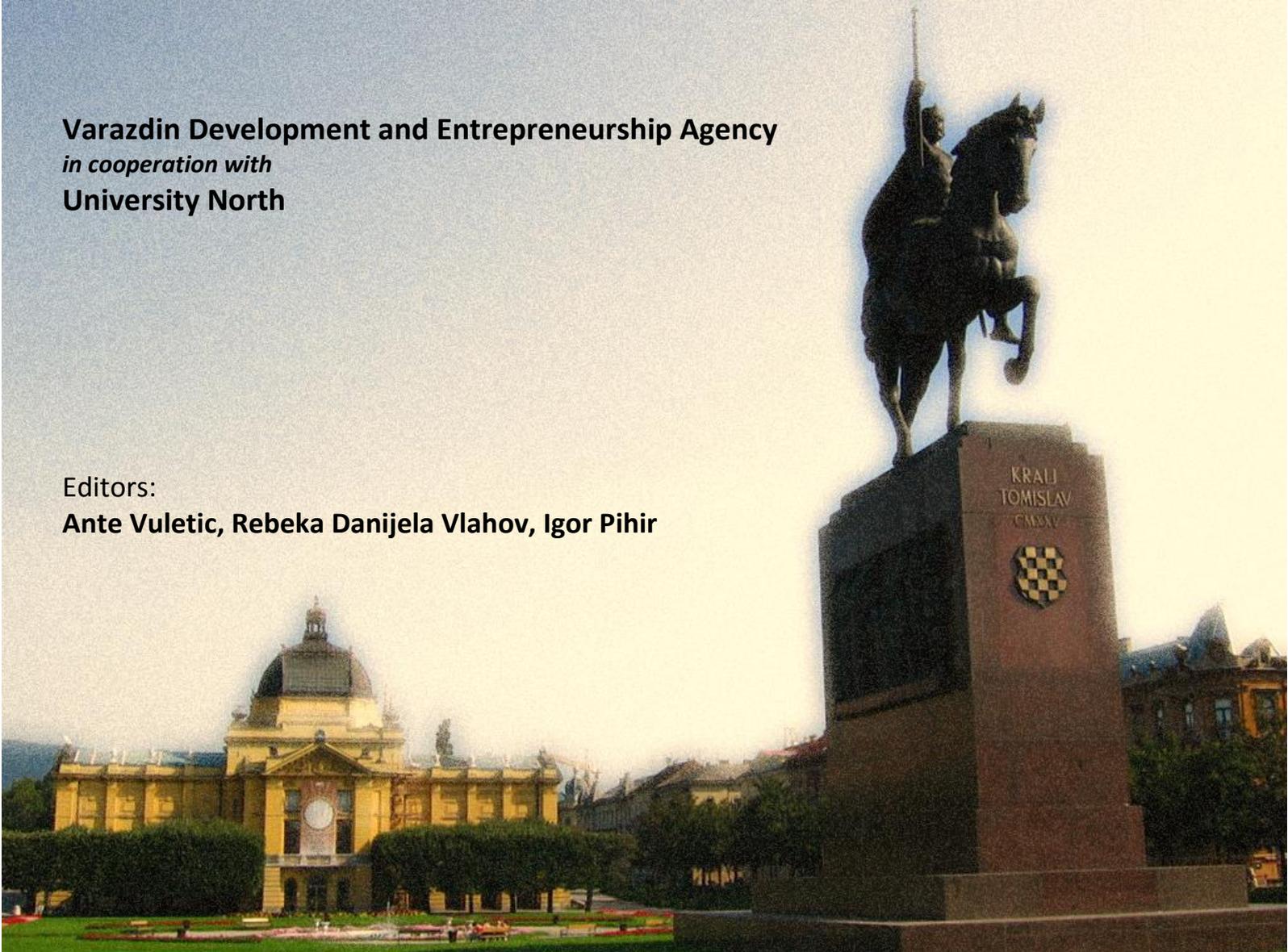


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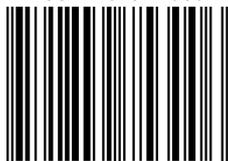
## **Economic and Social Development**

11th International Scientific Conference on Economic  
and Social Development – Building Resilient Society



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## **BLACK MIRROR – THE PORTRAYAL OF ADVERTISING PROFESSIONALS IN HOLLYWOOD MOVIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The use of movies is a neglected tool in communication education, although there are a large number of motion pictures that feature professionals who work in advertising, marketing, or public relations, and these movies could be used excellently as illustrations in classrooms.*

*At the same time it is a fact that movies often stereotype these professions; furthermore, in the majority of cases, they depict them negatively. This, however, is probably just the result of the negative public image of the advertising industry in general, and movie makers' efforts to create portrayals that are as dramatic as possible.*

*In this study we examine how 27 films depict the marketing and communications profession, with special regard to the characters' personalities, clothes, appearance, family status, attitude to work and harmful habits.*

*As the results of the study suggest, we could state that people in advertising are workaholic lying males with chaotic private lives and harmful habits.*

*But how much of this statement is true? It would be easy to say 'none of it', but interviews conducted with Hungarian creative professionals have proven that half of it is actually true. At the end of the article we will see which half it is.*

**Keywords:** *Advertising and PR professionals, Public image, Portrayal in movies, Communication education*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Advertising (or, in a broader sense, the marketing and communications profession) has inspired several directors to cinematize the profession and its image. The earliest of these, *Gentlemen of the Press*, was made in 1929 and similar works have been produced ever since, almost every year (work.colum.edu, 2011). Turner Classic Movies has compiled a list of American movies, series and documentaries whose content is somehow related to advertising industry. The database includes 349 films. (Bátorfy - Hatala, 2010)

But what is this portrayal like? And how similar is it to reality? In this study we aim to answer these questions through the analysis of 27 movies and in-depth interviews conducted with Hungarian advertising professionals.

### **2. IMAGE: ADVERTISING AS DEPICTED IN MOVIES**

#### **2.1. Advertising people lie by their own admission**

In the examined movies the main characters themselves admit that they lie. For example, the following conversation happens in the series *Mad Men* about Don Draper, the main character (*Mad Men – Babylon*. 1/6. 2007, directed by Matthew Weiner):

*"- Don's in advertising.*

*- No way. Madison Avenue? What a gas.*

- *We all have to serve somebody.*
- *Perpetuating the lie. How do you sleep at night?*
- *On a bed made of money.*”

In the political satire *Wag the Dog* they even declare war just to divert attention from the sex scandal of the President. But even in this case, they have the conversations (*Wag the Dog*, 1997. directed by Barry Levinson):

- ”- *You want me to produce your war?*
  - *Not a war. It's a pageant. We need a theme, a song, some visuals. It's a pageant.*”
- and
- ”- *Yeah, but our guy did bring peace.*
  - *There was never a war.*
  - *All the greater accomplishment.*”

In the movie *The Kid*, Russ Duritz makes a living by telling people what changes they should make to become compelling. He advises them on how to talk, dress, or put on makeup, what social circles to move in, where to shop – he basically interferes in the smallest details of their lives. As his childhood self, Rusty explains: *”You help people lie about who they really are... so that they can pretend to be someone else, right?”* (*The Kid*, 2000, directed by Jon Turteltaub)

In the comedy *A Crazy People* the main character, a copywriter goes as far as to say that people deserve being told the truth in advertisements. (*Crazy People*, 1990, directed by Tony Bill)

- ”- *Let's not lie, Steve. Let's level with America.*
- *We can't level, you crazy bastard. We're in advertising.*”

Even so, truth-telling advertisements go public:

- *”Buy Volvos. [...] This is not a smart time to be sexy anyway [...] Be safe instead of sexy.”*
- *”The French can be annoying. Come to Greece. We're nicer.”*
- *”Jaguar. Sleek and smart. For men who'd like hand-jobs from beautiful women they hardly know.”*
- *”Metamucil: It helps you go to the toilet. If you don't use it, you'll get cancer and die. Yes! I want to go to the toilet.”*
- *”Vitaflex. Stop pretending. If you look like this, you're fat. In fact, you're a fat slob. Admit it. Do something about it. Want to stop sweating on cool days? Get to a phone. Call Vita Flex now. We'll send you a free plant. A free plant for fat slobs.”*
- *”If you're risking cancer, shouldn't your cigarette deliver real flavour? Shouldn't something that might make you die taste great?”*
- *”Come to New York – There were fewer murders last year.”*
- *”Sony. Because Caucasians are just too damn tall.”*

Picture 1: An honest advertisement: *”United – Most of our passengers get there alive.”*



Source: *Crazy People* (1990, directed by Tony Bill)

## 2.2. The majority of creative professionals are males

As the summary table shows, the films analysed feature characters that are almost all males, as if only males are employed in marketing, advertising and public relations. The rare exceptions include Samantha Jones, public relations manager in *Sex and the City*.

## 2.3. Advertising professionals go to work in suits

With a few exceptions, movies feature advertising professionals wearing suits. Just as in the case of office jobs generally, we can say that if you work in advertising, it does matter what clothes you take out of the closet in the morning. A suit lends the wearer a sense of confidence and seriousness, and serves as an expression of respect. Their colours are usually grey, black, or dark blue. It is a typical scene in such movies that characters wearing suits lean back in leather armchairs and immerse in thoughts. In order to illustrate this, we have compiled the montage below.

*Picture 2: Typical advertising professionals: in suits and leather armchairs. Left to right: Nick Naylor, Don Draper, Ted Kramer, Nelson Moss, Dan Foreman, Nick Marshall*



Source: *Thank You for Smoking* (2005, directed by Jason Reitman), *Mad Men* (2007, directed by Matthew Weiner), *Kramer vs. Kramer* (1979, directed by Robert Benton), *Sweet November* (2001, directed by Pat O'Connor), *In Good Company* (2004, directed by Paul Weitz), *What Women Want* (2000, directed by Nancy Meyers).

In movies neckties are standard accessories of suits. In the 3D movie *The Smurfs* the little creatures arriving from their village wonder what this garment is good for (*The Smurfs*, 2011, directed by Raja Gosnell):

- "- *Someone looks smurfalish!*
- *Why you wearing a leash?*
- *It's a tie.*
- *Does it keep your neck warm?*
- *No.*
- *Clearly, it functions as an aid in his craft, like a blacksmith's apron.*
- *I wear it because it's what everyone wears at work.*"

The brand and price of a necktie are just as determinant as in the case of a suit. In the movie *The Hucksters* we can eyewitness and hear how such a necktie is purchased (*The Hucksters*, 1947, directed by Jack Conway):

- "- *Anything?*

- *I want a very sincere necktie.*
- *I beg your pardon?*
- *I want something that makes me seem sincere.*
- ???
- *You know, honest; genuine; upright; trustworthy.*
- *Well... um, here's a handpainted one in four colors; at 35 dollars. Is that sincere enough?*
- *I think, my friend, any more sincerity would be downright foolhardy."*

Brands have a very significant role in pointing out the differences between people with and without suits. Customized, tailor-made, expensive clothes suggest that the person wearing them is extremely talented in his work and makes so much money out of successful businesses that he can afford such luxury.

In the movie „Kramer vs. Kramer” the following conversation takes place (Kramer vs. Kramer, 1979, directed by: Robert Benton)

*"- They're going to make me an assistant art director.*

*- You get yourself a Burberry coat. If you're gonna be Madison Avenue, you have to look it."*

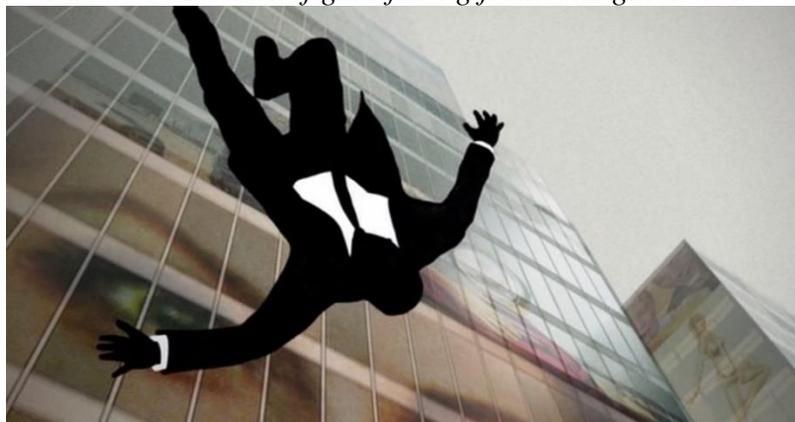
Looks can also be used as a tool of deception. As PR manager Stue Shepard says in the movie Phone Booth (Phone Booth, 2002, directed by Joel Schumacher) *"I wear all this Italian shit because underneath, I still feel like the Bronx. I think I need these clothes, and this watch. My \$2000 watch is a fake, and so am I. I neglected the things I should've valued most. I valued this shit. [...] I mean, I work so hard on this image, on Stu Shepard, the asshole... who refers to himself in third person, that I only proved I should be alone. I've been dressing up as something I'm not for so long... I'm so afraid you won't like what's underneath. But here I am. I'm just flesh and blood and weakness."*

Or, as the sports agent PR professional of the movie Jerry Maguire grumbles: *"Who had I become? Just another shark in a suit?"* (Jerry Maguire, 1996, directed by Cameron Crowe)

The link between looks and work is perfectly characterized by the short introduction (title sequence) appearing at the beginning Mad Men episodes. (Mad Men, title sequence. 2007, directed by Weiner, Matthew)

A black, faceless silhouette wearing a suit enters the office and puts down his briefcase. All of a sudden the room slides apart, falls into pieces, and the next moment our protagonist is falling down from the window of a tall building. There are advertisements of consumer goods all around him, all creating an illusion of the American dream: charming housewives, pretty spouses, wedding rings, happy families. However though, the overall picture is very depressing. The falling represents insecurity and uneasiness, but he does not hit the asphalt. There is a swift cut, and the dark figure is seen in a safe environment, sitting in a leather armchair, smoking – he is waiting for the start of the new episode together with us. (Tranzit.blog.hu 2011)

*Picture 3: Faceless figure falling from a height in a suit*



Source: Weiner, Matthew (director): Mad Men. 2007

Following from the above, we can state that suits do not only play a functional role. Pressed trousers, varnished shoes, cuff links and tiepins all suggest balance and composure, although according to the movies these people are anxious and extremely busy, often impatient and nervous. They live for their work and find little time to relax.

#### **2.4. Creatives are obsessed workaholics**

All advertising professionals appearing in the examined movies are obsessed workaholics. They devote all their attention to their current assignment. If necessary, they even take notes on a napkin during dinner. They are not afraid of challenge and immerse in the topic. They test the product, read the book, and seek consumers' opinion. Usually they do not go to work early, but they stay in the office late as well. Their work space covers more than the office area. Depending on the expectations and wishes of the client they spend their evenings in restaurants, theatres, clubs or striptease bars in order to get their trust. As the father of Pete Campbell, a character in *Mad Men* exclaims: *"I run into you at the club, you're working. At a restaurant, you're working. Taking people to dinner, wining and whoring? That's not a job for a white man."* (*Mad Men* – New Amsterdam. 1/4. 2007, directed by Weiner, Matthew)

The movie *"Sweet November"* features a similar scene. Nelson Moss' girlfriend tries to convince him this way (*Sweet November*, 2001, directed by: O'Connor, Pat):

*"-You know, there are people who don't work 24 hours a day.*

*- I have a life, Angelica. And I'm late for it."*

Movies suggest that marketing, advertisement and PR professionals are always in a race with time. They complete all their jobs to a tight deadline. Their schedule is loaded with meetings, conferences and discussions, and all their moments are busy. This telephone conversation could be heard in the movie *"Thank You for Smoking"* (2005, directed by Jason Reitman):

*"-You still at the office?*

*- Do you know what time it is in Tokyo right now?*

*- No.*

*- 4:00 P.M. tomorrow. It's the future, Nick. [...]*

*- Oh, that's London calling.*

*- Jeff, when do you sleep?*

*- Sunday."*

Eli Wurman in *"People I Know"* takes drugs and sleeping pills, he also smokes and drinks. His health is deteriorating. His looks reflect his state of mind – he has tousled hair, wrinkled clothes, and circles around his eyes. He hardly sleeps as he organizes and manages events day and night. (*People I Know*, 2002, directed by Daniel Algrant)

*"- I saw you last night working in the room. You looked ashen and miserable. Hustling.*

*- Well, I'm a PR guy, honey. That's what I do."*

Workaholism also means that professionals must try products and perform tests with them. This important rule was also clear to Nick Marshall in the comedy *"What Women Want"* (2000, directed by Nancy Meyers). As he leaves the office of his new boss with a box of women's stuff that need new creative concepts, he does not want to disappoint his boss, therefore he tests all of them – he cleans his face, polishes his nails and waxes his feet.

Nelson Moss gets into a similar situation in the movie *"Sweet November"* (2001, directed by Pat O'Connor). He knows that the thing to advertise is more than just a hot dog. He gets up with wordplays, develops visuals during the day, eats hot dog sausage for dinner, and does not stop for a moment.

Picture 4: Advertising professionals test the products being advertised, just as Nick Marshall did in "What Women Want"



Source: What Women Want (2000, directed by Nancy Meyers)

## 2.5. Creatives have a chaotic personal life

As we can see from the above, advertising professionals in these movies devote all their attention to work. They usually cannot afford the time for themselves, their families, wives, and children. Even if they can, they are anxious and work out their anger on family members. Their intense workaholicism and lack of time may be the reason for not being able to maintain a happy marriage. In the movie "Sweet November" Sara is mocking Nelson saying "No, you are a walking case study. Look at you. You're a workaholic at such an advanced stage that your intimacy skills have withered away to almost nothing. Left untreated you could become emotionally extinct." (Sweet November, 2001, directed by O'Connor Pat)

In the comedy "The Kid" Russ Duritz (Bruce Willis) has to face his childhood self (Spencer Breslin) to realize what he wanted to achieve when he was young and where he is now compared to that. A bachelor in his forties with an arrogant manner, being paid big bucks for advising insecure people on how to shape their image. "So, I'm 40, I'm not married, I don't fly jets, and I don't have a dog. I grow up to be a loser." (The Kid, 2000, directed by Jon Turteltaub)

The star of "What Women Want", Nick Marshall is characterized this way: "He'll send you on more errands than anyone in the entire company [...] He's the least politically correct guy in the universe. He's the king of all the T & A ads we do. You want babes in bikinis? He's your man." His mother was a bar dancer, which made him grow up among scantily dressed women with little scruples, providing an explanation for his job and dissolute lifestyle. Unlike his mother, he could not establish a close parental relationship with his child. His daughter does not even call him father; she just calls him by his first name as if they were strangers. His former wife is just about to wed her new fiancé. (What Women Want, 2000, directed by Nancy Meyers)

The reason why wives tend to leave their husbands is not only their excessive work – the infidelity of husbands also plays a significant role. In the thriller "Phone Booth" a sniper is punishing Stuart Shepard because his life has been based on lies. "You are guilty of inhumanity to your fellow man." The sniper forces him into a phone booth where he is giving him instructions. Shepard must not hang up the phone because his life is at stake. He is told to call his wife and lover, one after the other, and confess the truth – that he has only taken advantage of them and leading them on. (Phone Booth, 2002, directed by Joel Schumacher)

## 2.6. Creatives often live with addictions

"Jerry Maguire" touches alcohol in his disappointment after being fired. Graham Marshall, the main character of "A Shock to the System", drinks alcohol to gain strength to plan his actions. Nick Marshall also likes to pull a cork to find out "What Women Want"; not to mention Nick Naylor, who is the chief spokesman and vice-president of the Academy of Tobacco Studies in the movie "Thank You for Smoking".

Characters of „Mad Men”, a series presenting advertising in the sixties, light a cigarette every minute on average. Pete Campbell is the only one who does not smoke, but all others do. Even women do smoke – when they see their psychologist or gynecologist, or when they are in the kitchen, cooking or washing the dishes. Just everywhere. They do not even care if they are pregnant (Mad Smoke, 2010).

"- *You smoke.*

- *All the time. It's practically mandatory in our office.*" (Mad Men – Indian Summer. 1/11. 2007, directed by Matthew Weiner)

The excessive consumption of cigarettes is not the only characteristic of the movie... "Compared to them, the characters in Dallas are purely abstinent." (Baski, 2008)

"- *How many drinks do you have a day? Wine, cocktails, beer.*

- *Everything depends on the day.*

- *Days of plenty being Three.*

- *You're a high-powered businessman with a high-tension job. I'm trying to help you here.*

- *Five.*

- *And two packs a day, but you're cutting down.*" (Mad Men – For Those Who Think Young. 2/1. 2008, directed by Matthew, Weiner)

A glass of whiskey in the hands is one of the external characteristics that make these men feel like a man. Clothing, sipping, and motions of smoking are all the visuals of their profession. They are nonverbal signals that demonstrate their belonging to the group. "Now, my generation? We drink because it's good. Because it feels better than unbuttoning your collar. Because we deserve it. We drink because it's what men do." (Mad Men – New Amsterdam. 1/4. 2007, directed by Matthew Weiner). It is ironic that these statements are made by Roger Sterling, whose rough lifestyle results in two heart attacks some time later. They always find a reason for drinking. "Should we drink before the meeting or after? Or both?" (Mad Men – Smoke Gets in Your Eyes. 1/1. 2007, directed by Matthew, Weiner) Drinking is a solution to creative crises, and also the best thing to do if an assignment was successful (or it was a failure), they had a tough day, or they just do not have anything else to do. (Vulture: How to drink like a Mad Men, 2010)

*Picture 5: Roger Sterling and Don Draper in a bar*



Source: Mad Men - Six Month Leave. 2008. 2/9. (directed by Matthew Weiner)

Table 1: Marketing, advertising and PR characters in examined movies, their family status and addictions

Film Title	Role	Job	Advertised product/person	Family status	Does he/she smoke?	Does he/she consume alcohol?
Phone Booth	Stuart Shepard	publicist	musicians	unfaithful husband	✓	✓
The Hucksters	Victor Albee Norman	advertising professional	soap	single	✓	✓
The Kid	Russ Duritz	image consultant	anyone, depending on assignment	single	x	✓
America's Sweethearts	Lee Phillips	producer	actors and actresses	single	x	x
Wag The Dog	Conrad Brean	PR manager	the American President	not displayed in the film	x	x
Jersey Girl	Ollie Trinke	publicist	musicians	widower	✓	✓
All the President's Men	Claudia Jean Cregg	spokesperson	the American President	complicated	x	✓
Sweet November	Nelson Moss	advertising professional, creative	anything, depending on assignment; here: hot dog	left by girlfriend	x	✓
Criminal Minds	Jennifer Jareau	spokesperson	FBI	married	x	x
A Shock to the System	Graham Marshall	executive in an advertising company	not displayed in the film	widower (killed his wife)	✓	✓
Hancock	Ray Embrey	PR spokesperson	charity organisations, superhero	married	x	x
Door to Door	Bill Porter	door-to-door salesman	detergents	single	x	x
The Smurfs	Patrick Winslow	advertising professional, creative	cosmetics	married	x	x
People I Know	Eli Wurman	PR manager, publicist	actors and actresses	single	✓	✓
Jerry Maguire	Jerry Maguire	sports manager	sportsmen	left by girlfriend, then married	✓	✓
In Good Company	Dan Foreman	advertising executive, former head of sales	anything, depending on assignment	married	x	x
Thank You for Smoking	Carter Duryea	advertising executive, new head of sales	anything, depending on assignment	divorced	x	x
	Nick Naylor	spokesperson	cigarette	divorced	✓	✓
Kramer vs. Kramer	Ted Kramer	advertising executive	not displayed in the film	divorced	✓	✓
Crazy People	Emory Leeson	advertising executive	anything, depending on assignment	divorced	x	x

Mad Men	Don Draper	creative director	anything, depending on assignment	unfaithful husband, then divorced	✓	✓
	Roger Sterling	founder partner	anything, depending on assignment	unfaithful husband, then divorced	✓	✓
Melancholia	Pete Campbell	account executive	anything, depending on assignment	unfaithful husband	x	✓
	Justine	copywriter	not displayed in the film	left by husband after wedding	x	✓
What Women Want	Nick Marshall	advertising professional, creative	anything, depending on assignment	divorced	✓	✓
Edward Scissorhands On the Line	Peg Boggs	door-to-door saleswoman	cosmetics	married	x	x
	Kevin Gibbons	copywriter	anything, depending on assignment; here: shoes	single	x	✓
Love and Other Drugs Sex and the City	Jamie Randall	door-to-door salesman	medicines	single	x	x
	Samantha Jones	PR manager	anything, depending on assignment	single	x	✓
Perfect Stranger	Harrison Kill	advertising executive	anything, depending on assignment	unfaithful husband	x	✓

Source: Takács, Zsanett: Főszerepben a ("Advertising professionals as main characters"). Thesis paper. Budapest College of Communication and Business. Supervisor: Papp-Váry, Árpád)

## **2.7. The overall view as depicted in movies**

In the table above we have summarized the movies' characters in marketing and advertising roles, and the items they market or advertise. In addition we also listed the characters' family status and addictions. The table represents the results of our analysis of the movies.

All in all, we can summarize the results in a single sentence: according to the movies, people in advertising are workaholic lying males with chaotic private lives and harmful habits.

## **3. REALITY: ADVERTISING PROFESSION ACCORDING TO IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

The analysis of films was followed by the next phase of our research. We interviewed Hungarian advertising professionals about the same questions; that is, we found out to what extent the depictions of the movies match reality.

Our interviewees were (in alphabetical order):

- Melinda Becskereki, Copywriter, Tóth Avanti és Társai Discount Agency
- Vilmos Fekete, Creative Director, Leo Burnett Advertising Agency
- Gyula Kisantal, Creative Director, D'Arcy Avenue Advertising Agency
- Nóra Péter, Junior Account Manager, Morpho Communications (formerly copywriter at Ogilvy and Mather Advertising Agency)
- Balázs Pócze, Creative Director, Mito Agency
- István Sas, Advertising Psychologist, multiple Cannes prize winning commercial film director, the founder of KOAK Communications Academy

The first surprise was that these renowned advertising professionals hardly saw any of the examined movies. However, they also had a reason for it. Gyula Kisantal, creative director at D'Arcy Avenue Advertising Agency explained that "No one is interested in movies on himself or his profession. There's nothing interesting in that. It's more than enough to see the real one." He claimed that movies only serve entertainment purposes, and the advertising industry is not like it. Based on the movies seen, István Sas thinks that "Films represent advertising industry as an irrational world. Whether someone is a good creative or not always depends on the goodwill of a person. They depict extreme situations, but there is no tangible task." Melinda Becskereki, however, decided to become an advertising professional when she saw the movie *Sweet November* as a youngster. She thought "There is a job where I can invent exciting things and get paid for it!"

Now let us see the questions based on aspects highlighted by movies.

### **3.1. Do advertising people lie by their own admission?**

The practitioners we interviewed did not agree with this statement. Furthermore, they referred to the agency slogan of McCann-Erickson: "Truth Well Told".

### **3.2. Are the majority of creative professionals males?**

Their answer was an unanimous "yes", meaning that there are more male creatives, copywriters and graphic designers than female ones. As Vilmos Fekete says "Creatives must be gigantically exhibitionistic in this profession, and males are more like it".

István Sas claims that there are more male creatives because women cannot stay in the profession in the long term if they want a family – nevertheless, he thinks that there are very good female creatives, too. Melinda Becskereki also states that she has only met male creative directors during her career to date. In her opinion there are more male creatives because they tolerate this rush and lifestyle better. Nóra Péter thinks women perform better as account managers because they can divide their attention between various tasks, while men are better at control and concentration on a single matter, resulting in more male creatives.

### **3.3. Do advertising professionals go to work in suits?**

The answer to this question was "Just look around!" Most people wear casual and comfortable everyday clothes. According to Vilmos Fekete, Creative Director at Leo Burnett Advertising Agency "Advertising people typically wear modern city clothes, which helps us stay young longer as we have to follow fashion and new trends. Our clothes are meant to suggest that we do nothing according to the rules. By wearing sophisticated and trendy clothes we can convince our customers that we are good. It is important that the clothes we wear be expensive and demonstrate that the reason we do not wear suits is not because we cannot afford them, but because we can distinguish our work and ourselves from others this way." Gyula Kisantal said, "Recently I gave a lecture at the Spar marketing conference which I attended wearing a suit and pink slippers with pom-poms. By doing that I wanted to suggest that we do not have to go wall-to-wall, but need to find the tiny point where or by which we can make an impression. In that case my pink slippers with pom-poms served as that tiny point. By the way I never wear a suit; I always prefer comfortable clothes." Nóra Péter mentioned that "All creatives like to wear trendy and modern stuff, and dress up with style including something creative and unique. Creative directors are usually the ones with the coolest clothes, drawing attention to their uniqueness."

Balázs Pócze, Creative Director at Mito Agency, does not even have a suit. He considers that type of freedom a "creative directors' luxury". In the interview he also admitted that he does not like to "be paid for his looks". István Sas agreed that a suit is not a typical part of the creative set, and you may even notice jeans-wearing creatives from a distance at award ceremonies.

This indestructible piece of clothing is, at the same time, a part of the clothing style called "smart casual". Pócze's account management colleagues also wear jeans with leather shoes, unbuttoned shirts, a jacket, and no ties. But this is not a general trend, either; it depends on the person and the occasion. Pócze noted jokingly, "When our executive director appears in a meeting wearing a suit, I always say to the clients that he has just arrived back from a court hearing..."

Our interviewees also pointed out that there are many people who want to work in the world of advertising because they do not have to wear suits or costumes all day long.

### **3.4. Are creatives obsessed workaholics?**

Yes, they are. Our interviewees all stated that you cannot just switch off, although you can learn to manage that. Good creatives are always thinking about ideas, keeping their eyes open, because their impressions at the movies, at home, on the street, or even in shopping centres may all result in great new ideas.

This is also the reason why advertising professionals are much more straightforward and open people. Relationships between people working at the same company are also closer as they may gain new ideas sharing family stories or news from their lives. Therefore they try to share as much information as possible, facilitating their own and each other's work.

It is also true that they do a lot of work. Gyula Kisantal said that when someone sent an email to all colleagues at 8 or 9 PM in the old times when they were not allowed to work in home office yet, most people replied that evening, which shows that they were still working in the office. It is true that they tend to go to work later, but they also stay in the office later. Melinda Becskereki claims that she gets to her workplace at around 9.30 AM, but she never leaves before 7 PM. Nóra Péter also stays in the office until 10 PM, as she prefers working in the evening hours.

### 3.5. Do creatives have a chaotic personal life?

István Sas considers that most advertising professionals are single or divorced because the profession requires continuous thinking and takes a lot of time, creating a way of life that only a few people can manage. On the other hand, Vilmos Fekete claims that the number of divorced creative professionals is so high because they meet and contact several people every day, therefore male creatives (and even female ones) are often seduced.

### 3.6. Do creatives often live with addictions?

Balázs Pócze does not agree with this statement. Only a few Mito employees smoke, and he thinks that the degree of alcohol consumption is no different from other professions, either. Pócze says that the difference is "casual drinking, that is, drinking during daytime". István Sas agrees that there is no close link between advertising and harmful habits. Just as in other industries, the leader, his/her management style and attitude have a great influence on the team: "Well, you know, sometimes they call me a champion of quantities because I have done it a lot. But I would exaggerate the influence of alcohol if I said it has been involved in two good ideas out of a thousand."

## 4. THE SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

Let us see a summary table comparing the realities of advertising with the image presented in movies.

*Table 2: The image of advertising as depicted in movies, compared with reality*

<i>Image based on movies</i>	<i>Reality at advertising agencies (according to advertising professionals)</i>
Advertising people lie	False
The majority of creative professionals are males	True
Advertising professionals go to work in suits	False
Creatives are obsessed workaholics	True
Creatives have a chaotic personal life	True
Creatives often live with addictions	False

Source: The results of own research based on 27 examined movies and 6 in-depth interviews

All in all we can say that there is an overlap between movies and reality. Movies often exaggerate or overstate certain things to make them more interesting for the audience. We get emotional while watching romance, we are frightened by horror, we laugh at comedies, but deep inside we feel that in reality not all relationships have a happy ending, most owners of roadside hotels are not murderers, and the source of humour is not always funny for everyone. Depictions in movies on advertising are shallow, and they highlight stereotypes. Some of it is actually true, and some of it is not. Therefore we could say that "Any resemblance to real persons is purely coincidental."

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## FILMOGRAPHY:

Year	Director	Film Title	Role	Job
1947	Jack Conway	The Hucksters	Victor Albee Norman	advertising professional
1976	Alan J Pakula	All the President's Men	Claudia Jean Cregg	spokesperson
1979	Robert Benton	Kramer vs. Kramer	Ted Kramer	advertising executive
1990	Jan Egleson	A Shock to the System	Graham Marshall	executive in an advertising company
1990	Tony Bill	Crazy People	Emory Leeson	advertising executive
1990	Tim Burton	Edward Scissorhands	Peg Boggs	door-to-door saleswoman
1996	Cameron Crowe	Jerry Maguire	Jerry Maguire	sports manager
1997	Barry Levinson	Wag The Dog	Conrad Brean	PR manager
1998-2004		Sex and the City	Samantha Jones	PR manager
2000	Nancy Meyers	What Women Want	Nick Marshall	advertising professional, creative
2000	Jon Turteltaub	The Kid	Russ Duritz	image consultant
2001	Joe Roth	America's Sweethearts	Lee Phillips	producer
2002	Joel Schumacher	Phone Booth	Stuart Shepard	publicist
2002	Steven Schachter	Door to Door	Bill Porter	door-to-door salesman
2002	Daniel Algrant	People I Know	Eli Wurman	PR manager, publicist

2004	Kevin Smith	Jersey Girl	Ollie Trinke	publicist
2001	Eric Bross	On the Line	Kevin Gibbons	copywriter
2001	Pat O'Connor	Sweet November	Nelson Moss	advertising professional, creative
2004	Paul Weitz	In Good Company	Dan Foreman	advertising executive, former head of sales
			Carter Duryea	advertising executive, new head of sales
2005	Jason Reitman	Thank You for Smoking	Nick Naylor	spokesperson
2005-	-	Criminal Minds	Jennifer Jareau	spokesperson
2007	James Foley	Perfect Stranger	Harrison Hill	advertising executive
2007-	-	Mad Men	Don Draper	creative director
			Roger Sterling	founding partner
			Pete Campbell	account executive
2008	Peter Berg	Hancock	Ray Embrey	PR spokesperson
2010	Edward Zwick	Love and Other Drugs	Jamie Randall	door-to-door salesman
2011	Raja Gosnell	The Smurfs	Patrick Winslow	advertising professional, creative
2011	Lars von Trier	Melancholia	Justine	copywriter

**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS:**

- Melinda Becskereké, Copywriter, Tóth Avanti és Társai Discount Agency
- Vilmos Fekete, Creative Director, Leo Burnett Advertising Agency
- Gyula Kisantal, Creative Director, D'Arcy Avenue Advertising Agency
- Nóra Péter, Junior Account Manager, Morpho Communications (formerly copywriter at Ogilvy and Mather Advertising Agency)
- Balázs Pöcze, Creative Director, Mito Agency
- István Sas, Advertising Psychologist, multiple Cannes prize winning commercial film director, the founder of KOAK Communications Academy

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