the broader social and political changes of the time. Kodak resorted portraying itself as a stable and reliable company tied to wholesome American families as it had been for years since its founding.

Kodak and JWT’s view of the changes in 1968 as chaotic and temporary and their strategy of portraying Kodak as a company that would remain stable and consistent amongst the turmoil is also portrayed in Kodak’s international advertisements. One example comes from Kodak’s Asia/Pacific consumer international advertisements collection.33

![Print advertisements from the Eastman Kodak 1961, 1964-1967 Consumer International Asia/Pacific Print Advertisements Collection.](image)

33 Kodak Instamatic Print Advertisement, Consumer International Asia/Pacific Print Advertisements Collection, Box AP1, Eastman Kodak 1961, 1964-1967 Consumer International Asia/Pacific Folder, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.
This print advertisement was displayed in issues of the *Reader’s Digest* magazine throughout Asia. Following Kodak and JWT’s marketing strategy in response to the late 1960s, in America, these international print advertisements were also centered around family and creating memories of youth. The copy on the right side of the advertisement remains almost identical to that of advertisements from the early 1960s. It stressed that the Kodak Instamatic made quality picture taking as easy as possible. The subjects of the advertisement were the most important change to note when comparing this advertisement to earlier Instamatic advertisements. In the early 1960s when the Instamatic was first released, Kodak’s advertisements typically featured one, typically young individual using the camera and did not show the subject of his or her picture taking.

On the other hand, this advertisement from the later 1960s featured a conservatively dressed father and mother taking a picture of their young son. This change stressed the idea that people everywhere should use Kodak cameras to document their family and youth while they can. Even though it aimed to sell the same product with the same technology and features, Kodak and JWT targeted a new audience and gave the product a new relevance related to youth and families in response to greater political and social changes during the time. Similar to Kodak’s outlook on advertising abroad from earlier in the 1960s, Kodak viewed its domestic strategies as transferrable around the world. The company developed a strategy relying on its tradition and connection to affluent and heteronormative American family life and youth and believed it to be a strategy which should also be applied to sell to consumers abroad.
Both print advertisements, published in Reader’s Digest Far East in 1967 and Reader’s Digest Chinese also relied on family to sell the Instamatic Movie Camera and Kodak film. The caption “I want to remember this moment” conveys the idea that in a year when there is a lot of political and social unrest in the world, moments of stable family life are the ones that should be remembered. It is important to note that in both of the advertisements the father is the one using the camera.JWT stated in the Kodak Account Summaries that they viewed youth and children as the most promising future opportunities, yet neither advertisement displays women or youth using the camera. In creating the father as the user of the camera and the children and wife as the subjects of his photo, the advertisement subtly reinforces a the white, heteronormative, middle class ideal portrayed in Kodak advertisements in the 1950s and early 1960s. Kodak and JWT had
to make changes amongst the changes and unrest of the late 1960s and these changes reshaped but still reinforced Kodak’s idea of family. Ultimately, Kodak and JWT shied away from the monumental changes of the time and advertised using their idea of the stable family and “good life.”

In addition, a multiple page spread in *J. Walter Thompson Company News* on December 17, 1968 detailed another international campaign in which Kodak and JWT returned to their strategy of relying on family to sell Instamatic cameras. This campaign was the 1968 Gift Season campaign created by the Kodak International account, creative and production group headquartered in Kodak’s New York office. The Give a Gift of Memories campaign was “the largest single worldwide promotion on behalf of Kodak cameras and projectors since the introduction of the Kodak Instamatic Camera in 1963.”

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The advertisements from the campaign were displayed in November issues of Reader’s Digest International and Life International but featured the same image of a white father and mother giving their son a gift with copy which read, “Give a Gift of Memories…From Kodak.” It did not matter which country the advertisement was displayed in, it always featured the same family with the only change being the copy translated into the language of that country. This problematic targeting of consumers around the globe using the same image of a white family was a by-product of the companies attempt at a more cohesive international marketing effort. The February 1968 Account Summary for the International Markets Division stated that there was a “lack of adequate coordination among product, planning, marketing, and advertising functions” and that the “long term and strategic marketing objectives” were Kodak to have “a one-world coordinated marketing effort.” There was still more diversity in domestic and international advertisements for the Instamatic, but as one of the first attempts at this more coordinated marketing effort, the Give a Gift campaign failed to also represent a more diverse consumer base. In failing to present diversity, Kodak also conveyed the message that the family ideal valued by white, middle-class America, should be valued in the same way around the globe.

In addition the print advertisements, Kodak and JWT also partnered with the Associated Dry Goods Corporation to create in-store and window displays promoting children’s sleepwear. The 1968 theme of the displays encouraged consumers to use a Kodak Instamatic to take pictures of their children wearing Jolly Mouse sleepwear. This partnership and incorporation of the displays into the campaign exemplified Kodak’s strategy to rely on youth and families to sell their products in America and abroad. Even though the world was changing dramatically, Kodak

35 Ibid.
36 Account Summary Eastman Kodak Company (Consumer Markets Division), February 1968.
38 Ibid.
wanted to distance itself and maintain its image as a stable and reliable company through its connection to family.

Clearly, the world underwent many changes in the late 1960s that Kodak as a dominating global company had to address in both its business practices and relationship to the Rochester community as well as in domestic and global advertisements. Amongst these changes, Kodak and JWT ultimately decided to return to its roots. The first way it did so was by responding to backlash from the Rochester community and reaffirming its dedication to helping minority groups, people which were not present in many of its advertisements in previous decades. Furthermore, Kodak returned to advertising families, but not the exact same family ideal and target consumer as it had in previous decades. With this strategy, Kodak and JWT hoped to maintain a reputation of stability and avoid conflict in the late 1960s.
Conclusion

Since its founding, Kodak established itself as one of the leading companies in the photography industry. It was a company committed to innovation and technological advancement that maintained its dominant position in the industry throughout most of the 20th century. From 1950 to 1970, photography was rapidly evolving. With the help of Kodak and the Instamatic camera, photography quickly spread around the world, becoming accessible to more than just industry professionals.

Despite the many years of Kodak’s success, we are no longer living in a “Kodak moment.” Consumers around the world may still recognize the Kodak name and famous yellow logo, but the company struggles to gain the same overwhelming success as it did previously. Photography has come to mean something very different than what Kodak envisioned. Even though consumers are surrounded by photography in the present day, it is far less common for people to take staged family portraits as they used to. After years of struggling to adapt to the rapidly changing industry, Kodak filed for bankruptcy in 2012.\(^\text{39}\) Kodak is no longer the pioneering leader that it once was.

What factors contributed to the downfall of Kodak in more recent decades? How did Kodak go from inventing the first digital cameras in 1975 to a company struggling to remain relevant in a digital world? Several economists and business schools have studied this question. One commonly proposed answer is that Kodak was unwilling to innovate in the way it needed to, for Kodak was unwilling to let go of its unprofitable reliance on selling film. Another reason is that Kodak now has more competitors. Not only is Kodak competing against other major

photography companies, such as Fujifilm, they are also competing against different manufacturers, printing services, and most importantly smartphones.40

These proposed answers may be the case, but thesis suggests another reason and one that is historical. Throughout its history, Kodak attempted to address social and political changes. From its start, Kodak did so while also establishing a strong connection to family. As its social-political environment changed in the 1960s, Kodak abandoned its connection to family. Much of the world during this time was captivated by major advancements in science and technology while media and popular culture reflected a new interest in a more hip and modern style. Kodak wanted to keep up with these changes and experimented with being on the scientific vanguard. As the world was undergoing changes in the late 1960s, many of which were described as madness or chaos, Kodak pulled back. Kodak returned once again to relying on their previous and safe strategy of advertising to families to sell cameras.

Although advertising families was a common theme among several camera companies, Kodak’s hesitation to leave its past reliance on this strategy is especially clear in its television commercials from the 1980s and 1990s. More than twenty years after their return to advertising

Kodak Kodacolor Gold 100 commercial (1990)

family nostalgia in the late 1960s, Kodak advertisements retained this theme. For example, a Kodak Kodacolor Gold 100 advertisement from 1990 relies solely on family. Focusing on a family adopting a young boy, Kodak attempted to be progressive with their idea of “New Family” without completely letting go of the past. Likewise, a commercial titled “Daddy’s Little Girl” from 1989 relies again on advertising family nostalgia by showing a father reminiscing about his daughter’s childhood while dancing with her at her wedding. In the 1980s and 1990s, this strategy was outdated. Kodak did not adapt and change its approach to keep up with a more digital world. Unwilling to change its marketing strategy of advertising family nostalgia Kodak contributed to its own eventual downfall.

Meanwhile, competing companies like Canon, Fujifilm, and Polaroid pushed the envelope. Some of these companies advertisements included families, for there was always a consumer appeal to family photography, even to this day. However, these companies highlighted more of the new and different ways to use photography. For instance, a Canon camera

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commercial from 1980 emphasized how technologically advanced yet easy to use the Canon camera was to use by showing users taking pictures of a ski race. Additionally, Polaroid often featured celebrities in commercials, such as Sinbad in the 1990s, to sell its Polaroid Captiva camera. Both of these examples show how Kodak’s competitors were experimenting more with new ways to advertise cameras in addition to the outdated strategy of advertising family nostalgia.

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My thesis suggests that Kodak’s more recent failure to be on the vanguard of the digital revolution in photography is a result of how the company positioned itself in the important 1960s. By relying so heavily on advertising family Nostalgia Kodak remained stuck in the past while the world of photography was rapidly changing. From 1950-1970, Kodak and JWT strengthened Kodak’s method of advertising family nostalgia. Through this we find one explanation for the company’s downfall and also learn how Kodak understood its place in society and the lives of consumers during its efforts to expand its company and personal photography around the world. Kodak’s goal was for consumers both in America and abroad to incorporate the Kodak brand and products into the most deeply personal aspects of their daily lives. Kodak wanted consumers to understand personal photography as necessary to their lives, specifically in regards to documenting family life. The Kodak Instamatic was the tool for this expansion and integration into consumers lives.

The Kodak Instamatic and its advertisements created by JWT allowed Kodak to respond to its changing social-political environment and push for the spread of personal photography around the globe. While developing personal photography around family life helped Kodak reach more consumers and spread personal photography around the globe, a success which it did not maintain. Kodak continually pushed for this expansion and innovation, but they were not ready to keep up with these changes. By studying Kodak’s unwillingness to let go of its connection to family life, we can understand one historical reason for the downfall of this pioneering company in the expansion of personal photography.
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