



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Revlon Incorporated Advertising Collection

NMAH.AC.0939

Vanessa Broussard Simmons

2008

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Revlon, Incorporated Advertising Collection
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0939
Date:	1936-1986
Extent:	2 Cubic feet (4 boxes)
Creator:	Revlon, Inc. Stevens, Martin
Language:	English
Summary:	Collection consists of commercial advertisements and promotional materials created by Revlon Incorporated, 1936-1986.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Revlon Advertising Collection

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated by Martin Stevens in 2007

Location of Originals

Revlon Incorporated maintains the original television commercials.

Related Materials

Materials in the Archives Center

Warshaw Collection of Business Americana (NMAH.AC.0060)

Albert W. Hampson Commercial Artwork (NMAH.AC.0561)

Cover Girl Advertising Oral History and Documentation Project (NMAH.AC.0374)

NW Ayer Advertising Agency Records (NMAH.AC.0059)

Processing Information

Collection processed by Kiley Orchard (intern); supervised by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist, 2008.

Preferred Citation

Revlon Advertising Collection, 1936-1986, Archives Center, National Museum of American History. Gift of Martin Stevens.

Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research use and access on site by appointment.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Accruals

Additional materials were donated by Martin Stevens in 2008.

Historical

In 1932, brothers Charles, Joseph and Martin Revson, and chemist Charles Lachman founded the Revlon company with the goal of creating a mainstream market for nail polish. The introduction of new colors each year branded the product and created a dedicated market. In 1940, Revlon introduced lipstick and by 1952, it achieved tremendous success with its "Fire and Ice" campaign. The Revlon Company continues to expand its product line including beauty tools, skincare, make-up, hair color, and fragrance lines simultaneously advancing the careers of models.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of advertising and promotional materials of Revlon Incorporated from 1936 to 1986. Revlon's print and television advertisements, semi-annual promotions, and techniques of planned obsolescence helped it become one of the leading brands of the cosmetics industry. The materials provide insight into the depiction and importance of beauty throughout the decades. Additionally, the names of models and photographers are identified throughout the collection.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series.

Series 1, Revlon Advertisements, 1936-1986

Series 2, Other Revlon Incorporated Brand Advertisements, 1965-1986

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Beauty culture
- Broadcast advertising
- Cosmetics
- Cosmetics -- advertising
- Television advertising
- Women in advertising

Types of Materials:

- Advertisements -- 20th century
- Commercials
- Compact discs
- Tear sheets

Names:

- Stevens, Martin

Container Listing

Series 1: Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1936-1986

Series 1, Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1936-1986, includes both print and television advertisements spanning Revlon's first fifty years as a product brand. Some of the products advertised include nail polish and lipstick.

Subseries 1.1: Index, 1936-1986

Subseries 1.1, Index, 1936-1986, include smaller images of 305 advertisements from the first fifty years of Revlon Incorporated, organized by the company. The company created a dot system to aid researchers in gaining a better understanding of ways in which the advertisements were used. One red dot next to the advertisement indicates that there is a larger laminated advertisement. Two red dots indicate both laminated advertisements and unmounted proofs. Black dots indicate major promotion pieces. Dates and names of models, photographers, and advertising agencies are printed underneath the advertisements. Dates do not necessarily correspond with the dates on the advertisements themselves. The index also includes other Revlon brands.

Box 1, Folder 1	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1936-1959
Box 1, Folder 2	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1960-1969
Box 1, Folder 3	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1970-1979
Box 1, Folder 4	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1980-1986
Box 1, Folder 5	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1960-1986
Box 1, Folder 6	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1960s-1986
Box 1, Folder 7	Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1970s-1986

Subseries 1.2: Printed Advertisements, 1944-1986, undated

Subseries 1.2, Printed Advertisements, 1944-1986, undated, includes larger images of advertisements found in the index. Names of the photographers, models, and advertising agencies can be found on the reverse sides. Advertisements are arranged by size and chronological order. Included in the subseries is an advertisement celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Life magazine as well as The New York Times Magazine: Fashions of the Times from August 25, 1985, which features Revlon products.

Box 2, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1944-1958
Box 8, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1958-1963
Box 8, Folder 2	Printed Advertisements, 1964-1967

Box 2, Folder 2	Printed Advertisements, 1966-1969
Box 8, Folder 3	Printed Advertisements, 1968
Box 8, Folder 4	Printed Advertisements, 1968-1969
Box 9, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1970
Box 2, Folder 3	Printed Advertisements, 1971
Box 9, Folder 2	Printed Advertisements, 1971-1973
Box 3, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1972-1977
Box 9, Folder 3	Printed Advertisements, 1976-1983
Box 3, Folder 2-3	Printed Advertisements, 1978-1979
Box 4, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1980-1983
Box 10, Folder 1	Printed Advertisements, 1980-1986
Box 4, Folder 2	Printed Advertisements, 1982-1986
Box 4, Folder 3	Printed Advertisements, undated
Box 4, Folder 4	Magazines 1985
Box 10, Folder 2	Fiftieth Anniversary of Life Magazine, 1986

Subseries 1.3: Promotion Folders, 1961-1982

Subseries 1.3, Promotion Folders, 1961-1982, include four promotional folders of Revlon products. The Revlon publicity department created these folders for almost every new lipstick shade. Stores used this material for merchandising and display purposes. Materials are arranged in alphabetical order.

Box 5, Folder 1	Cleopatra, 1982
Box 10, Folder 5	Gypsy Gold, 1981
Box 10, Folder 6	Louis XIV Red, 1961
Box 10, Folder 7	Polished Ambers of Revlon, 1977

[Image\(s\)](#)**Subseries 1.4: Television Database and Commercials, 1950s-1980s**

Subseries 1.4, Television Database and Commercials, 1950s-1980s, include CDs of 319 Revlon television commercials. Also included is a database, disk one, for navigating disks two, three and four. Disk two contains commercials from the 1950s-1960s, Disk three documents the 1960s-1970s, and Disk four documents the 1970s-1980s. Early commercials were produced live and appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show and The 64 Thousand Dollar Question. Later commercials feature well-known celebrities such as Tom Selleck, Nicolette Sheridan, Kim Bassinger, and Joan Collins.

Box 12, Item CD939.1	Database, master copy, undated
Box 12, Item CD939.2	Commercials master copy, 1950s-1960s
Box 12, Item CD939.3	Commercials master copy, 1960s-1970s
Box 12, Item CD939.4	Commercials master copy, 1970s-1980s
Box 12, Item CD939.5	Database, reference copy, undated
Box 12, Item CD939.6	Commercials reference copy, 1950s-1960s
Box 12, Item CD939.7	Commercials reference copy, 1960s-1970s
Box 12, Item CD939.8	Commercials reference copy, 1970s-1980s

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Series 2: Other Revlon Brand Advertisements, 1965-1986

Series 2, Other Revlon Incorporated Brand Advertisements, 1965-1986, includes advertisements for Balmain, Bill Blass, Borghese, Braggi, Charlie, Jontue, Norell, Replique, and That Man. Ultima II, Revlon's most heavily advertised upscale brand, is prominently featured.

Subseries 2.1: Printed Advertisements, 1965-1986, undated

Subseries 2.1, Printed Advertisements, 1965-1986, undated, includes larger images of advertisements found in the index. Names of the photographers, models, and advertising agencies can be found on the reverse sides. This subseries also includes miscellaneous advertisements used for charitable purposes.

Box 1, Folder 8	Bill Blass, 1983-1986
Box 10, Folder 3	Braggi, 1970s
Box 1, Folder 9	Braggi, 1970s
Box 6, Folder 1	Charlie, 1976-1983
Box 1, Folder 10	Charlie, 1979-1981
Box 1, Folder 11	Jontue, 1978-1979
Box 10, Folder 4	Ultima II, 1968-1983
Box 6, Folder 2	Ultima II, 1972-1980
Box 6, Folder 3	Ultima II, 1981-1986, undated
Box 7, Folder 1	Other, 1965-1985
Box 1, Folder 12	Other, 1968-1982
Box 7, Folder 2	Miscellaneous,, 1976, 1984, 1985, undated

Subseries 2.2: Ultima II Promotion Folders, 1979-1985

Subseries 2.2, Ultima II Promotion Folders, 1979-1985, include six promotional folders for Revlon's Ultima II brand. Ultima II served as a more upscale brand to compete with names such as Max Factor, L'Oréal's Lancome, Hazel Bishop, Helena Rubinstein, and especially Estée Lauder. Stores used the promotion material for merchandising and display purposes.

Box 11, Folder 1	America the Beautiful, 1980
Box 11, Folder 2	Casino!, 1979

Box 11, Folder 3	Colors of Ireland, 1979
Box 1, Folder 13	Maroc, 1985
Box 11, Folder 4	Navajo Color, 1981
Box 11, Folder 5	Tropics, 1980

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