

Ad Seminar Engages and Inspires Students in Advertising

By **KERI ANN FLACCOMIO**
Staff Writer

Bernie Zlotnick, a prominent creative director and superstar in the advertising industry for more than 40 years, spoke to Ramapo College Communication and Visual Arts students during an interactive presentation on Nov. 3.

Zlotnick's presentation, entitled "Beauty, Desire, Seduction: The 'Mad Men' of 20th Century Advertising," focused on popular advertising from the 1960s to the present.

"We were having a glorious time," he said. "It was pretty similar to the way you see it on the show 'Mad Men,' but the show does exaggerate—there weren't as many divorces or people crashing into walls."

Beginning with an overview of his involvement in the industry, which began in the late 1960s, Zlotnick discussed many of the positions he held, including that of vice president and creative director for Young & Rubicam, one of the leading international advertising agencies. He also talked about



photo by Keri Ann Flaccomio

Students participate in a hands-on activity at Bernie Zlotnick's seminar on advertising.

opening his own advertising agency with a partner.

Providing a look back into history, Zlotnick gave students a glimpse of American culture, the stereotypes in popular advertising, and the ideas behind the print and television promotions. He shared photographs of his creative teams, as well as slideshows and commercial footage for advertising campaigns that he led.

This material included advertisements for Hanes, Olmeca tequila, Ovaltine, Jell-O, Finlandia Swiss Cheese and a Room Plus Furniture commercial featuring Dennis the Menace.

One point that Zlotnick stressed repeatedly is that every product and advertisement begins with brainstorming and idea development, which becomes the most important element of the final result.

Calling upon his original desire to become

a cartoonist, Zlotnick shared what his professor for graphic arts once told the class—that the ideas are more important than putting the design together.

Zlotnick feels that this rings true in both the past and the present. Commenting on the difference between advertising in the 60s and 70s, as opposed to that of the modern day, he said that—with the exception of the computer—nothing has really changed, and that the idea itself is the heart of any campaign.

As far as Zlotnick is concerned, a good advertisement needs to cut through the clutter. "You have to excite them," he said. "You have to stimulate them. You have to know what you're doing."

Anne Barretta, adjunct professor of idea development and promotions writing, attended the presentation with some of her students. Of a successful advertisement she says, "It should create a sentiment that

touches you, and causes you to change your beliefs, attitudes or behaviors ... or makes you laugh. It's about basic human emotion."

Zlotnick also emphasized the importance of working on projects outside one's realm of personal interests. Although he did not smoke or drink, for example, Zlotnick said he produced many cigarette and alcohol advertisements because it was his job, and said professionals in the industry have to keep an open mind and take on such challenges, or else risk hurting their careers.

At the end of the presentation, students in idea development classes were invited to participate in a hands-on activity. The groups created advertisements for a product referred to as "8:00 coffee," developing and presenting original concepts. In the end, Zlotnick could not choose one favorite, and declared that all the groups were winners.

Bonnie Blake, professor of design and interactive media, thinks that students benefited from hearing Zlotnick speak.

"I think it introduced students to an era in media that they would have otherwise not experienced. This period of advertising—the 1960s through the 1980s—was very glamorous and really set the stage for the way we perceive the identity of products and people, including ourselves."

Blake organized the presentation and workshop, along with Sara Stackhouse, an assistant professor in communication arts and graphic design.

Zlotnick has won many prestigious awards, such as The Clio, and was inducted into the ADCNY Hall of Fame. He now works as a teacher focusing on student projects, and conducting workshops in colleges and universities.

CORRECTION:
Jeremy Kelly was quoted in "Halloween Masquerade Draws a Lively Crowd" in the Oct. 29 issue.



photo by Keri Ann Flaccomio

Zlotnick spoke of his decades of experience in the advertising industry, and advised students to tap into basic human emotions.

THE RAMAPO NEWS: STAFF, CONTACT & POLICY

A publication by the students for the Ramapo College community

Cortney Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Charlie LaPlaca
News Editor

Joey Lewandowski
Sports Editor

Dan Sforza
Technical Advisor

Katie Sobko
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Daniel Rist
Business Manager

Kimberly Ciocon
Photo Editor

Contact us at:

The Ramapo News
Robert A. Scott Student Center
505 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah, NJ 07430

Telephone: (201) 684-7842
Advertising: (201) 684-7842
Fax: (201) 684-7939
E-mail: rcnjnews@ramapo.edu

Whenever necessary, The Ramapo News will publish corrections or clarifications in the following issues. All corrections must be brought to the attention of the editor as soon as possible. The Ramapo News strives for accuracy. In keeping with journalistic standards, pre-publication review of any article, quote or editorial is not allowed. Viewpoints may be dropped off at SC-218 or e-mailed to rcnjnews@ramapo.edu. The Ramapo News reserves the right to edit viewpoints for content, style and space. Anonymous viewpoints will not be accepted.

Paid advertisements are accepted at the sole discretion of The Ramapo News staff and are due no later than the Monday of that week's issue. Rates are available by contacting the editorial staff by phone or e-mail.

Staff: Lianna Albrizio, Megan Anderle, Michelle Angelino, Natasha Arena, Morgan Balog, Francesca Baratta, Erica Buchman, Kristen Burnell, Alyssa Connors, Kelly Craig, Deanna Dunsmuir, Jake Edinger, Amy Fezza, Keri Ann Flaccomio, Melanie Framo, Rachel Frank, John Frazee, Andrew Gould, Louis Guerrero, Lauren Haag, Ashley Hastings, Bryan Kaminsky, Jeremy Kelly, Nick Kolani, Scott Laudati, Jon Lindenauer, Ryan Mallory, Stefanie Mauro, Nicole Mazewski, Kaitlin McGuinness, Jenna Moonjian, Dave Ragazzo, Lindsay Sanchez, Diana Stanczak, Keith Stratton, Brittany Temple, Samantha Ullrich, Rachel Wintermute.