



THE MIX

“The very first law in advertising is to avoid the concrete promise and cultivate the delightfully vague.”

BILL COSBY
COMEDIAN

Contact Us

Story ideas? Questions? Comments?
E-mail us at gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu

Tackling the consumers



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY
MARY PINCKNEY WATERS

BY HILARY
SCHRAMM
THE GAMECOCK

Super Bowl Sunday: You're surrounded by friends and unhealthy food; everyone is laughing and having a great time. Why? It's the commercial break.

While many hardcore football fans tune in to the Super Bowl every year for the game, it's estimated that half the viewers pay more attention to the ads than the football.

And that's what companies are counting on. According to SuperBowl-Ads.com, the average cost for a 30-second spot was \$2.25 million this year. The Super Bowl has become the television event in which companies premiere their best commercials, spending millions every year in advertising wars.

"As to why companies place their best ads in the Super Bowl and not another event, I really don't know," said Bonnie Drewniany, associate professor of advertising and public relations who teaches a class on Super Bowl commercials. "It's probably because media coverage has increased for both the Super Bowl and the commercials."

Advertisers join the Super Bowl in the battle to debut the crowd-winning commercial — and pay the price for on-air time

While it's hard to know why the Super Bowl has become the marketing event it is today, it's not hard to pinpoint the commercial that started it all. The first Super Bowl commercial that was different from any normal commercial was Apple's "1984" spot in, not surprisingly, 1984.

The commercial, directed by Ridley Scott, featured no dialogue or everyday scenes. Instead, it showed a monochromatic scene of people blindly following a leader. The scene is interrupted by a female runner who throws a hammer into a screen featuring Big Brother. A voiceover then explains Apple's new computer will prevent 1984 from being "1984."

After that groundbreaking commercial, Super Bowl advertising continued to evolve throughout the late '80s, and the early '90s saw an increase in competition between companies to have the "best" spot.

While beer companies dominate the field today, the '90s were host to the "Cola Wars" with strict competition between Coca-Cola and Pepsi.

While football fans and entertainment addicts watch Super Bowl commercials for the ones that will make them laugh the hardest, advertising experts often look for something more.

"A good Super Bowl commercial is defined two ways," Drewniany said. "Some people say

a good Super Bowl commercial makes you laugh, but as an advertising person, I know that a quick reaction doesn't always result in sales. A commercial could have a really high likability rating in USA Today on Super Bowl Monday, but in five minutes the fans could forget what the commercial was even for."

After the Cola Wars of the '90s and the dot-com year 2000, it's not surprising that this year will play host to another shootout. Critics have named Super Bowl XXXVIII the "Erectile Dysfunction Drug Shootout," with ads from Viagra, Cialis and Levitra all airing during the game.

Ads to watch for include a Lay's potato chip spot and a Proctor & Gamble commercial.

"I'm intrigued that Proctor & Gamble invited all its brands to compete for a spot," said Drewniany. "While only one will be shown during the Super Bowl, lots of good commercials will be shown throughout the year now."

But no matter which commercial is most remembered or ranks highest in USA Today, fans will tune in for the ads to decide for themselves.

"I think it's just the whole energy and excitement," said Drewniany. "I think very few people watch the game alone."

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu

Pigging out with the pigskin

BY LINDSEY JEFFERSON
THE GAMECOCK

It's that time of year again. Football fanatics live for the Super Bowl, and most people would agree it's not just any ordinary football game; it steps everything up a notch. From the celebrity-sung national anthem to the star-studded halftime show, fans know that Super Bowl Sunday is the time to go all-out. Even the commercials evidence that over-the-top enthusiasm.

It makes sense, then, that the parties for the "big game" would be more impressive than the ordinary Sunday afternoon get-together. And what makes watching any game seem more festive?

Food, of course.

When deciding what types of dishes to serve, most football fans opt for finger foods. They allow for grab-and-go snacking and quick clean up so as not to interfere with the actual game watching.

First-year nursing student Anna White prefers simple dishes like chips and salsa and popcorn to keep her Super Bowl appetite suppressed.

While some might favor such simple snacks, others tend to gravitate towards more satisfying choices like pizza. Ivy Ladd, a first-year public relations student, enjoys being able to grab a slice during the game, preferring to munch on pizza with mushrooms and pep-

peroni.

Ladd agreed that chips and salsa are also essential to the football-watching experience.

Hot wings have long been associated with the "big game," and the fan favorite is the food of choice for first-year nursing student Tish Hickson.

"I like having the wings in assorted flavors with ranch dressing on the side," said Hickson, who said she likes to wash it all down with soda.

Once halftime is done, some might decide to curb their eating and enjoy the rest of the game without making trips back to the buffet table. But in reality, the remaining quarters are a perfect time for chowing down on

dessert.

First-year accounting student Corey Phillips prefers to eat ice cream while watching the second half of the game. "You have to serve that towards the end of the game," he said.

Whether you decide to celebrate this year's Super Bowl at a small gathering with a few friends or at a large, packed party, it's almost a guarantee you will be snacking your way through the action. Whatever you prefer to munch on, the typical football-watching mix of foods is sure to make your viewing experience more savory.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu



SURF YOURSELF

Vote for your favorite ads during the game at www.usatoday.com and www.adbowl.com

Keep your eyes peeled for...

- ◆ Anheuser-Busch's spots featuring a donkey that wants to be a Clydesdale.
- ◆ A new H&R Block commercial featuring Willie Nelson.
- ◆ MasterCard's latest installment in the "Priceless" campaign.
- ◆ Two spots featuring Ford's new GT.
- ◆ "Grandparents," a Frito-Lay ad that features Gramps and Graamy fighting over potato chips.
- ◆ Five anticipated ads from Pepsi/Sierra Mist, one of which involves a young Jimi Hendrix.
- ◆ Pizza Hut ads featuring Jessica Simpson and the Muppets.

And check out a live countdown of the best Super Bowl commercials of all time Saturday night at 9 p.m. on CBS.

Musical Review

'Les Miserables' does novel justice

"LES MISÉRABLES"
★★★★ out of ★★★★★

BY ALEXIS STRATTON
THE GAMECOCK

More than 25 years after "Les Misérables" first opened on Broadway, Cameron Mackintosh's musical masterpiece filled USC's Koger Center Wednesday with soaring harmonies and unforgettable performances, delighting the audience with its unique staging and incredible talent.

Based on the Victor Hugo novel of the same name, this presentation was filled with stirring emotion as each dynamic cast member connected with the audience, portraying the story of "Les Misérables" with passion and energy.

"Les Misérables," which opened in Columbia on Tuesday and continues through Sunday, tells the story of an escaped convict, Jean Valjean, who turns from his life of crime as the result of a bishop's inspirational kindness. Valjean breaks parole, determined to lead a righteous life, and the musical follows his struggle to evade the law — which is personified by Inspector Javert — and create a life for himself.

Set on the eve of a revolutionary uprising in 19th-century France, "Les Misérables" incorporates the volatile nature of the period with the tribulations of

Valjean's life. Such conflicts are merged with the love plot that evolves between Valjean's adopted daughter, Cosette, and a student revolutionary, Marius, who must deal with the thwarted affections street girl Eponine has for him.

Most notable of the cast was Randal Keith as Jean Valjean. Keith, who also played Valjean on Broadway during the show's closing run, gave a strong performance on Wednesday, portraying the intense emotions of his character by showcasing his vocal skills. He expertly contrasted the powerful tenor strains of songs such as "Who Am I?" with the gentler, more melodic tones of the supplicating solo "Bring Him Home," after which Keith received an energetic and elongated round of applause.

Keith, however, was not the only cast member to deliver an impassioned performance. Robert Hunt, who played Javert in the place of Stephen Tewksbury, was convincing as Valjean's adversary. Hunt's warm, expressive tone brought empathy to his hard-nosed character. Ma-Anne Dionisio, who played Eponine, presented a robust rendition of the heart-breaking "On My Own," accentuating her dynamic character. Also, Cindy Benson and Michael Kostroff played the perfect inn-keeping, petty-thieving duo as the comedie, if morally

◆ MUSICAL, SEE PAGE 6

TV options beyond the gridiron

BY DONNA PETROZZELLO
KRT CAMPUS

Sick of football? Think Tom Brady was one of "The Brady Bunch"? No sweat.

When millions tune in to CBS' coverage of the Patriots and the Panthers in the Super Bowl on Sunday, there will be plenty of places for the non-football fan to turn. Realizing that most of the football audience is male, programmers have put together marathons of movies and series geared toward women.

These offerings range from a collection of chick flicks to back-to-back-to-back episodes of the fixer-up show "Trading Spaces." Here's a sample of Sunday's alternatives:

- ◆ TBS offers a day's worth of female-friendly movies, including "Beaches" with Bette Midler at 11 a.m. and Whoopi Goldberg's "Sister Act" at 4 p.m.
- ◆ Sci-Fi starts 12 hours of "Wishmaster" movies at noon.
- ◆ WGN has a marathon of "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air" starting at 11 a.m.
- ◆ WE: Women's Entertainment has Meryl Streep in "Sophie's Choice" at noon, Cher in "Mask" at 5:30 p.m. and Katharine Hepburn in "On Golden Pond" at 8.
- ◆ On TNT, episodes of "Charmed" will run from 2 p.m. through midnight.
- ◆ AMC presents a trio of thrillers under the "Amityville

Horror" banner starting at 5:30 p.m.

- ◆ VH1 features Barbra Streisand in "Yentl" at 6 p.m. and Nicole Kidman in "Moulin Rouge" at 9 p.m.

- ◆ At 6 p.m., MSNBC launches a mini-marathon of "National Geographic Explorer."

- ◆ MTV has a marathon of the inside-celebrity-homes show "Cribs" beginning at 6:30 p.m.

- ◆ At 8 p.m., ABC airs "Notting Hill," starring Julia Roberts and Hugh Grant.

- ◆ Fox will show Will Smith's action drama "Independence Day" at 7 p.m.

- ◆ On UPN, Denis Leary's comedy "Two If By Sea" starts at 7 p.m.

- ◆ FX has the movie "M*A*S*H," starring Donald Sutherland and Elliott Gould, at 7:30 p.m.

- ◆ There's a marathon of the home-remodeling show "Trading Spaces" on TLC starting at 7 p.m.

- ◆ Starting at 7 p.m., the WB airs three episodes of the celebrity reality show "The Surreal Life."

- ◆ At 8 p.m., NBC offers a three-hour marathon of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." Bravo will run several episodes of "Gay Weddings" beginning at 8 p.m.

- ◆ The Travel Channel has back-to-back episodes of its "World Poker Tour" at 8 p.m.

- ◆ Court TV has episodes of "Forensic Files" at 8 p.m.



PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

With Super Bowl Sunday approaching, parties are stocking up on junk food for game-night snacking.