



I originally gravitated toward a career in advertising for two reasons: It looked like a lot more fun than teaching, the only other job for which I was remotely qualified; and because the ads of my youth, the so-called Creative Revolution of the Sixties, were just so well done, so much fun, I thought, that's what I want to do. Also, compared to teaching, it paid really well. So I guess that's three reasons.

If you aren't familiar with the work I'm talking about – the output of Leo Burnett, Doyle Dane Bernbach, Mary Wells, Jerry Della Femina and others – I highly recommend a book called *When Advertising Tried Harder*. I just checked and Amazon has thirteen copies available.

Which brings me to the point: a cleverly-wrought, understated, and thought-provoking ad from Harry's Shaving. It's part of their current campaign, which to me echoes the best of the great work of the past. Whether the homage is intentional or not, I can't say. But I do know all Creatives steal from the best; what is called "inspo" today used to be unapologetically called a "swipe file."

I received it as a banner ad, but it would be equally at home in a magazine or an out-of-home execution. That versatility is another hallmark of a great ad. The layout is super clean, the headline is a grabber, body copy is kept to a bare minimum - an approach that is both highly contemporary and time-tested.

And believe it or not, the focus of the ad is loyalty.

The ad is both inciteful and insightful. The main head reads, "You're not 'loyal' to Gillette." The subhead says, "You just haven't thought about it." Above the Harry's logotype the tagline reads, "Smooth shave. Fair prices."

In a business landscape that prizes disruption, those eleven words of copy are downright subversive. And more powerful than any 200-word manifesto about how a

brand is “reinventing” their category.

Why does one buy Gillette (or any other legacy brand)? Is it just habit? Habit can be very powerful. But so can a message that breaks through and makes us think. If you check out the book I recommended above, you’ll find ads that use simple, clever constructs to make us question the status quo. Like the Volkswagen ad that asks, “Did you ever wonder how the snowplow driver gets to work?” Small, agile, air-cooled cars were still something new back in the day, and they had to challenge Detroit’s land-yachts.

Habit is strong enough to drive a lifetime of repeat buying. But it’s still only skin-deep, and doesn’t create any real engagement. A message that makes people think though their buying decisions can blow mere habit out of the water. I was once conducting a workshop with a bunch of retail executives, and one mentioned a major department store. He said, “I shop there and I don’t even like them.” That’s a strong habit!

We’ve argued for the power of habit; that not every brand can build the kind of ride-or-die loyalty marketers crave. For a majority of brands, habit is enough to drive loyal behavior, if not brand love.

But Harry’s isn’t asking you to fall in love when them. They just want you to stop and think about your buying habits, give their brand a chance. After all, that’s what any great ad does. And this one does it in spades. *Your thoughts?*



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'LOYAL' TO  
GILLETTE.**

You just haven't thought  
about it.

SMOOTH SHAVE. FAIR PRICES.

**HARRY'S**

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