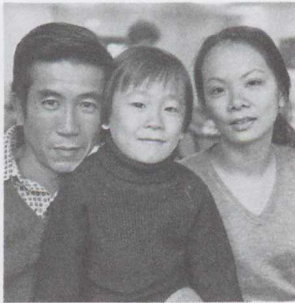


RECOMMENDATION

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PROMOTE ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL THAT REFLECT THE MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY OF CANADA

Alienation: In advertising, visible minorities do not usually see themselves portrayed as a part of society. A significant and persistent omission is the portrayal of aboriginal peoples in conventional societal roles. The underlying message of the advertisements that bombard us daily is that visible minorities seem to have no place in Canadian life - a message to which the children of visible minorities are very susceptible. The traditional marginality of visible minorities is not only maintained, but the seeds of alienation and hostility are sown among the next generation of minority young who perceive their presence in Canadian cities as being denied daily. As well, majority youth become accustomed through advertising to a world where visible minorities are not allowed.

Research studies confirm the general impression that visible minorities are severely under-represented in advertising. A survey by Professor Stanley Elkin for the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1971 on *The Employment of Visible Minority Groups in Mass Media Advertising* showed that only 3.7 per cent of the television commercials observed had a minority group performer, who was shown mostly in crowd or group scenes or in secondary roles.

Commercials: In 1977 a study commissioned by the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism found that, of 2,064 persons counted in the commercials observed, only 48 were members of visible minority groups - 24 Blacks and 24 Asians. Of these, the majority were children. Both studies also dealt with newspaper and magazine advertising and concurred that these advertisements did not include visible minorities in any meaningful way except where foreign airlines or holidays were being advertised.

The Crowd: A 1982 study commissioned by the Multiculturalism Directorate covered 617 commercials selected in consultation with the Advertising Advisory Board. Ten per cent of the commercials contained visible minorities characters, but these characters were most often part of a larger crowd, and the majority of the visible minority characters in the crowd were children.

RECOMMENDATION:

The advertising industry should work towards adopting a policy of having all advertising and promotional material reflect the multicultural diversity of Canada and towards setting standards for portrayal of visible minorities in advertising similar to its standards for portraying women.