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## **"Use the SONGS to sell your SHOW!": Sam Goldwyn, the Eddie Cantor musicals and the development of product-centred marketability**

### **Abstract**

This article advances understanding of Hollywood's relationship to advertising and commerce by demonstrating that deeply embedded product placement is an older practice than current scholarship recognises. Focusing on a series of musical comedies, produced by Samuel Goldwyn and released through United Artists in the early 1930s, it argues that the development of product-centred marketing was shaped by the way different corporate structures affected the ability to control the marketing message, with independent production and non-vertically integrated distribution driving the development of more sophisticated onscreen product integration. Through close analysis of the film texts, their advertising surround and the surviving production documentation, I explore how Goldwyn's approach responded to industrial conditions by making songs the locus for product plugs. I posit that major production numbers, including 'Keep Young and Beautiful', did not merely reflect consumer culture but were explicitly constructed as vehicles to carry embedded advertising. This enabled national and local tie-ups to be structured around strong consumer concepts, but also adapted to suit different exhibition contexts. I address why the dynamics of film history have worked to render these advertising imperatives invisible, and highlight their impact on both Cantor's star performance and the development of Busby Berkeley's directing style.

## **"Use the SONGS to sell your SHOW!": Sam Goldwyn, the Eddie Cantor musicals and the development of product-centred marketability**

### **Introduction**

The 1930s is recognised as the decade in which Hollywood marketing became streamlined, industrialised and increasingly product/brand-orientated. Most accounts take the 'big five', fully vertically integrated studios as the norm and depict a general shift from locally organised promotional 'ballyhoo' at the start of the decade to a field increasingly dominated by sophisticated national campaigns with centrally co-ordinated 'tie-ups' at its close.<sup>1</sup> Staggered releasing and a strong tradition of individual showmanship meant that as the Hollywood studio system took shape during the 1920s a great deal of marketing and exploitation activity was still conceptualised and organised at the local exhibition level.<sup>2</sup> The studios' push to 'control every facet of promotion' in the decade that followed was driven primarily by the desire to maximise advertising effectiveness, ticket sales and profits.<sup>3</sup> But in 1930 an additional factor arose: the industry's self-regulatory body, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (hereafter, MPPDA) introduced an Advertising Code.

The Advertising Code stressed 'the mandates of good taste' and, as Mary Beth Haralovich explores, was designed to protect the industry from harsher legislative intervention by voluntarily eradicating advertising that misled the public or focused on overly salacious elements.<sup>4</sup> Although initially rather toothless, by April 1932 the MPPDA boasted that the Code was elevating values across the 'entire stream of motion picture advertising', and its annual report included examples of new Code-compliant, company-wide internal communications from four of the majors (Fox, Loews/MGM, Warner Bros. and Paramount).<sup>5</sup> In November 1933 the MPPDA began to require advance sight of advertising copy for approval.<sup>6</sup> Thus, as the decade wore on, controlling the form and tone of film promotion all



the way along the U.S. release chain became an ever more important aspect of protecting the studio brand.

Policing nationwide advertising was a trickier task than ensuring that film content was compliant with the MPPDA's more famous Production Code. But for major studios that conformed to the vertically-integrated model, ownership of a large number of secure exhibition sites meant that, at least during the earlier stages of a film's release, they could ensure that tie-up cross-promotions were appropriate to the film and tastefully chosen, and could insist that the preferred promotional angles, as laid out in the film pressbooks, were followed by showmen. However, if, as Janet Staiger argues, Hollywood's ability to gain control over film promotion was something 'possible only as a weird consequence of vertical integration', what did that mean for independent production companies and those smaller studios and distributors that lacked major cinema chains?<sup>7</sup> Without sufficient tied theatres and a solid chain of command, ensuring that showmen put the movie across as desired was necessarily more dependent on persuasion than compulsion. The preferred marketing angles needed to be clear, strong and seductively easy to use—simply too good for showmen to ignore. This article will make the case that an advanced approach to onscreen product placement provided one means to achieve this.

Focusing on a series of big budget musical comedies starring Eddie Cantor, I examine the innovative approach developed by independent producer Samuel Goldwyn and United Artists (henceforth, UA), the non-vertically integrated distributor through which he released his films. Goldwyn's Cantor films contained many standard features of the early sound era and were rich with marketable elements. They combined established stage talent, fast-paced comedian comedy, hit songs ripe for radio and sheet music exploitation, and big production numbers with an evolving cast of beautiful chorus girls. However, as the series progressed,

consumer goods and brand relationships (as opposed to made-for-the-film merchandise) became increasingly central to the promotional strategy. In an age when most onscreen product placements were mere set dressing, Goldwyn used the Cantor films to pioneer deeply embedded onscreen advertising. His use of products, brands and specific concepts of consumption became aesthetically integral to the core spectacular pleasures offered by these films, and this required far greater above-the-line involvement and cross-departmental production planning than current scholarship recognises was the practice during this period.

Neither these films nor Goldwyn's approach appear in the prior histories of product placement or film marketing. Uncovering their importance has necessitated a broader range of sources and a methodological willingness to weave close textual analysis together with the films' production histories, and situate this within the wider industrial and commercial context. Using the film texts, the pressbooks, trade press coverage and the surviving production correspondence and working documents, I demonstrate that key musical numbers quickly became the focus for Goldwyn's advertising activity. I show how and why, over the course of the Cantor films, this evolved into the use of songs as deliberate and highly sophisticated temporal sales windows. In the first film—*Whoopee!*, released in 1930—the advertising was an opportunistic experiment.<sup>8</sup> By the fourth film—*Roman Scandals*, in 1933—a clever mix of brand specific and more generic product plugs, deployed within production numbers, enabled a range of nationally and locally arranged tie-ups to be structured around clear and coherent consumption themes.<sup>9</sup> This product-centred strategy permitted both central control of the marketing message and enough flexibility in its execution to suit different sales territories and a range of exhibitor needs. I posit that while these commercially-orientated production numbers were specific to the musical form of the period, they achieved something akin to modern high-impact product placement, and formed part of a remarkably 'high concept' approach to designing the marketability of the films

deeply into the screen texts.

### **Marketability, product placement and Hollywood production models**

There are many resonances between the major marketing gearshifts that began in the late 1920s and gathered pace throughout the 1930s, and those that occurred in the late 1970s and came to formulaic fruition in the 1980s. Addressing the rise of ‘high concept’ filmmaking in the latter period, Justin Wyatt defines the phenomenon as embodied by ‘an emphasis on style in production’ and ‘the integration of the film with its marketing’ from the earliest stages of pitching and planning.<sup>10</sup> Wyatt draws on Janet Staiger’s industrial analysis to argue that this new focus on marketability was a consequence of the way the American film industry had restructured after the war. In the late 1930s the ‘Paramount Case’ famously challenged Hollywood’s monopolistic practices and concluded with a 1948 Supreme Court judgment that forced the major studios to divest themselves of their theatres, precipitating the end of the studio production system. The dominant Hollywood filmmaking model that emerged in its wake—the package-unit system—was necessarily more cautious. Where the classic studio system had spread risk and balanced costs across productions, the new model meant that each film was put together by its producers as an individual financial package. A production now stood or failed alone, and designing-in a film’s marketability from the outset became one way to manage that risk and maximise returns.<sup>11</sup>

Wyatt emphasises the degree to which ‘high concept’ marked a break from the narrative complexity of the early-1970s New Hollywood Cinema that preceded it. But the three elements he identifies as central to a high concept approach—‘the look’ (a heightened, stylised aesthetic, well-suited to deployment in advertising and merchandising extra-texts), ‘the hook’ (an easily summarised premise, often built around a topical issue or an instantly

recognisable match between star persona and onscreen character) and ‘the book’ (frequent reliance on familiar, ‘presold’ intellectual properties)—can also be argued as common to the early sound period, which was similarly marked by economic downturn, rapid technological change and rising production costs.

One element of high concept style that Wyatt highlights has particularly clear precursors in the early sound period and specific relevance to the Cantor series: the importance of songs and musical moments in selling the films. He argues that in high concept films music-centred sequences often function as points of stylised excess, lifting off from the narrative in a way that echoes the musical. This enables the use of hits from the soundtrack in the promotion of the film across wider media culture, through the inclusion of film clips and/or borrowed aesthetics in music videos.<sup>12</sup> For early sound musicals, as Katherine Spring explores, a very similar cross-promotional function was served by radio airplay, and by sheet music and record sales.<sup>13</sup> For the Goldwyn/Cantor films, this musical multi-media advertising presence was strongly reinforced by Cantor’s growing status as a national radio star, after he was chosen to succeed Maurice Chevalier as the host of NBC’s hit Sunday night radio show, the *Chase and Sanborn Hour*, shortly before the release of the second film, *Palmy Days*, in 1931.<sup>14</sup>

Another element common to both eras was the step-changes in the sophistication of the relationship between the Hollywood feature film and commercial brands and goods. However, there are significant aesthetic differences in the form of these developments. While commercial products and branded advertising have been present in and around films since cinema’s inception, the 1980s are seen as the point at which modern ‘product placement’, as a term and a practice, truly took hold. Advertising scholars and cultural critics alike have observed that the late 1970s saw a rise in increasingly ambitious, high-impact product

placements. Brands are now regularly fully woven into the storyworld, whether through significant narrative integration, or by being positioned as key to character identity or as a central component of a major action sequence.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast, even the high-profile deliberate product deals of the 1930s were less about what happened onscreen than an array of offscreen promotional activities. These were usually only lightly anchored in the film texts. Various kinds of made-for-the-film merchandise, including novelisations, sheet music, record releases, and off-the-peg fashion styles based on the onscreen designs worn by the stars, could be strongly showcased within feature films' narratives and moments of entertainment spectacle. But as Charles Eckert notes, the branded goods that were easiest to place in Warner Bros. pictures were General Electric (GE) household appliances and Buick cars.<sup>16</sup> These kinds of placements, deployed in contemporary comedies and dramas, dressed the set and got the characters from A to B. This created an onscreen presence that sold the idea of the goods as part of a modern aspirational American lifestyle but did not linger on brand specificity or communicate particular product ideals. Nonetheless, background visibility, brief mention or loosely implied product association onscreen could be spun into major star-driven tie-up deals offscreen. Here it is useful to consider what Yvonne Zimmerman has termed the 'when' of screen advertising. For the typical 1930s brand tie-up, the 'persuasive rhetoric' of connecting the product idea to the brand largely happened in the extra-textual surround.<sup>17</sup> Items like furniture, appliances and cars were loaned free of charge, reducing production costs, in return for production stills, which captured the product on set and with the star. These images facilitated as-seen-in and star endorsement narratives for the brand's wider advertising campaigns, which in turn delivered significant cross-promotional value for the film.<sup>18</sup>

As the decade wore on, an ancillary industry emerged in Hollywood to support this

kind of product placement, but for individual films, such arrangements largely operated at below-the-line level. Specialised agents, most notably Walter E. Kline, exploited their connections in script departments to make timely, direct approaches to the studios' property and publicity staff.<sup>19</sup> In 1930, however, Goldwyn led from the top. He aggressively sought out brand partners early in the production process for the first Cantor picture. This more hands-on approach was partly a consequence of the Goldwyn/UA business model. Even for a 'major minor' studio of the era, UA had a highly unusual structure, prefiguring the post-war norm. In the early 1930s, UA was essentially a distribution umbrella for a number of discrete production units.<sup>20</sup> Like the post-war model, this structure resulted in fewer—but bigger—pictures being made; Goldwyn Productions only produced three or four films a year. Where major studios could spread their risk, a single serious flop could bankrupt Goldwyn. And just like more modern high concept blockbusters, this created considerable additional pressure to get the marketing of each picture absolutely right.

Corporate structure did not only affect how much was at stake on each picture and the importance of its marketing. It also altered the logical use of product within marketing strategy, resulting in different levels of aesthetic impact on the film texts. Warner Bros. had a full production slate and could strike high-level multi-film deals with their commercial partners, making it sensible to situate their primary commercial advertising spectacle offscreen. The prime example of this was the 1933 Warner-GE Better Times Special, a glittering GE-sponsored Pullman train full of studio stars. The train crossed the country, co-ordinating its arrival in various locations with a series of live events designed to generate publicity for both GE and a whole raft of new Warner's releases.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, Goldwyn's smaller production slate and film-by-film focus led him to approach tie-up campaigns and product deals as things which needed to be built around each picture in a completely bespoke way. This opened the door to much deeper onscreen product integration.

### **Beyond the tie-up: branded product placement as opportunistic spectacle in *Whoopee!***

Between 1930 and 1936 Sam Goldwyn produced six Eddie Cantor pictures, which were all distributed by UA and targeted to coincide with the holiday season. When the 1943 *International Motion Picture Almanac* compiled a list of the mere 59 films that had made over \$1,500,000 (unadjusted for inflation) between 1914 and 1942, only one of the Goldwyn/Cantor films—the fifth picture, 1934's *Kid Millions*—did not make the cut.<sup>22</sup> The early 1930s are often noted as a period when the musical was out of favour, but by Joel Finler's calculations of North American rental returns, the first four Cantor pictures were the strongest performers produced in their respective years.<sup>23</sup> In the context of a comparatively lean early-1930s box office, the Cantor musicals were the exceptionally successful pictures that helped to carry Goldwyn Productions and UA through the toughest years of the Depression.<sup>24</sup>

The first opportunity for creative advertising in the Cantor series arrived by chance, and owed more to Goldwyn's opportunism than any grand plan at the outset of production. The Ziegfeld produced Broadway show on which the first Cantor film, *Whoopee!*, was based contained a major production number extolling the virtues of the Stetson Hat Company.<sup>25</sup> The jingle-like lyric framed a Stetson as the best, most stylish attire for a wedding or social occasion, with a chorus that modern advertising scholars might now classify as 'heroic' brand placement: 'Come on along, and wave your Stetson / Can't go wrong with a Stetson....'.<sup>26</sup> This was followed by an extended choreographed sequence with a troop of chorus girls. However, as staged and shot by Goldwyn's brand new dance directing talent—Busby Berkeley—the number acquired spectacular new screen specific qualities.

While the Stetson number had been part of the original Broadway show, its retention

in the film was by no means automatic. When a musical moved from stage to screen in the early sound era, it was usual to replace all but the biggest hit songs.<sup>27</sup> Commissioning new numbers not only helped to refresh a show, it also allowed the production company to take a bigger slice of the sheet music and record sales. Cantor's big number, 'Makin' Whoopee' had caught the public imagination and was an obvious keeper. Ethel Shutta's 'Stetson' was not. However, following a fortnight of acrimonious haggling with his co-producer Florenz Ziegfeld over the price, condition and terms of delivery for the stage costumes—most importantly the expensive headgear—Goldwyn spotted a potential saving.<sup>28</sup> On the 18 March 1930 he drafted the following to his East Coast publicity man, Lynn Farnol:

THERE IS A NUMBER IN WHOOPEE IN WHICH STETSON HATS ARE PROMINENTLY FEATURED AND MENTIONED BY NAME TO EXTENT OF SAYING QUOTE YOU CAN BE HIGH HAT IN A STETSON UNQUOTE SUGGEST THAT YOU IMMEDIATELY COMMUNICATE WITH STETSON PEOPLE AND ADVISE THEM IT OPTIONAL WITH US WHETHER WE WILL RETAIN THAT NUMBER FROM ORIGINAL SHOW OR USE ANOTHER NUMBER WITH OTHER HATS STOP SUGGEST YOU SEE ADVERTISING MAN OF STETSON COMPANY STOP ASCERTAIN JUST WHAT THIS PLUG IS WORTH TO THEM AND ADVISE IMMEDIATELY STOP EXPLAIN TO THEM THAT PICTURE WILL COST A MILLION AND A HALF AND THE CIRCULATION WILL BE WORLD WIDE<sup>29</sup>

Goldwyn did not send the telegram. In his typical impatient style, he picked up the telephone and contacted the Los Angeles Stetson representative himself. That Stetson was open to a deal was unsurprising. The song's presence in the stage show had already worked as a plug for the brand, and as the *Variety* reviewer noted when the show opened in 1928, Stetson was credited in the programme with supplying the hats.<sup>30</sup>

From Stetson's perspective, this placement was a successful stage-to-screen advertising transfer, and once filming was complete, the company took out a full-page advert in *Variety* to trumpet the song's retention (see figure 1).<sup>31</sup> Stetson's product was inherently well suited



to motion pictures, particularly the western genre, and they were one of a range of companies that had been happily arranging Hollywood tie-ups since the early 1920s. This included an endorsement deal with a range of male Goldwyn stars in 1923.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, the film version of *Whoopee!* gave Stetson a much more glamorous national platform than usual and access to a different audience, which they used to promote the launch a new range of fashion hats for women. In addition to supplying new costume hats for the production and special sets of Stetson hats for shop-window displays, Stetson instructed their dealers to work with exhibitors and use their shop windows to promote the picture. They also paid for some of the film's newspaper advertising and billboards.<sup>33</sup>

Wednesday, September 3, 1930 VARIETY 47



Rehearsing the Stetson number in "Whoopee!"

## "WHOOPEE"

is a great show  
with its sparkling Stetson number

Florenz Ziegfeld incorporated in his stage show a number in which were featured the hats worn by the plainsmen who built up the West. The wide-brimmed Stetsons associated with the color and romance of the western pioneers contributed to one of the hits of the show. In the screen version of "Whoopee" this outstanding number was, of course, retained.

The old-timers are disappearing, but the West goes on, and keeping pace are the styles of Stetsons—changing with the times, but holding to the same sturdy quality.

It may seem strange, but it's true; more Stetson hats are sold from eight dollars up, than any other hat you ever heard of, no matter how low the price.

Men who care about their personal appearance do not regard Stetsons as "high" in price. They buy them because in a Stetson hat they get qualities no other hat gives, they refuse to be content with anything less, and they know that in dollar-for-dollar value, Stetson stands alone.

They know that Stetson styling is authentic—that the right people choose Stetsons to start fashions. They know that the traditional quality in Stetson hats insures their upstanding, outstanding rightness through rain or shine. It is certainly true economy to get a hat that will continue to look well. And as far as the name is concerned—you know yourself that a Stetson is the hat a man is glad to hold so that the trade-mark shows . . . just a little.

# STETSON HATS

JOHN B. STETSON COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA

Makers of finest quality headwear for men and women—fur felts, straws, panamas, leghorns, silk top hats, opera hats, caps

LOOK AT YOUR HAT — EVERYONE ELSE DOES!

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**Figure 1** Stetson Advert *Variety*, 3 September 1930, 47.

With the exception of the full-page *Variety* ad, none of Stetson's reciprocal contributions went beyond established tie-up deal practice in form. However, the onscreen showcasing of product that the company received in return was quite remarkable. When the dance director of the *Whoopee* stage show, Seymour Felix, was unavailable to do the film, the person responsible for headhunting his replacement was Lynn Farnol.<sup>34</sup> It is not clear if the ex-theatre-critic turned publicity man saw a flair for a commercially orientated aesthetic in Berkeley's stage work, but that is what the picture got. Various scholars have noted the parallels between way the screen and the shop window addressed the viewer/consumer in the early twentieth century, with Jane Gaines providing the most sustained case-based analysis of the relationship in the early sound era. Gaines' examination of the 'convergence of show window and screen' explores the way the prestige picture aesthetics of *Queen Christina* (MGM, 1933) were extended outwards and adapted within large-scale department store displays.<sup>35</sup> But in *Whoopee!* the direction of influence was the reverse; Berkeley brought a different, earlier retail aesthetic, based on patterned abstraction, repetition and product abundance right inside the film text.

The 1910s and 1920s had seen the rise of a new urban fashion for more minimal window displays, which used space, lighting and carefully posed dummies to dramatise consumer desire. But as retail historian Leonard Marcus notes, in the early 1930s many 'stockier' shop windows were still being designed with the 'elaborate finickitiness of the early 1900s mechanical displays'. Searching for a frame of reference that would provide effective visual shorthand for his readers in 1978, Marcus likens this style to the 'energetic hyperbole of a Busby Berkeley dance routine.'<sup>36</sup>



**Figure 2** ‘Cowboy Song’ overhead shot with Stetsons

Although Berkeley’s early work for Goldwyn is generally overlooked in favour of his more famous, grand-scale efforts at Warner Bros., he was dance director for the first four of the Cantor pictures, and this raises questions about the role of advertising imperatives in the development of his distinctive directing style. In his screen debut, *Whoopie!*, the opening ‘Cowboy Song’ sequence contains the first versions of his famous kaleidoscopic overhead shots, creating a flattened effect reminiscent of a wheel design pinned on a shop-window backcloth or a rotating shop display (see figure 2). Indeed, as Martin Rubin notes, the choreography for the whole film is ‘fairly rudimentary’, with more emphasis on headgear and arm movements than on footwork.<sup>37</sup> This is most striking in the ‘Stetson’ number. With the exception of one shot—Berkeley’s first attempt at taking the camera through a tunnel of legs—every single set-up and dance manoeuvre in the nearly three-minute Goldwyn Girls sequence is built around their white Stetsons. These are passed about and between the girls

bodies in elaborate patterns; thrust aloft; held out in front with heads bowed, like tribute offerings; and made into three parallel lines, shifting back and forth in opposition to each other, creating the effect of shunting the chorus line off screen right in a locomotive action (see figures 3 & 4).



**Figure 3** *Hat manoeuvres*



**Figure 4** *Locomotion*

In his 1927 essay, ‘The Mass Ornament’, Siegfried Kracauer highlighted the conceptual relationship between the fashion for tightly drilled dance troupes and the industrial age. Addressing the phenomenon of the Tiller Girls, he argued that their dances created an undulating conveyor belt of mechanised movement, which simultaneously reflected factory production and the increased regimentation of the lives of urban audiences. Berkeley’s approach to filming the Stetson-centred production numbers can be understood as synthesising Kracauer’s abstracted conveyor belt of ‘indissoluble girl clusters’ with the repetitious patterned abundance of retail display, effectively putting the product back onto the production line.<sup>38</sup> There is scholarly recognition that Berkeley’s work invites Kracauer based readings, acknowledgement that the “Cowboy Song and ‘Stetson’ sequences shape his future use of props and patterns, and even that his patterns and abstractions influence the use of choreographed product in future television advertising.<sup>39</sup> But prior criticism and analysis has not noticed the absolutely central place of the commercial product and its explicit advertising

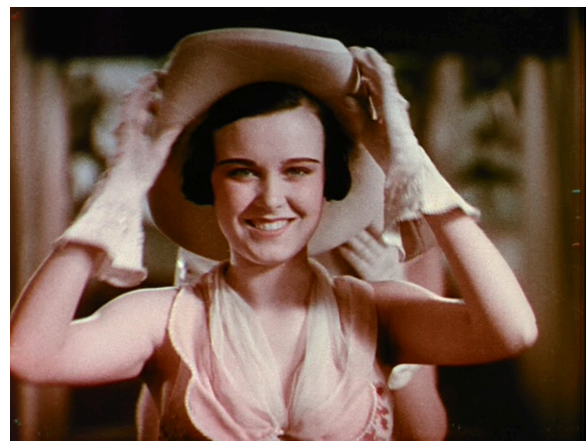


function in this first and foundational iteration of Berkeley's screen work.

The hats also motivate the very first use of Berkeley's mid-sequence close-ups, fragmenting the 'girl clusters' to frame singular beauty. Reflecting on his career in the 1960s, Berkeley felt this to be his key innovation in the film.<sup>40</sup> Like the kaleidoscopic overheads (which in the same interview Berkeley misremembers creating for a later, Warner Bros. film) this is a shot that he would go on to reuse and develop throughout the decade. However, while Berkeley's retrospective account does not acknowledge the place of the product within the shot, it is paramount. Each close-up of a girl is preceded by a close-up of a Stetson, held crown forward to the camera, which she raises to reveal her face, before placing the hat on her head, giving a smile or cheeky wink to camera, and disappearing from the bottom of the frame—to reveal the next Stetson (see figures 5 and 6). These sequential close-ups begin to tap into a direct-to-camera address that is at once generic and individualised, and related less to retail display than to advertising photography.



**Figure 5** *First the Stetson*



**Figure 6** *Then the girl*

Emboldened by his successful Stetson deal, Goldwyn conducted a script breakdown during the preparation for filming *Whoopee!* and identified various further brand placement opportunities in the narrative. He then attempted to secure advertising partners for products as wide ranging as stove polish, ketchup, ant paste, a luxury car brand and a patented laxative, promising prospective advertisers that the products would be prominently featured

in scenes with the star and that the film would have a worldwide reach. But despite Goldwyn's conviction that 'THIS FORM OF ADVERTISING SHOULD BE OF ENORMOUS VALUE TO MANUFACTURERS WHO OWN NATIONAL BRANDS OF ANY OF THE AFFORMENTIONED COMMODITIES', the advertisers and their New York and Chicago based ad agencies did not bite.<sup>41</sup> Over the course of four weeks of correspondence between East Coast and West it became clear that the advertisers' need for caution and control over strongly-integrated screen placements and the lack of West Coast-based advertising agency infrastructure sat at odds with the hurtling speed and on-the-spot decision-making required by the expensive machine of studio-based film production. The upshot of this was that on 30 April 1930 Goldwyn Productions Vice President, Abraham Lehr, wired Farnol to say 'HAVE DECIDED DROP ADVERTISING SCHEME BECAUSE CANNOT GIVE WORTHWHILE REGISTRATION OF NATIONAL BRANDS WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH TEMPO AND ENTERTAINMENT VALUE OF SCENES INVOLVED'.<sup>42</sup> Despite Goldwyn's best efforts, this left Stetson as the only onscreen placement in the film.

### **Marketing marketability: product deals as part of a persuasive inter-industry address**

The release of *Whoopie!* in late 1930 coincided with the intensification of a backlash against the increased intrusion of various kinds of explicit and disguised commercial advertising on the cinema screen. Arguments about advertising by motion picture and its potential negative impact on audience satisfaction, exhibitor profits and the reputation of film as a medium had long encompassed the advertiser-sponsored short fiction films, newsreels and production process films which were made and distributed outwith the Hollywood studio system throughout the 1910s and 1920s. But the arrival of sound and the financial pressures of the

Depression also saw the development of highly contentious stand-alone ‘ad trailers’, which were a couple of minutes in length and more closely resembled modern advertisements.<sup>43</sup> Plugs for products within full-length features were also becoming more common, but these were often very clumsily executed. Donald Crafton notes the example of a thirty-second close-up of an RCA-Victor phonograph in RKO’s 1930 feature *Danger Lights*.<sup>44</sup> This phenomenon became a particular issue for the MPPDA, which received letters of complaint from various companies about the screen exposure being given to competing brands. Thus, while the Motion Picture Production Code did not forbid product inclusion, the MPPDA began to discourage it.<sup>45</sup>

By 1931, the backlash was to a large degree being sustained by *Harrison’s Reports*, a one-man trade publication that explicitly served independent cinema exhibitors. P.S. Harrison was particularly alert to the growth of onscreen product visibility and scripted plugs for brand names in studio features, and also took a dim view of the expansion of offscreen tie-up and star-endorsement activity. He sought to enlist the editors of general newspapers around the country in his crusade against ‘concealed advertising’, appealing to them both as self-interested competitors for the advertising dollar and as champions of public/audience interest.<sup>46</sup> With his agitation, the full range of screen advertising practices became caught up in the latest iteration of the controversy.<sup>47</sup>

If Goldwyn’s plan to include additional narratively-embedded placements in *Whoopie!* had been successful, the film would undoubtedly have drawn strong criticism from Harrison and possibly from other quarters too. But as released, it did not. Although Goldwyn had essentially smuggled a four-minute all-singing-all-dancing advertising short for Stetson right inside the picture, Harrison did not object. This was perhaps because *Whoopie!* did not commit any of the usual screen advertising offences. Neither vocal nor visual appearances of

the Stetson brand could be accused of diminishing the film's entertainment value, interrupting its narrative flow or otherwise short-changing the audience. Instead, as part of a major production number—a kind of narrative interruption that was entirely expected and welcomed within the Hollywood musical format of the time—the product was fully and successfully integrated into the central pleasures of the text. Harrison's review of *Whoopee!* explicitly noted that the 'the group dancing by cowboys and cowgirls is pleasingly rhythmical' and declared the film 'sure-fire entertainment'.<sup>48</sup> Quite by accident, Goldwyn had stumbled upon the big production number as the vehicle through which embedded advertising could be included extensively and without rebuke.

Harrison claimed to speak for the exhibition sector as he railed against tie-ups and 'concealed advertising', and sought to extract statements from each studio head publicly repudiating these practices. The studios, however, were not convinced. In March 1931, Nicholas Shenck, President of MGM and Loews wrote to Harrison, defending his choices: 'Up to date, the majority of exhibitors have shown a desire for commercial tieups for they themselves in most cases have gone out to make them.'<sup>49</sup> This was true. As UA's Hal Horne wrote to influential publicist Lincoln Quarberg in the same year, tie-ups were now simply 'part of the fabric and custom of picture exploitation.' Moreover, if the studios did not establish centralised tie-ups, they were liable to find the faces of their stars used in locally arranged deals that they had neither authorised nor approved for taste and suitability.<sup>50</sup> Thus, while the MPPDA might have wished the studios to desist from the practice, there were Advertising Code-related risks involved in leaving that side of exploitation purely to the exhibition sector.

Before any film could be pitched to the public, the picture, and more importantly *its marketability*, had to be sold to the gatekeepers of the audience—a struggling exhibition



trade. UA sold its films on an individual, rather than a block-booked basis. The company advertised this policy at the point of release of the second Cantor picture, *Palmy Days*, as evidence of the confidence it had in the quality of its films. But it also sought to justify taking a larger percentage of the gross (50%), which it felt was ‘commensurate with box office value.’<sup>51</sup> As Jack Harrower would note, reflecting on 1931’s exploitation trends in the *Film Daily Yearbook*, the turn to percentage bookings ‘forced the producer to get down to the brass tacks of exploitation’ and approach the endeavour as a ‘co-partnership’ with the exhibitors.<sup>52</sup> For UA, this meant taking particular care with both the design and the framing of its campaigns. Pressbooks full of improbable exploitation suggestions could not just be thrust upon the exhibitor. Tie-ups needed to be constructed more thoughtfully, with an eye to ease and practical applicability.

In July 1931 UA announced that the release of *Palmy Days* would be used to launch its new more streamlined and efficient approach to exploitation management. This included an expanded exploitation role for UA salesmen, in an Advertising, Publicity and Exploitation department now headed by Hal Horne, a man with extensive exhibition experience. *Variety* reported: ‘Suggestions about exploitation are out for U.A. from now on. Hook ups will be made, not inferred.’<sup>53</sup> The film, which premiered on 23 September 1931, saw Cantor play a fake spiritualist’s assistant turned efficiency expert, in a farcical caper set in an industrial-scale art deco bakery staffed almost entirely by skimpily clad Goldwyn Girls. Echoing the theme of industrial efficiency and homing in on the bakery goods made by the fictional business, the *Palmy Days* pressbook boasted the ‘largest bakery tie-up ever conceived’: a pre-set deal with the Continental Baking Company and its nationally distributed brands, Wonder Bread and Hostess Cakes. UA implied that other studios’ national tie-ups might be less than enthusiastically supported by their brand partners, and assured exhibitors that they would get ‘whole-hearted cooperation’ from the ‘industrial giant’ behind

Wonder Bread.<sup>54</sup> A second national tie-up made a connection both to the office environments depicted throughout the film and to Cantor's status as a published writer:

Your local representative of the Underwood Typewriter will know all about "Palmy Days". He's aware of the Eddie Cantor Tie Up. You won't have to go through any involved selling routine. Your story is pre-sold. He has the window displays and counter cards. He's aching to make use of them. Tell him your playdates on "Palmy Days": arrange for the theatre imprinting.<sup>55</sup>

This centralised approach to exploitation was framed not as taking away exhibitors' independence but as a modern, professional support infrastructure, staffed by men with exhibition know-how doing 'double the job' in order to make the exhibitor's life easier, whatever the theatre's place in the release chain.<sup>56</sup> As Mark S. Miller has argued, pressbooks cannot simply be read as evidence of the kinds of marketing appeals encountered by audiences. They need to be understood as documents of studio public relations and persuasive inter-organisational and inter-trade communication.<sup>57</sup> Although the exhibitors were not part of a vertically integrated UA structure, the pressbook subtly invited theatre owners to conceptualise themselves as if they were managers working within a larger organisation, entitled to expect efficient co-operation from the distributor and local suppliers alike. UA also used the trade press to deliver a promise of comprehensive service: 'Exploitation is being figured from every angle. One campaign isn't designed for all types of places. Individual treatment is being given the first class city; second class; small town and neighborhood.'<sup>58</sup> While, as always, there were additional live events, stunts and launch activities planned for the larger cities and the most prestigious theatres, for *Palmy Days* the choice of the biggest national tie-ups focused on everyday, branded bakery goods, which were on sale in cities and towns of every size and type. And unlike a Stetson, pricewise these products lay within the reach of the mass audience that the film targeted.

### **‘Use the SONGS to sell your SHOW!’**

The Cantor films have held little interest for academics focused on mapping the evolution of the musical towards a greater integration of plot, character trajectory and musical moment. Notably, there is no place for any of these films in Rick Altman’s narrative taxonomy of the musical.<sup>59</sup> But the innovative integrations achieved by the Goldwyn Cantor films were not narrative. Richard Dyer has argued that song and dance interludes in films have their own temporal space, intensity and internal logic, performing different functions within the text. They can work to provide a time-out from the narrative in a way that illuminates a tension or communicates a deeper meaning with vivid immediacy.<sup>60</sup> As the series progressed, Goldwyn’s use of key musical numbers in the Cantor films began to acquire an increasingly sophisticated commercial address, setting aspiration against wider narratives depicting economic struggle. The use of featured product started to move away from the brazenly branded spectacular product placement of the first film towards a more subtle type of explicit onscreen product presence, woven into more generalised visual and lyrical odes to different forms of consumption. These used complex combinations of brand-specific and more generic onscreen plugs for whole classes of goods, and facilitated the building of a flexible range of nationally, locally and internationally arranged tie-ups.

The opening of *Palmy Days*, while not precisely a musical number, showcased the workings of factory production in a tightly choreographed sequence set to an orchestral version of one of the picture’s major Cantor songs, ‘Yes, Yes! (My Baby Said Yes)’.<sup>61</sup> If *Whoopie!*’s Stetson routines invoked the advertised product on its production line, *Palmy Days* made this connection completely explicit, moving through the factory setting in a way that blended the rhythmic aesthetics of the industrial process film—a common type of early

advertising short—with Berkeleysque musical glamour, as the Goldwyn Girls operated various machines and enacted regimented work processes. The invention of a fictional bakery, Clarks, meant the film did not namecheck its branded tie-up partner, keeping the possibility of alternative bakery partners open, both within and beyond the US.<sup>62</sup> But the focus on the marvel of uniformly machine-sliced loaves clearly signalled Wonder Bread's key selling point. This refined approach still foregrounded product and product qualities spectacularly, but now the onscreen hooks were simultaneously overt and flexible. The film did attract some tie-up-related criticism from Harrison in the course of voicing his objections to the profusion of product deals and plugs across UA's 1931 output.<sup>63</sup> However, musical integration and the development of semi-branded and more generic product hooks remained the best path forward for Goldwyn's embedded advertising strategy. After a brief experiment with a roadshow release and a stronger focus on made-for-the-film merchandise tie-ups with *The Kid from Spain* in 1932, by the 1933 release of *Roman Scandals* both the mass audience and musically-structured tie-ups were firmly back in the frame.<sup>64</sup>

The *Roman Scandals* pressbook urged the exhibitors to 'Use the SONGS to sell your SHOW!', and the film provided two tie-up ready numbers through which to do this.<sup>65</sup> As Henry Jenkins has argued, over the course of the Goldwyn/Cantor films, Eddie's onscreen persona became increasing 'desemited', moving away from a performance and character style firmly grounded in the Yiddish vaudeville stage toward a less ethnically-specific cinematic 'everyman', designed to have nationwide appeal.<sup>66</sup> This everyman persona is most strongly embodied in *Roman Scandals*. Eddie plays a kind-hearted delivery driver in the corrupt town of West Rome, who, exhausted and hungry to the point of hallucination, finds himself transported to ancient Rome. The first number, 'Build a Little Home', takes place in the Depression-era present. The song is set in motion when Eddie comes upon a group of people who have just been evicted, in order to make way for the construction of a new jail.

Gesturing to the surrounding furniture, Eddie urges them to set up camp in the street: 'The City put you here. Well you stay here until the City put you somewhere else.' In this narrative context of sudden homelessness and potential destitution, what follows is an ode to homemaking as an act of aspiration and love.

With a million little stars,  
We can decorate the ceiling,  
With an optimistic feeling,  
When we build a little home.

Every single little dream,  
Is a shingle or a rafter,  
We can paint the house with laughter,  
When we build a little home.

"BUILD A LITTLE HOME"  
Words and Music by Harry Warren and Al Dubin  
© 1933 WC MUSIC CORP. (ASCAP)

The lyrics replace material goods with laughter, optimism and the resources of nature. The sky provides a roof; 'buttercups and clover' become the carpet. Happiness is configured as a building material stronger than 'log and stone'. As the number progresses, Eddie weaves through the cluttered street, moving furniture, helping to carry laundry and vacuum a rug, playing a piano and starting a gramophone. This creates images that fleetingly position him almost as a sales demonstrator for various types of goods (see figure 7). Around him, a cast of extras, of all ages, sets about organising the profusion of mismatched items into a makeshift environment for communal living. If the 'Stetson' number reflected a retail aesthetic of strictly patterned, uniform abundance, 'Build a Little Home' references the junk shop, the general store and the outdoor market.



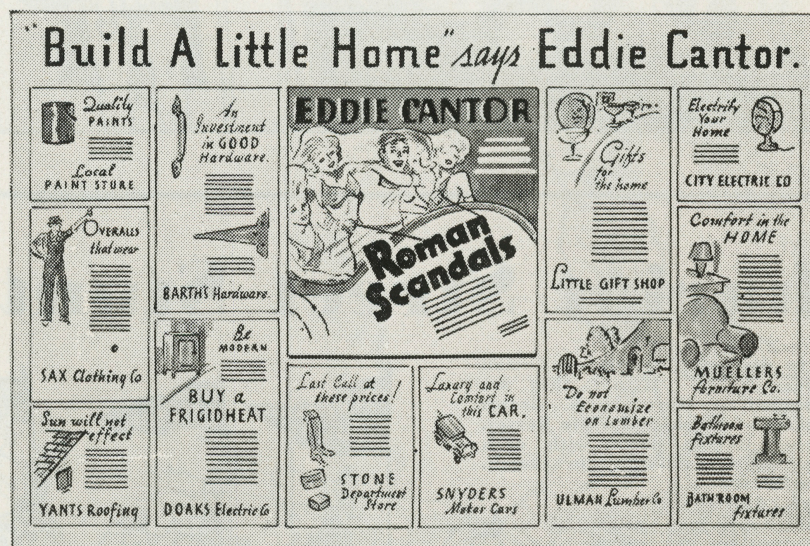
**Figure 7** *Eddie helps to vacuum*

This makes sense when considered in relation to the pressbook. There was a national dealership tie-up in place with Masury Paints, which secured 162 store displays for the film in New York alone.<sup>67</sup> There was also a *Saturday Evening Post* full-page ad sponsored by the Copper and Brass Research Association. But a key suggestion for this song was that it was ideal for developing tie-ups with a range of business types more likely to be local in scope. This recognised the degree to which the branded culture of the early twentieth century had yet to reach into every corner of life. Local tie-ups and business relationships still mattered to exhibitors, and the film provided a strong conceptual hook on which these deals could be hung. By its nature, the homebuilding theme safely steered the exhibitor towards appropriate local choices unlikely to trouble the Advertising Code.



# Special Newspaper Section

*Suggested by the Song, "Build a Little Home,"  
Sung by Eddie Cantor in "Roman Scandals"*



"Build a Little Home," sings Eddie—and all your local merchants chime in singing the praises of their particular product in this co-operative newspaper layout. Hardware, roofing, electric companies. Plumbing, paint, furniture outfits. Everybody can come in on this—and will. Theatre to get large picture ad free of charge in center. Get right after the advertising manager of the leading local daily.

**Figure 8** Suggested press advertising layout, *Roman Scandals* pressbook. Image supplied by the Wisconsin Centre for Film and Theatre Research.

The pressbook recommended contacting 'any and all manufacturers of building materials', along with local building contractors, real estate agents and home furnishing stores.<sup>68</sup> While there is no evidence that the rather ambitious 'Build a Little Home' themed double page newspaper spread of local advertisers proposed in the pressbook (see figure 8), was attempted or achieved in any locale, the song nonetheless provided a flexible logic for less expensive window displays with individual businesses, along the lines of the national

Masury deal.<sup>69</sup> Onscreen, the camerawork and editing highlighted many different possible product types, but in a context that emphasised DIY ingenuity rather than shop-bought perfection. And it was left to Al Dubin's lyrics to frame consumer desire, outlining a dream of happy nesting, while keeping the products themselves intangible. The sequence ends with a Berkeley-choreographed barn dance, emphasising community and the coming together of different characters, which is ultimately halted by the authorities, who move the narrative forward by throwing Eddie out of town. Although the official tie-in brands do not appear vocally or visually in the number, 'Build a Little Home' embodied what early-twentieth-century advertising practice understood—that effective advertising didn't just sell products, it sold dreams of the better self/life that could be enabled by those purchases.

The second advertising-orientated number in *Roman Scandals*, 'Keep Young and Beautiful', was even more ambitious.<sup>70</sup> It takes place in ancient Rome, at the royal baths and despite the historical narrative framing, employs a stronger relationship to explicit branded plugs. Eddie/Eddipus is seeking his friend's beloved, a captured British princess who is to set to become the emperor's next concubine, in order to warn her of a poisoning plot and hatch a plan to escape. The bathhouse is exclusively female, a harem-like spa. Locating her involves Eddie disguising himself briefly as a girl, and then, following an accidental mud treatment, switching to blackface. When attempting to leave the harem, Eddie is mistaken for an Ethiopian beauty specialist. The blonde, bewigged Goldwyn Girls seek his advice and expertise, leading into the film's most famous song. As he outlines the activities and products a woman should invest in if she wants to keep the attentions of a man, we encounter a range of generic and brand-specific exhortations to consume, accompanied by images illustrating various beautification practices. However, while all the women in the bathhouse appear to be slaves, there is a strict racial hierarchy. Identical black handmaidens serve identical blonde women of leisure, brushing, massaging and buffing in service of an ideal of white beauty



(figure 9). Although displaced to Ancient Rome, this number can be understood as part of a wider twentieth century advertising practice of using imagery of happy, helpful black slaves/servants to market modern aids for traditional feminine competences to increasingly time-pressed white women.<sup>71</sup>



**Figure 9** Eddie, solo: *'When you're seen anywhere with your hat off, Have a permanent wave in your hair.'*

Self-improvement and the beautifying ablutions of the Goldwyn Girls had already been mined as more typically geometric Berkeley spectacle in previous films in the series. But in *Palmy Days*, the diet-and-exercise themed 'Bend Down Sister' worked against the Continental Bakery tie-up deal, by warning of the dangers of too many French pastries. Here the offscreen product endorsement value of the Goldwyn Girls completely converges with the film text, creating onscreen imagery that is almost magazine-advertisement-ready. Where the mobile sequential close ups in the 'Stetson' number had a candid, characterful liveliness,

here—even when the girls are singing—there is a frozen quality to their poses, invoking much more strongly the stills photography used for cosmetics advertising (figures 10, 11 and 12). The title’s instruction to ‘keep young and beautiful’ echoed phrasing that had been in common advertising usage since the turn of the century.<sup>72</sup> And rather like advertising copy, the rest of the lyrics are clever and knowing, at once cynical about the ‘oceans of lotions and potions’ involved in maintaining the facade of youth and beauty while merciless in pressing home the lonely risks of failing to do so.



**Figure 10** *Pictured girl, solo line: ‘Each wrinkle in your skin / Rub it out and rub a dimple in.’*



**Figure 11** *Close up of lipstick application*



**Figure 12** *Pictured girls, sung together: 'You'll always have your way / If he likes you in a negligee.'*

Both Eddie and several of the featured Goldwyn Girls get unique lines to sing. But, while the girls' lyrics focus on beautifying activities and generic product types, the two explicitly-branded vocal plugs in the song are reserved for Eddie and are sung in ways that exploit and commercially repurpose the most instantly recognisable and characteristic elements of his comic performance style. Blackface had been a central part of Cantor's stage stardom and his use of the form was firmly rooted in Jewish comic tradition. As Michael Rogin explores, it could be mobilised by Jewish performers to negotiate their own ethnic identity and assimilation within American society. While Rogin stresses that the practice was offensively parodic, entirely based on white stereotypes of blackness and thus always at the expense of people of colour, he argues that for Jewish performers, it could also be assertive, self-authored and, particularly in the work of someone like Cantor, used to disrupt the social order.<sup>73</sup>

In *Whoopie!* the masquerade of racial other—both blackface and redface—enables Cantor's character, Henry Jenkins, to transform from meek nebbish to impish provocateur, challenging the WASP authority of the sheriff and the wealthy ranch owner, and repeatedly outwitting them. But in *Roman Scandals*, Eddie/Eddipus's primary challenges to power and

authority are conducted without racial masquerade, as in the framing of ‘Build a Little Home’. When blackface is donned for this film, it begins, as usual, as a practical deception. But instead of being put to politically subversive use as the scene unfolds, it is reduced to a sales tool. Even the mud treatment pretext for getting Eddie into blackface makes a knowing, inter-textual reference to the star’s earlier adventures with stage-based advertising songs, as in 1923, Cantor had struck a deal with a brand of complexion clay and wrote/performed a song promoting it in Ziegfeld’s *Follies* show: ‘My Girl Uses Mineralava (That’s Why I’m Her Beau)’.<sup>74</sup> Two signature aspects of Cantor’s star performance—always exaggerated in his blackface sequences—are used to underline the brand mentions of two key national tie-up partners in ‘Keep Young and Beautiful’. First, his distinctive rapid clap, at once camp and childishly gleeful, coincides with a risqué plug for Cellophane, which was being marketed by DuPont as a fancy gift-wrapping material, Cello Ribbon, and had been used to make the sparkling fringes of the white save girls’ dance costumes (see figure 13).



**Figure 13** Eddie, solo: ‘You’ll drive him half insane / In a bathing suit of Cellophane’

Second, Cantor's 'Banjo Eyes', the source of his nickname, are used to fullest effect for the most exclusive item in the pre-set deals, Caron's Christmas Night perfume. As he sings 'Get him to hold you tight, Let him get a whiff of Christmas Night' his eyes roll and widen. He completes the main refrain—'Keep young and beautiful / If you want to be loved'—on a sustained open note, throwing his head back, mouth wide, as the camera rises (see figure 14).<sup>75</sup> The pressbook copy emphasised the advertising power of this vocal:

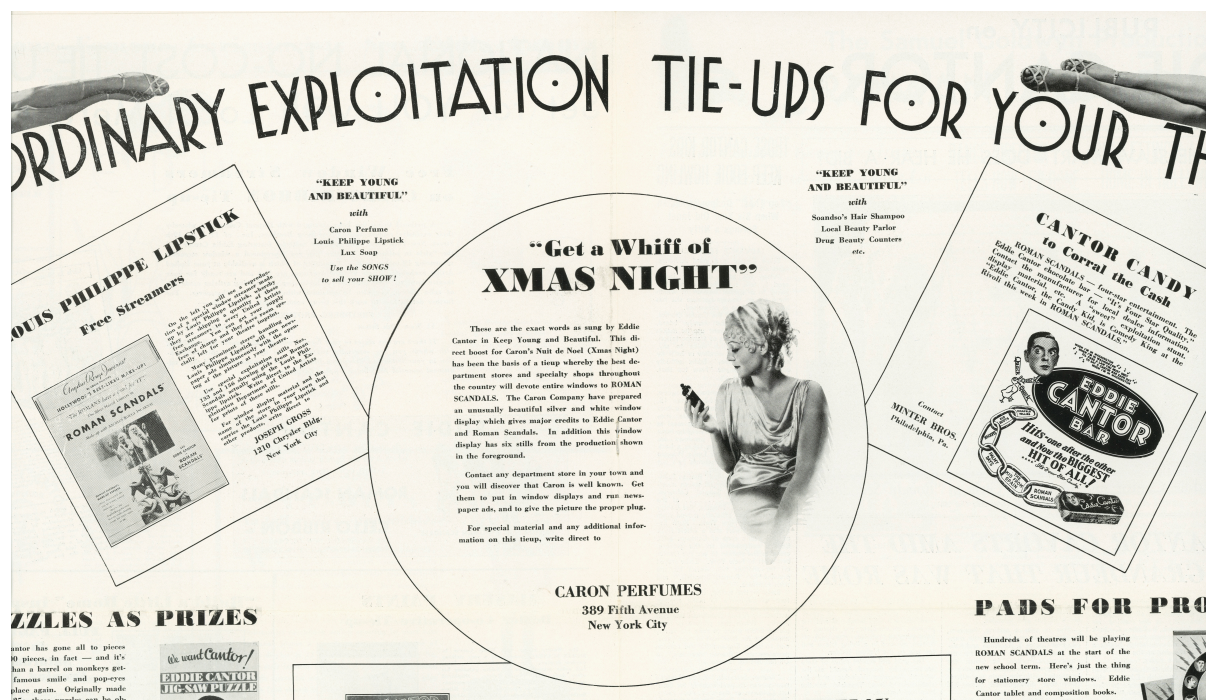
"Get a Whiff of XMAS NIGHT"

These are the exact words sung by Eddie Cantor in *Keep Young and Beautiful*. This direct boost for Caron's *Nuit de Noel* (Xmas Night) has been the basis by which the best department stores and speciality shops throughout the country will devote entire windows to ROMAN SCANDALS. (see figure 15)



**Insert Figure 14** *Eddie, solo: 'Keep young and beautiful / If you want to be looooved'*





**Figure 15** *Roman Scandals* pressbook beauty tie-up spread  
Image supplied by the Wisconsin Centre for Film and Theatre Research

Three weeks before *Roman Scandals* was released, the *Motion Picture Herald* was under the mistaken impression that the whole number would be called 'Christmas Night'. It carried a publicity still of eleven of the Goldwyn Girls in their bathhouse robes, holding outsized display versions of Caron's distinctive black glass art deco flacons.<sup>76</sup> These bottles do not appear in the number (or anywhere else in the film) and must have been brought onto the set expressly for the purpose of facilitating the tie-up campaign. Just like the incorporation of Cello Ribbon into the costume design and the targeted deployment of Cantor's signature performance elements around key branded moments in Dubin's lyrics, this demonstrates the degree to which the visual and vocal aspects of the tie-ups were being planned well in advance and factored in as integral to the production process. This went far beyond set dressing and would have required extensive cooperation between different production departments.

In giving the number a more general title and blending a range of branded and generic

marketable cues into the song, 'Keep Young and Beautiful' enabled a similar mix of nationally pre-set and locally-made deals to 'Build a Little Home', albeit with a stronger focus on the branded elements. Both songs provided windows through which to advertise small- and big-ticket items under the same tie-up concept umbrella, inviting viewers to buy into the idea of beautification or homebuilding anywhere on the price-point spectrum. Exhibitors and tie-up partners could also buy in on a spectrum. Particularly for the 'Keep Young and Beautiful' campaign, the range of pre-set deals was suited to constructing different styles of displays in a wide range of store types in any location. Caron's flagship scent could extend the film text into a prestigious spot. Just as readily, Lux soap could facilitate a smaller drugstore's more modest display.

There are no complete records of the U.S.-wide use of store windows for the film, but Farnol's round-up of the promotional activities arranged for New York has survived, and this highlights the way in which a major film's release could become ubiquitously suffused throughout the retail environment of a city. *Roman Scandals* secured a double Macy's window for four days between Christmas and New Year. This was the single most valuable piece of retail-display real estate in the city, worth 'several thousand dollars a day'.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, the display arranged for it was a one-off, featuring an elaborate original costume and focused on a range of film-specific merchandise, including sheet music, records and Parker Brothers games. This kind of high-profile retail spectacle was important, but not readily replicable. The more ordinary work of city and nationwide retail-based promotion was carried out by the branded deals. In New York there were 'complete windows in several of the large department stores' for DuPont Cellophane displays. But crucially, DuPont displays also went into the proudly price-conscious Woolworths chain. There were twenty Caron windows, some in Manhattan's 'most important' midtown locations. But *Roman Scandals* streamers for Louis Philippe lipstick were also distributed to drugstores throughout

the city. The relationship between the song and its real-world retail extensions was also narrativised, further positioning the Goldwyn Girls as the film's glamorous ambassadors of consumption. Farnol planted a special "Buy Now" story about a Goldwyn Girls shopping trip in the *New York Journal*, arranging staged images of the girls emerging from department stores, clutching packages in their hands.<sup>78</sup>

The idea of building in highly-structured but still flexible ad hooks was not just of value in shaping the promotional focus throughout the US market. It could also facilitate control of advertising angles in UA's increasingly important international markets.<sup>79</sup> In June 1934, in its rather breathless, ticker-tape manner, *Film Daily*'s exploitation section reported: 'Chalk up a swell stunt for the foreign publicity dep't of United Artists .... which negotiated a merchandising tieup on a mass scale never equalled in the foreign field'. Outlining a thirteen page *Roman Scandals* advertising spread in *Cine-Mundial*, the leading Spanish language film magazine, it praised the way that 'Keep Young and Beautiful' had been used to persuade major manufacturers to take out 'full page ads dressed up with specially posed stills of the Goldwyn Girls', concluding: 'What we're trying to figure out is was this sequence worked into the Goldwyn pix with the idea of exploiting it so magnificently as outlined above ..... or did the foreign publicity department develop a natural? ..... either way ..... it's a darb.'<sup>80</sup>

What is striking here is that the trade press is still surprised by the idea of this degree of production-level thematic premeditation. The spread in the August issue of *Cine-Mundial* was produced almost as described and is notable for the way it exploits the song's commercial flexibility. Of the ten beauty-related product deals included, none is with the national tie-up partners used in the US territory. The generic activities illustrated in the number enable territorially-specific rebranding, so although there is no perfume partner to



replace Caron in the *Cine-Mundial* spread, new partners are found for other product types which did not get branded vocal plugs. The number contained a shot of four girls brushing their teeth, and in the US there was an endorsement deal with Phillips Milk of Magnesia Toothpaste. In the advertising for Spanish markets this was easily replaced by Listerine toothpaste.<sup>81</sup> One advertising moment in the film straddled the generic and the branded in a particularly interesting way, testing the limits of rebrandability. When two Goldwyn girls sing ‘In using or choosing a lipstick / Choose the kind that won’t leave any mark’ they are strongly referencing the well-publicised ‘indelible’ qualities and marketing rhetoric of the official US tie-up partner, Louis Philippe’s Rouge Incarnat lipstick.<sup>82</sup> However, the lyrics do not namecheck the product or the brand explicitly, and this meant Tangee lipstick could take its place in the Spanish magazine spread, despite the fact that Tangee’s famous cosmetic innovation was quite different—it changed colour on the lips.<sup>83</sup>

Goldwyn recognised the need for particular ‘care and skill’ in the handling of the advertising of *Roman Scandals*. Another number in the film, ‘No More Love’ was set around a slave auction and featured chained women dressed in nothing but artfully-arranged blonde wigs. This skated about as close to the limits of acceptability as it was possible to go. Writing to Farnol four days after the Los Angeles premier, and just as the Advertising Code was finally beginning to get some teeth, Goldwyn emphasised the importance of the child audience and fretted that ‘by stressing nudity too much in the advertising it will drive away that clientele.’ He saw the film’s appeal as tripart: ‘For the children we have the chariot scenes and Cantor himself, who they idolize. For the women, the beauty of the picture and how to keep young and beautiful. For the men we have more beautiful girls in this picture than they have ever seen anywhere.’ Elsewhere in the letter he laboured the main marketing theme: ‘We must play up the idea of keeping young and beautiful—every woman who wants to keep young and beautiful should see the Cantor picture.’<sup>84</sup>

Without knowledge of this advertising context, film scholars have struggled to make sense of this number. The lack of the conventional dynamics of the gaze, the strangely non-erotic nature of the women's display to camera, and the conspiratorial looks between women, all noted by William D. Routt and Richard Thompson, are rather less perplexing—and less potentially subversive—when the song is understood as a big advert and considered in relation to a primary intended viewer who is a (white) female consumer of beauty products. And while these authors correctly spot a recurring economic theme across various numbers in the film, they fail to see its functional role.<sup>85</sup> For a mass-market movie that combined the childish with the adult and the wholesome with the sexual, in order to draw in a wide audience, the ready-built, easy-to-use tie-up campaigns and concepts of *Roman Scandals* became the main means by which exhibitor and advertiser activity could be safely steered towards the less risqué elements of the picture. 'Keep Young and Beautiful' can and has been read in terms of the containment and discipline of the white female body.<sup>86</sup> But re-read in light of the pressbook, the surviving documentation, and the trade press coverage, it should also be understood in terms of the attempt to discipline exhibitors' marketing practices, in line with production and distribution company interests.

## **Conclusion**

The industry-wide growth of commercial tie-up deals and product-centred marketing angles during the 1930s should be understood as one of the key tools available in the pursuit of promotional control for all studios. But the varying levels of per-film financial risk associated with different corporate structures resulted in that tool being deployed in rather different ways. Here I have argued that Goldwyn's approach in the early 1930s was significantly ahead of what is understood as common practice at that time. His independent producer status and

film-by-film production focus drove him to develop a version of product-and-brand-centred marketability that was much more advanced than anything being done by his vertically integrated competitors. In an era when onscreen product placements were mere set dressing for the drama, Goldwyn's advertising strategy created something much closer to modern high-impact product placement, both in concept and in onscreen effect. Strongly integrated product placement certainly became more common after the end of vertical integration. But a focus on production and distribution companies that were never part of a vertically integrated structure reveals a version of these practices emerging much earlier.

Goldwyn's early-1930s version of high-impact product placement necessarily responded to early-1930s industrial conditions. Over the course of the Cantor film series, his approach evolved to work deftly around MPPDA disapproval and advertiser reticence, as it sought to cater persuasively and flexibly to the needs of various types of exhibitors, across UAs different sales territories. However, as a form of commercial address to the viewer, it also became increasingly sophisticated in the way that it integrated its advertising message with the entertainment content. By focusing his onscreen product and brand hooks within discrete musical interludes, Goldwyn effectively embedded a series of short advertising breaks within the narratives of the films, echoing the structure of established radio practice and prefiguring the arrival of television spot advertising. If 'Stetson' smuggled a single advert into the film, the multi-product approach of the two key numbers in *Roman Scandals* functioned as entire advertising breaks.

Across the Cantor series, these musical sequences drew on a range of existing commercial aesthetics—from retail, stage, radio, screen and print—and synthesised them into a new form of brand-friendly promotional screen rhetoric, which could be deployed without complaint in the musical feature. The Goldwyn girls' interchangeable generic glamour and

Cantor's individualised star performance were put to work, promoting whole classes of goods on one hand and highlighting branded uniqueness on the other, with each product type or brand name given its own visual and vocal moment to shine. In conjunction with the pressbooks, these deeply embedded advertising hooks were designed to make the preferred tie-up deals simply too good for exhibitors and retailers to resist. This can be contrasted quite directly against the practices over at Warner Bros., who by 1933 were co-incidentally using exactly the same dance direction and song writing team as Goldwyn for the production numbers of *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* and *Gold Diggers of 1933* (Busby Berkeley, Harry Warren and Al Dubin), but who did not need to present their advertising campaigns so persuasively to their exhibitors.<sup>87</sup> In *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*, the flirting and courting of 'Young and Healthy' and the honeymoon themed 'Shuffle Off to Buffalo' kept the focus on romance and the promise of sex. These songs notioned only broadly, through the standard trajectory of heterosexual coupledness, towards the potential purchase of the offscreen GE white goods that marriage might make desirable.<sup>88</sup>

The mythology that developed around Berkeley, fuelled by his oft-repeated interview account, is illustrative of one of the ways in which advertising imperatives and the role of commercial product relationships have been glossed out of the history of popular film, in the process of consecrating it as art. A production still of the dance director at work in 1930, rehearsing the Goldwyn Girls, and specifically correcting the positioning of their hats, recurs in the popular auteurist books that were published about Berkeley, following his critical rediscovery in the 1960s.<sup>89</sup> However, while latterly used to evidence the working practices behind his freshly-embraced directorial genius, the existence of this image stems from advertising needs. Publicity directors like Farnol were intimately involved in ensuring the right publicity stills were captured on set for promotional use.<sup>90</sup> The photograph in the Berkeley books is clearly part of the same stills session as the image used in Stetson's full

page *Variety* ad (see figure 1). But in its original 1930 trade-to-trade advertising context, where the photograph is captioned ‘Rehearsing the Stetson number’ and shows Berkeley handling and positioning the hats without naming him, the image highlights the commercial drivers behind the artistic innovation, and positions the spectacular product deal as the new star.<sup>91</sup>

The fact that the Cantor films have also, to date, been completely absent from the growing body of academic literature addressing the history of product placement is testament to Goldwyn’s achievement. Beyond the reports of the most spectacular offscreen promotional stunts, the history of advertising in feature films has been constructed largely from trade and mainstream press accounts of the backlash against it.<sup>92</sup> Thus, the more successfully a film’s advertising components were entwined with its entertainment value onscreen, the less historically visible they are today. The promotional extensions of films are highly ephemeral and fade over time. The things which link the marketable anchors within the text to the more explicit ‘persuasive rhetoric’ of their commercial exploitation beyond it become invisible to modern audiences. Thus, once these songs are divorced from their relationship to the abundant marketing extra-texts, and distanced from the once-common knowledge of the fashionable brands and their properties, it becomes possible for film scholars Routt and Thompson to misinterpret the direct Caron plug, ‘let him get a whiff of Christmas Night’, as a subversive pre-Code reference to ‘vaginal odor’.<sup>93</sup> Without careful historical reconstruction of the extra-textual marketing surround, some forms of product placement cannot be readily recognised as advertising at all.

In his penultimate Cantor film, Goldwyn’s final use of the production number as advertising window would tip over into surreal excess. A future article will explore in detail the ambitious folly that was the Technicolor Ice Cream Fantasy finale of *Kid Millions*.<sup>94</sup> But

for the purposes of this argument, it is sufficient to say that it altered the balance between advertising, entertainment and star values, and ultimately precipitated the breakdown of the working relationship between Goldwyn and Cantor. The final film in the series, *Strike Me Pink* (1936), which contains no significant onscreen advertising, was a painful exercise in contractual obligations on all sides.<sup>95</sup> But by the mid 1930s Goldwyn had already made a significant innovation. Even as the Cantor films moved away from the overt branded placement of *Whoopee!* and dialled down the explicitness of their vocal plugs, these songs made the consumer concept the core sentiment. ‘Build a Little Home’ and ‘Keep Young and Beautiful’ placed the product and the potential emotional and social rewards of purchase front and centre. The titles of the songs were clear directives to consume, and carried the message out, not only into shop windows and music retail space, but also across the airwaves. Goldwyn’s song centred approach to product placement enabled a concept of consumption to be brought to the fore and framed in a way that was at once utterly blatant and largely deniable.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Charles Eckert, 'The Carole Lombard in Macy's Window', *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 3, no. 1 (1978): 1–21; Janet Staiger, 'Announcing Wares, Winning Patrons, Voicing Ideals: Thinking about the History and Theory of Film Advertising', *Cinema Journal* 29, no. 3 (1990): 3–31; Tino Balio, *History of the American Cinema. Vol. 5: Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930-1939* (New York, N.Y.; London: Charles Scribner's Sons; Simon & Schuster and Prentice Hall, 1993); Mark S. Miller, 'Helping Exhibitors: Pressbooks at Warner Bros. in the Late 1930s', *Film History* 6, no. 2 (1994): 188–96.

<sup>2</sup> Staiger, 'Announcing Wares'; Jane Gaines, 'From Elephants to Lux Soap: The Programming and "Flow" of Early Motion Picture Exploitation', *The Velvet Light Trap* 25 (1990): 29–43.

<sup>3</sup> Balio, *Grand Design*, 173.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Beth Haralovich, 'Mandates of Good Taste: The Self-Regulation of Film Advertising in the Thirties', *Wide Angle* VI, no. 2 (1984): 50–7.

<sup>5</sup> Will H. Hays, *The President's Report to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, April 11 1932*, (New York: MPPDA), 25-29.

<sup>6</sup> Staiger, 'Announcing Wares', 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>8</sup> *Whoopie!* Directed by Thornton Freeland, Hollywood, CA: Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, 1930. DVD edition used for analysis and screenshots: Warner Bros. Archive Collection: Samuel Goldwyn Classics, Burbank CA: Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. 2013.

<sup>9</sup> *Roman Scandals*. Directed by Frank Tuttle, Hollywood, CA: Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, 1933. DVD edition used for analysis and screenshots: *Eddie Cantor 4-Film Collection*, Warner Bros. Archive Collection: Samuel Goldwyn Classics, Burbank CA: Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., 2015, disc 3.

<sup>10</sup> Justin Wyatt, *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in Hollywood*, Texas Film Studies Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 19.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-52.

<sup>13</sup> Katherine Spring, 'Pop Go the Warner Bros., et al.: Marketing Film Songs during the Coming of Sound', *Cinema Journal* 48, no. 1 (2008): 68–89.

<sup>14</sup> Herbert G. Goldman, *Banjo Eyes : Eddie Cantor and the Birth of Modern Stardom* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 370.

<sup>15</sup> Mary-Lou Galician and Peter G. Bourdeau, 'The Evolution of Product Placements in Hollywood Cinema: Embedding High-Involvement "Heroic" Brand Images', in *Handbook of Product Placement in the Mass Media : New Strategies in Marketing Theory, Practice, Trends and Ethics*, ed. Mary-Lou Galician (New York ; London: Routledge, 2004).

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<sup>16</sup> Eckert, 'Carole Lombard', 11 & 15.

<sup>17</sup> Yvonne Zimmermann, 'Advertising and Film: A Topological Approach', in *Films That Sell: Moving Pictures and Advertising*, ed. Bo Florin, Nico de Klerk, and Patrick Vonderau, 1st ed. 2017 edition (New York, NY: Springer, 2016), 21–39, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Jay Newell, Charles T. Salmon, and Susan Chang, 'The Hidden History of Product Placement', *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 50, no. 4 (2006): 575–94, 583–4. See also, Eckert 'Carole Lombard'; Kerry Segrave, *Product Placement in Hollywood Films: A History* (McFarland, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Newell, Salmon and Chang, 'Hidden History', 583–4 & 588.

<sup>20</sup> Tino Balio, *United Artists: The Company Built by the Stars* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

<sup>21</sup> Eckert, 'Carole Lombard', 3; Harvey G. Cohen, *Who's in the Money?: The Great Depression Musicals and Hollywood's New Deal* (Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 30–32.

<sup>22</sup> Terry Ramsaye, ed., *International Motion Picture Almanac* (New York: Quigley Publications, 1943), 1120–1.

<sup>23</sup> Joel W. Finler, *The Hollywood Story* (London: Mandarin, 1992), 471–3.

<sup>24</sup> Balio, *United Artists*, 94.

<sup>25</sup> The stage show *Whoopee* does not have an exclamation mark. The film *Whoopee!* should have one. However, this was often omitted in trade press reports and in archival correspondence, so quotations and references reflect these omissions.

<sup>26</sup> Stetson music and lyrics, Walter Donaldson and Gus Kahn. Galician and Bourdeau, 'Evolution of Product Placements'.

<sup>27</sup> Richard Barrios, *A Song in the Dark: The Birth of the Musical Film* (London: Oxford University Press, 1995), 242.

<sup>28</sup> See various correspondence involving Goldwyn, Ziegfeld, Stanley Sharpe, Abraham Lehr and James Mulvey dated between 5 March and 18 March, held within the Samuel Goldwyn Papers, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles (henceforth SGP-MHL). *Whoopee* – Correspondence 1930, f. 2762.

<sup>29</sup> *Whoopee* – Correspondence 1930, SGP-MHL: f. 2762

<sup>30</sup> 'Legitimate: "Whoopee"', *Variety*, 12 December 1928, 52.

<sup>31</sup> *Variety*, 3 September 1930, 47.

<sup>32</sup> 'Goldwyn Stars Exploited in Stetson Hats', *Exhibitor's Trade Review*, 8 December 1923, 34.

<sup>33</sup> *Whoopee!* pressbook, (United Artists Corporation, 1930), 5 & 13, in *Cinema Pressbooks from the Original Studio Collections*. (Woodbridge, Conn.; Reading, Berkshire: Research Publications, 1988) microfilm reel 37; 'Exploitation: Los Angeles', *Variety*, 1 October 1930,



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16. For examples of the tie-up elsewhere see, 'Sketch of Cantor, Stetson Hat Tieup Exploit "Whoopie"', *Exhibitors Herald-World*, 18 October 1930, 62; 'Managers' Round Table: Walter McDowell of Louisville, Kentucky Is Active Showman', *Motion Picture News*, 15 November 1930, 63; and a photo of 'Stetson tieup effected by Warren A Slee, manager of the Colonial house, Allentown, Pa.', *Exhibitors Herald-World*, 20 December 1930, 50.

<sup>34</sup> This hire is routinely credited to Cantor, as he claimed responsibility for recommending Berkeley in his autobiography. But on the basis of the surviving correspondence, it is clear that Cantor was away on tour and appears to have had extremely minimal involvement in the choice of dance director. Farnol did all the New York legwork and persuaded Goldwyn to hire Berkeley, against Goldwyn's initial reservations, which were fuelled by co-producer Ziegfeld's vociferous objections and rumours about Berkeley's drinking. See various correspondence between 24 January and 5 March 1930. Whoopie – Correspondence 1930, SGP-MHL: f. 2761.

<sup>35</sup> Jane Gaines, 'The Queen Christina Tie-ups: Convergence of Show Window and Screen', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 11, no. 1 (1989): 35–60.

<sup>36</sup> Leonard S. Marcus, *The American Store Window* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1978), 17.

<sup>37</sup> Martin Rubin, *Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 90.

<sup>38</sup> Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), 76.

<sup>39</sup> Amy Herzog, *Dreams of Difference, Songs of the Same: The Musical Moment in Film* (Minneapolis, Minn.; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 154–56. Gerald Mast, *Can't Help Singin': The American Musical on Stage and Screen* (Woodstock, N.Y: Overlook Press, 1987), 121. Colleen T. Dunagen, *Consuming Dance: Choreography and Advertising* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press USA, 2018), 90–92.

<sup>40</sup> Bob Pike and Dave Martin, *The Genius of Busby Berkeley* (Reseda, Cal.: Creative Film Society, 1973), 42.

<sup>41</sup> Lehr to Farnol, 5 April 1930, Whoopie – Correspondence 1930, SGP-MHL: f. 2762. See also various related correspondence between 1 April 1930 and 30 April 1930.

<sup>42</sup> Lehr to Farnol, 30 April 1930, Whoopie – Correspondence 1930, SGP-MHL: f. 2762. The reasons for advertiser resistance will be interrogated in more depth in a second article.

<sup>43</sup> Segrave, *Product Placement*, 26–34.

<sup>44</sup> Donald Crafton, *History of the American Cinema. Vol. 4: The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926–1931* (New York: London: Charles Scribner's Sons; Simon & Schuster/Prentice Hall International, 1997), 191.

<sup>45</sup> Segrave, *Product Placement*, 45–46; Newell, Salmon and Chang 'Hidden History', 587.

<sup>46</sup> 'Enlist the Aid of the Press Against "Sponsored" Screen Advertising', *Harrison's Reports*, vol. XIII, no. 12, 21 March 1931, 45.

<sup>47</sup> Eckert 'Carole Lombard'; Segrave *Product Placement*; Newell, Salmon and Chang 'Hidden History'.

<sup>48</sup> "'Whoopie" – with Eddie Cantor', *Harrison's Reports*, vol. XII, no. 41, 11 October 1930, 162.

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<sup>49</sup> 'Nick Shenck will not give up Tie-up Advertising', *Harrison's Reports*, vol. XIII, no. 28, 21 March 1931, 109.

<sup>50</sup> Horne, quoted in Newell, Salmon and Chang 'Hidden History', 587; See also, 'Pictures: Inside Stuff', *Variety*, 8 December 1931, 48.

<sup>51</sup> 'A Frank Statement of Policy', *Variety*, 6 October 1931, 34.

<sup>52</sup> Jack Harrower, 'Exploitation', in *The Film Daily Year Book of Motion Pictures.*, ed. Jack W. Alicoate (New York, N.Y.: Film Daily, 1932), 105.

<sup>53</sup> Pictures: U.A.'s New Promotion System Makes Film Salesmen Double as Exploiters', *Variety*, 14 July 1931, 21.

<sup>54</sup> *Palmy Days* pressbook (United Artists Corporation, 1931), 3–4, in *Cinema Pressbooks*, reel 33.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>56</sup> 'Pictures: U.A.'s New Promotion System' *Variety*.

<sup>57</sup> Miller, 'Helping Exhibitors', 189.

<sup>58</sup> 'Pictures: U.A.'s New Promotion System' *Variety*.

<sup>59</sup> Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 372–8.

<sup>60</sup> Richard Dyer, *In the Space of a Song: The Uses of Song in Film* (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2012), 89.

<sup>61</sup> *Palmy Days*. Directed by Edward Sutherland, Hollywood, CA: Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, 1931. DVD edition, *Eddie Cantor 4-Film Collection* disc 1.

<sup>62</sup> For instance, see the use of a tie-up with Countess Doughnuts and Cakes in Philadelphia. 'Ed. Corcoran Broke Keith House record With Cantor Picture' *Motion Picture Herald*, 14 November 1931, 69. In Preston, England, the sequence inspired an elaborate joint tie-up with a local bakery and a gas appliance company. 'What Managers are Doing' *Kinematograph Weekly*, 25 February 1932, 35.

<sup>63</sup> 'Commercial Advertising in Moving Pictures', *Harrison's Reports*, vol. XIII, no.48, 28 November 1931, 189.

<sup>64</sup> *The Kid From Spain* (Leo McCarey, Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, Hollywood, CA., 1932). Pressbook (United Artists Corporation, 1931), 3–4, in *Cinema Pressbooks*, reel 30. Merchandise included an Eddie Cantor board game with Parker Games and lingerie based on the Goldwyn Girls opening sequence costumes through the Modern Merchandising Bureau.

<sup>65</sup> *Roman Scandals* pressbook (United Artists Corporation, 1933), 8, in *Cinema Pressbooks*, reel 34.

<sup>66</sup> Henry Jenkins, "'Shall We Make It for New York or for Distribution?': Eddie Cantor, 'Whoopee', and Regional Resistance to the Talkies', *Cinema Journal*, 29, no. 3 (Spring 1990): 32–52.

<sup>67</sup> 'New York Exploitation Campaign On "Roman Scandals"'. Undated 3 page typed document by unnamed author. SGP-MHL: file 2137. This is filed in between correspondence dated 27 Dec 1933 and late Jan 1934, but contents and cross-referencing with other sources

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clearly indicates Farnol as the author and places the date earlier in December.

<sup>68</sup> *Roman Scandals* pressbook, 17.

<sup>69</sup> Digitized collections of local newspapers were examined via <https://newspaperarchive.com/us/> and <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/>.

<sup>70</sup> "KEEP YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL", Words by Al Dubin, Music by Harry Warren © 1933 WC MUSIC CORP. (ASCAP)

<sup>71</sup> Maurice M. Manring, 'Aunt Jemima Explained: The Old South, the Absent Mistress, and the Slave in a Box'. *Southern Cultures* 2, no. 1 (1995): 19–44.

<sup>72</sup> Key phrase searches of digitized newspaper collections (<https://newspaperarchive.com/us/> and <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/>) show that variations on the term arise in advertising contexts in the early 1900s and were still in common usage in the 1920s and early 1930s.

<sup>73</sup> Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley, Calif. ; London: University of California Press, 1998), 150–6.

<sup>74</sup> David Weinstein, *The Eddie Cantor Story: A Jewish Life in Performance and Politics* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2018), 65. This well-received comic turn tapped into and gently mocked the cultural moment of a much grander Mineralava Hollywood endorsement campaign: a nationwide tango tour starring Rudolph Valentino and his wife Natacha Rambova.

<sup>75</sup> This close association between the branded plugs and Cantor continued beyond the screen text. The published sheet music for 'Keep Young and Beautiful' had a shorter version of the lyrics and did not include the vocal placements for Cellophane and Caron's Christmas Night. These verses were also omitted in the recorded disc versions, which, in keeping with the norm for the period, featured artists other than Cantor—a practice that helped preserve the star draw of the screen version. However, on his radio show, Cantor performed a longer live version of the song, and this included the branded plugs. Al Dubin and Harry Warren, *Keep Young and Beautiful* (New York: M. Whitmark and Sons, 1933). *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*. NBC, 11 November 1933. Available via *Old Time Radio Downloads*, 'First song Keep Young and Beautiful'. Accessed 20 August 2019, <https://www.olds timeradiodownloads.com/variety/the-chase-and-sanborn-hour/first-song-keep-young-and-beautiful-1933-11-26>.

<sup>76</sup> Picture caption: 'A SCENT-SATION', *Motion Picture Herald*, 4 November 1933, 13. Caron still uses this bottle design for Nuit de Noel today.

<sup>77</sup> 'New York Exploitation Campaign On "Roman Scandals"', *Roman Scandals – Production*, SGP-MHL: f. 2137.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Peter Miskell, 'Resolving the Global Efficiency versus Local Adaptability Dilemma: US Film Multinationals in Their Largest Foreign Market in the 1930s and 1940s', *Business History*, 51, no. 3 (2009): 426–44, 431. Miskell suggests that 50% of UA revenues were from international markets in 1933.

<sup>80</sup> *Film Daily*, 26 June 1934, 3.

<sup>81</sup> *Cine-Mundial*, August 1934, 466.

<sup>82</sup> 'Inside Stuff: Radio', *Variety*, 4 July 1933, 43. This brand was part of the Affiliated

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Products Inc. drug and cosmetics combine, as was Phillips Magnesia Toothpaste.

<sup>83</sup> *Cine-Mundial*, August 1934, 468.

<sup>84</sup> Goldwyn to Farnol, 1 December 1933, Lynn Farnol 1928–1934, SGP-MHL: f. 3424. Underline as in the original.

<sup>85</sup> William D. Routt And Richard J. Thompson, “‘Keep Young And Beautiful’: Surplus And Subversion In Roman Scandals’, *Journal of Film and Video* 42, no. 1, (1990): 17–35.

<sup>86</sup> Lucy Fischer, *Designing Women: Cinema, Art Deco, and the Female Form*, Film and Culture (Columbia University Press, 2003), 145–6.

<sup>87</sup> *Gold Diggers of 1933*. Directed by Mervyn LeRoy, Hollywood, CA: Warner Brothers, 1933.

<sup>88</sup> *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*. Directed by Lloyd Bacon, Hollywood, CA: Warner Brothers, 1933; DVD edition used: *The Busby Berkeley 9-Film Collection*, Burbank CA: Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., 2010.

<sup>89</sup> Bob Pike and Dave Martin, *The Genius of Busby Berkeley* (Reseda, Cal.: Creative Film Society, 1973), 28; Tony Thomas and Jim Terry, *The Busby Berkeley Book* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1973), 39.

<sup>90</sup> For discussion of this practice during production of *Roman Scandals*, see Farnol to Goldwyn 30 August 33, Lynn Farnol 1928–1934, SGP-MHL: f. 3424.

<sup>91</sup> *Variety*, 3 September 1930, 47.

<sup>92</sup> Eckert, ‘Carole Lombard’; Segrave, ‘Product Placement’; Newell, Salmon and Chang, ‘Hidden History’.

<sup>93</sup> Routt and Thompson, “‘Keep Young And Beautiful’”, 31.

<sup>94</sup> *Kid Millions*. Directed by Roy Del Ruth, Hollywood, CA: Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, 1934.

<sup>95</sup> *Strike Me Pink*. Directed by Norman Taurog, Hollywood, CA: Samuel Goldwyn Productions/United Artists, 1936.