

"publicity properly applied"

## the selling of expertise in america

1900-1929

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In the early years of the twentieth century, American reformers adopted the new techniques of professionalism as a means of coping with the enormous problems of urban life.<sup>1</sup> This commitment placed the reformers in a difficult position. On the one hand, they were formulating intricate schemes that demanded highly-specialized knowledge and skills, schemes that were normally best implemented by a technical elite; on the other, they had to submit their proposals to public scrutiny in order to win the consent of voters who were ignorant and often suspicious of their theories, their data and their motives. This tension between democracy and expertise plagued the reformers for years, and led them to experiment with various methods of exerting political leverage to put their programs across.

Historians have shown how the new professionals met this situation by working directly on the seats of power,<sup>2</sup> and by aligning themselves with economic elites to insulate the mechanisms of decision-making from grass-roots pressures.<sup>3</sup> But these explanations concentrate on the institutions of power, and do not reveal how the reformers came to grips with the deepest level of their dilemma: the instability that was the very essence of the system. For there was simply no assurance that today's friendly decision-makers would not be turned out at tomorrow's election, leaving the professionals and their programs at the mercy of a hostile new government.

The problem then was inherent in democracy itself—in a political system that compelled the experts periodically to gain the approval of an uninformed electorate. Stated this way, of course, the solution was plain to see. If the problem was an uninformed public, then all the professionals had to do was inform it, the assumption being that as soon as everybody knew what they alone now knew, there would no longer

be a problem. But that only confirmed the dilemma. How could they communicate information and theories that were at odds with the common fund of knowledge about how the world worked? How could they win popular support for programs that defied popular understanding?

The modernization of public health illustrates the problem confronting these reformers. Before the 1880s the public health movement had been guided by the “dirt theory,” which held that communicable diseases originated somehow in decayed organic matter. The movement was often led by sanitation engineers, and emphasized plumbing, sewerage and fumigation as the basic deterrents to disease. These methods contributed to the growing control over epidemics, and no doubt had a benign effect upon the aromatic qualities of industrial cities, but they were limited in the long run by the very theory that sustained them.<sup>4</sup>

Public health activities took a new turn in the 1890s, when the germ theory of disease caught on. Thereafter the profession grew rapidly. The explosion of research on both sides of the Atlantic led the American Public Health Association (APHA) to set up a Laboratory Section in 1899 to serve as a clearing house for the vast accumulation of knowledge that followed. By the early 1900s public health officials were stressing care of the person and the physical environment as the primary deterrents to disease. The growing interest in the demography of births, disease and deaths raised questions about the social distribution of morbidity and mortality, and led to the creation of a section of vital statistics by the Association in 1906. Soon, as the social implications of public health came more clearly into focus, the APHA established a Sociological Section, on a trial basis at first, and finally in 1910 as a permanent section. By then the profession was carving itself into areas of specialization where experts were beginning to have difficulty communicating with each other, let alone with the general public.

The story was much the same in the other professions. The settlement-house workers of the 1890s helped transform the nineteenth-century charity movement, with its emphasis on personal moral responsibility, into the modern field of social work, with its emphasis on the environmental causes of human misery. Guided by the National Conference of Charities and Corrections (NCCC), social work soon produced its own experts in housing, family, factory and recreational problems, and was gradually built into university courses in which theory and research techniques carried as much weight as straight information. At the same time, city planning evolved from landscape architecture. It moved from its original concern with parks, monuments and civic centers (the “City Beautiful”) in the 1890s, to an organic concept of the city as a variety of interrelated physical and social phenomena, around each of which an area of specialization grew. The movement was institutionalized in the National Conference on City Planning (NCCP), founded in 1909, and

in the university courses in city planning that fanned outward from Boston in the twentieth century.

Unfortunately, while the designs of reform were impressive enough to the designers, they were not always warmly received in the urban slums. Public health officials, for instance, who worked constantly among the immigrant poor, were often frustrated by cultural barriers. In 1910 a visiting nurse told of a Syrian couple in Cleveland who could not afford to buy a much-needed ten-cent yarn truss for their baby because they were already starving themselves to save fourteen dollars for the infant's christening and for the celebration that would follow. The nurse could not understand the parents because she was acting on a professional commitment that called for technical solutions to pathological conditions. The parents resisted the nurse because they proceeded from priorities that were deeply embedded in cultural traditions. There was simply no way to reconcile these viewpoints.<sup>5</sup>

The economic problems of the poor were a hindrance also. There were many tubercular patients who felt that they could not afford to leave work for the bed rest that was prescribed. Yet in the eyes of health officials, who were at war with a contagious killer, prolonged isolation and bed rest were minimal prescriptions. Other families took lodgers into their already-cramped quarters to supplement meager incomes. For them it was a matter of economic survival. For housing reformers and health officials, however, this lodger evil only compounded all of the problems that were related to population congestion, and contributed to a social situation that was dangerously volatile, and had to be brought under control.<sup>6</sup>

Behind these specific problems of outlook and income lay the more general problem of a political system in which short-term elections threatened to disrupt long-term programs. That is precisely what happened when the Los Angeles Health Department demanded that tuberculin tests be given to the cows that supplied milk for the city. The issue was brought to referendum in 1912, and when it was defeated the editors of the *American Journal of Public Health* were outraged. They condemned a system which permitted "agitators" to mislead an ignorant public on vital health questions.<sup>7</sup>

The need to shield an educated elite from political sniping was a recurrent theme among the professionals. They longed for autonomy but knew that they would have to settle for less. One New Jersey health official proposed a compromise in which health programs would be coordinated under a single executive with full power to hire and fire his subordinates. Yet even that system, he noted, might run afoul of democratic impulses. Perfunctorily he conceded that popular rule was "fundamentally desirable," but then he warned that

no one who advocates democratic government carried to its extreme should forget that rule by the people, especially in a large

city . . . gives the most ignorant foreigner lately naturalized an equal vote on health-protective matters with the physician, the engineer and the sanitarian who has given all his mature years to the study of measures for the conservation and prolongation of human life.

The only way to protect the health official from "sinister influences," he concluded, was to proceed through a broad program of public health instruction.<sup>8</sup> One way or another, all of the reformers reached the same conclusion.

For that reason they set out to build a reservoir of support for their programs by educating the public. At first, however, few of them had a clear idea what they meant either by "educate" or "public." Specific suggestions did not usually push beyond such time-honored methods as press campaigns and school programs. These techniques played a significant role over the years, but alongside the urgency felt by the professionals they were agonizingly slow.

Gradually the reformers began to experiment with other modes of informing and influencing public opinion more rapidly. A landmark in this process was the New York "Congestion Show" of 1908, which was sponsored by the Committee on the Congestion of Population in New York. The Committee was founded in 1907 as the brainchild of several New York social workers, and was soon supported by the leading social agencies of the city. To build sentiment for population decentralization the Committee concentrated on dramatizing the evils of congestion in a wide assortment of graphic displays at the exhibit. Mel Scott describes how the Metropolitan Parks Association

exhibited a large map upon which small shot, each representing one person, was scattered and piled to show the density of population. On the lower part of Manhattan the shot was heaped up and running over the fences used to hold it in place, whereas in great areas on the outskirts it was 'scattered thin as flowers in meadows.'<sup>9</sup>

The imagery here suggests precisely the visual impact that the map was intended to have.

The following year a group of businessmen formulated a plan for the civic and social regeneration of Boston. Concerned initially with the future prosperity of the city, they worked through business, civic and professional organizations, and soon enlisted the support of such reform leaders as Edward Filene, Louis D. Brandeis and Dr. Richard Cabot in their efforts to educate the public to support the "Boston-1915" movement. The campaign was launched with an exhibition designed to draw large crowds to its colorful displays. One of these displays reproduced a North-end tenement apartment with its "rusty, partly broken stove, dirty floor . . . rickety beds with noticeably soiled coverings," and the other accoutrements necessary "to present a truly vivid picture of actual slum life." Next to this was a model apartment with a bathroom.

It was “all clean and decent,” and could be built, according to the reformers, to rent for very little more than the slum flat. The show was filled with similar exhibits “of real interest to the people—to everyday folks who don’t care a toothpick about statistics and deep sentences. . . .”<sup>10</sup>

The Congestion Show and the Boston-1915 exhibition marked the direction in which efforts to sway the public were moving. Issues whose deepest implications were often too complicated to explain to the average citizen, and too important to expose to counter-pressures, were presented in symbolic forms to reach behind consciousness and stir a favorable emotional response.

The reformers apparently worked out many of their early ventures in publicity on a trial-and-error basis, but from time to time they were given instruction by experts in advertising theory. In 1908, Edward Shaw, the managing editor of the Washington, D.C. *Times*, advised the social and charity workers gathered at the NCCC that their appeals for popular support would be more effective in the form of human interest stories aimed frankly at the emotions. Charity workers, he said, should learn from advertising men how to utilize the principles of modern scientific psychology, because the average person was simply not interested in dull facts or technical procedures.<sup>11</sup> The reformers were abreast of him, however, for at that same conference they established a section on press and publicity to advise social workers on just such matters.

Almost immediately this new section set out to spread the gospel of advertising as a means of softening the public for social programs. In 1909, John Kingsbury informed the NCCC that social publicity differed from commercial advertising only in its need to be moral and truthful, and he blurred even that distinction when he encouraged the social workers to emphasize “the harrowing human details,” which he said were the essential truth of a case, whenever they prepared a human interest release for the press.<sup>12</sup>

In the next few years health officials moved ahead of the other professionals in the sophistication of their approach to publicity. What was the purpose of employing advertising techniques? According to a New York physician, it was to persuade people to live a sanitary life “of their own accord.”<sup>13</sup> What was the best way of going about it? According to a New Jersey health official, it was by applying the lessons that advertising men had learned from the new science of psychology. The advantage of this approach, he said, was that it eliminated the need for complex explanations:

Publicity rarely allows of details. Even the highly educated and rapid reader will not stop to peruse a circular or poster of more than say a hundred words. . . . The most effective advertisements of the day are those which rely upon a single phrase or even a single apt word for their effect.<sup>14</sup>

In other words, health officials could put their message across more forcefully with slogans than with information.

Late in the Progressive era this trend was effectively summarized by Edward Moree, a prominent charity worker. Moree claimed flatly that “publicity properly applied will save more lives than any other single agency employed by health workers.” The goal was to “change the lives and habits of the people or to focus or re-focus public opinion.” First, however, the health official would have to “get (people) to think in the right way.” Like a businessman with a new brand of baked beans, he said, the health worker had a new product to sell. Obviously the merchant would never put his beans on the market without first hiring an advertising expert to prepare the public for them. The health official, he concluded, would be wise to adopt the same policy and employ a professional advertising agency to cultivate the public for his own ends—to “get them to think in the right way.” That was “publicity properly applied.”<sup>15</sup> Moree took ideas that had been implicit in the notion of publicity and integrated them into a system explicitly designed to engineer consent for public projects, and ultimately to regulate human behavior.

The idea of progressivism as social control, of course, has become a major theme among historians in recent years. Certainly the schemes devised by the new professionals to bring order to the turbulent cities place them squarely at the center of this impulse. In one sense their publicity work was simply an adjunct to the process, but there is more to it than that.

The reformers were already wary of the gouging tactics of the political cockpit. Under the tutelage of prophets like Moree they discovered how to cope with this peril. They learned that it paid to advertise; they learned that modern advertising was based upon a new psychology which emphasized the non-rational sources of human behavior;<sup>16</sup> and above all they learned that influencing the public, like protecting it, was too delicate a task to entrust to amateurs. In time they came to believe that democracy could be made to work for them through professionally-calculated appeals to unreason, that social control could be effected through psychological manipulation as well as through legislation and outright coercion. The political implications of this lesson emerged more clearly in the next decade.

Before that, however, the war intervened and brought a welcome reprieve to the professionals. In the past they had been forced to struggle for recognition of their plans and to beg for the meager public funds available to carry them out. Now their services were suddenly in demand to design army camps and housing projects, and to implement crash programs in health and sanitation for the new military and industrial armies. Above the turmoil stood the Federal Government, approving projects and dispensing funds. Liberated at last from the need to justify their ideas to an uncomprehending public, sanitation and

housing experts, health workers, city planners, architects, municipal engineers and social workers all pitched in with great enthusiasm and encouraging results.

Parallel to this development was the major contribution made to the war effort by the advertising industry. George Creel used advertising men with striking success in his Committee on Public Information to whip up popular support for wartime policies. As a result they had grown in public regard as well as self-esteem, and came out of the war with the firm conviction that they could sell practically anything to practically anybody.<sup>17</sup>

The success of advertising in the war only confirmed what the professionals had learned about it earlier in the decade. Thus when the war ended and they returned to the massive problems of the cities, when their Federal benefactors faded from the scene and they were forced to bid anew for public support, education once again became an integral part of their activities, and advertising represented more than ever their guideline to education.

In addition they began to perceive the awesome potential of the new electronic media of communications after the war. Actually they had been dabbling with films since about 1910, when health publicists had produced "The Acrobatic Fly" for distribution to nickelodeons around the Chicago area. Now they plunged ahead with characteristic thoroughness. In 1921 the NCCP set up a Committee on Moving Pictures, and was soon promoting films that demonstrated how a dismal "before" could be transformed into a utopian "after" by planning. At about the same time, the APHA meetings began to feature colloquia on the use of films in health publicity. Speakers at these sessions regularly cautioned publicists about the ignorance of the people who saw health movies, and urged them to produce films with that in mind. They recommended the use of animation, for example, to hold the attention of audiences that would otherwise be alienated by filmed sermons on health.<sup>18</sup> Even social workers began to employ the media, and by mid-decade were producing radio programs that played up the dramatic aspect of social problems.<sup>19</sup>

By the 1920s the long apprenticeship in publicity methods was over, and the professionals initiated information programs all over the nation. City planning came into its own for the first time as cities large and small adopted plans, and then devised programs to sell their plans to concerned citizens. In 1921 the Chicago Planning Commission deluged the city's clergymen with "Seed Thoughts for Sermons," a publication that described how city planning would benefit church social work. A year later planners in Buffalo sponsored a contest for children to name the major boulevard of the Buffalo plan. The idea behind the contest was that when a boy "gets father to help him find a name . . . father, in hunting for a name, gets sold on the proposition."<sup>20</sup> Leaders of the Kessler Plan Association of Dallas, aware of the instability of democratic

politics, in 1927 sought to create a source of perpetual support by authorizing a civics textbook for the schools that would “establish the right mind set” for planning in future generations.

Health officials approached publicity with somewhat more flair than planners. They produced increasingly sophisticated screenplays through the decade, and made extensive use of animated cartoons such as “Jinks,” which told the story of an unemployed worker who dreamed one night that “Mike Robe” was about to infest his lungs because he had been careless in his health habits. He awoke thoroughly chastised, and vowed to turn over a new leaf in personal hygiene. The *American Journal of Public Health* commented that “the film is an excellent example of happy treatment of a subject which has too often been made morbid.”<sup>21</sup>

In order to get through to the nation’s youth, health reformers also found it useful to exploit a variety of contemporary trends. In a strange but timely metaphor, the Indiana Board of Health proclaimed to school-children that “Your Body is the Automobile of Your Soul,” and then drew long parallel lists between people and cars: good gasoline/good food; clear headlights/good eyes; sound brakes/self control. Two years later the Indianapolis Tuberculosis League assisted the local Y.W.C.A. in drawing up a series of posters to publicize the merits of a good diet. One of the posters recommended prunes and oranges for good complexions; another praised onions as “Eye Sparklers”; a third prescribed celery and radishes as “Vanity Brushes for the teeth.” By far the most effective of these “Beauty Hint” posters showed graphically how beets act as a natural lipstick. Officials were delighted as they watched beet sales soar at the “Y” cafeteria in the next few days. The fruit and vegetable crusade was a mixed blessing, however, because as beet sales climbed, meat sales plunged. Alarmed at this development, a cook, who had clearly caught the spirit of the campaign, proposed a sure-fire remedy: simply turn out a series of meat posters.<sup>22</sup> The purpose of this publicity effort was to promote good health through sound nutrition, yet nothing in the posters spoke either of health or nutrition. Instead they advertised food as cosmetics; the appeal was to vanity, not health.

The career of Herman Bundesen in the 1920s illustrates many of the problems encountered by the professionals, and some of the solutions they worked out. Dr. Bundesen, who was the director of the Chicago Board of Health, fused the zeal of a missionary with the talents of a carnival barker in his trailblazing efforts to publicize health methods. He was already well known locally and in the profession for his radio talks on public health when he concocted a stunt in mid-decade that opened eyes everywhere. He wanted to teach the public a lesson about the food value of milk, and hit upon the startling idea of fueling a locomotive entirely with milk, and having it pull a five-car train for six miles. The deed was picked up by over one hundred newspapers in

the nation, and was perhaps the most successful single stroke of health publicity in the decade.

Public health officials were jubilant over this kind of publicity. One of them used it to support his plea for more “salesmanship” and “advertising” in health matters, advertising of the same sort, he said, that sold cars, chewing gum, cigarettes and soap.<sup>23</sup> Of course the stunt had no more to do with the growing body of expertise in the young field of nutrition than the vegetable posters at the Indianapolis “Y”, but that is exactly the point. Its whole purpose was to popularize milk without bringing technical information before the public. It was just what health publicists were striving for.

In the next few years Bundesen’s fortunes veered sharply back and forth. In 1926 he received the “Beneficial Action” award of the Chicago *Daily News* for his work on behalf of clean milk. A year later he was out of a job, the victim of a political purge by Mayor Thompson, who had only recently been called back into office by the voters of Chicago. The incident infuriated professional health workers, and brought home to them once again the folly of mixing politics with science. In 1928 Bundesen gained some satisfaction when he was elected president of the APHA. In his presidential address he acknowledged that science would probably continue to “outstrip public knowledge,” and proposed that his colleagues meet the situation with an all-out effort to “sell” public health by any means available—by “the motion pictures, the radio, slogan and poster, or in any other way you will. But *sell* it.”<sup>24</sup>

By the end of the decade the professionals were reasonably confident that they knew how to educate, and were working out a more refined notion of whom to educate as well. The city engineer of Wichita, for example, addressed his professional peers, who commonly worked hand-in-hand with city planners, and instructed them in the techniques of public relations. The first step was to flatter community leaders and curry the support of local newspapers. After that, he said, they should broaden their base of support by being regular fellows in the eyes of the working class, and by committing themselves actively to church, civic and fraternal organizations.<sup>25</sup> Public health officials also began to pitch their appeals to organized community forces, when they learned that chambers of commerce, parent-teacher groups and women’s clubs could all be engaged to support public measures in terms of their own group interest.

Virginia Wing, of Cleveland’s Social Work Publicity Council, introduced social workers to an even more advanced conception of the public. Census data, she told them, were extremely valuable in identifying nationality groups and population drifts. Once this information was gathered, it could be correlated with statistics on the distribution of disease, prostitution and delinquency in order to come to a better understanding of social problems, and to develop “a new form of social

publicity and education.”<sup>26</sup> The following year she returned to the conference to describe a recent publicity campaign for a new hospital in Cleveland. “Moving people to action,” she said, “means separating the basis of the campaign into its parts, and organizing each part so that it will appeal to the motor nerves of the general public.” In fact what she meant was not the “general public,” but a variety of discrete publics. Her organization had made separate appeals to the Chamber of Commerce in terms of business that would be generated, to labor in terms of jobs that would be created, to women’s clubs in terms of civic improvements that would be made, and to politicians in terms of votes that would be won, although the object of the campaign had nothing to do with business, or jobs, or civic improvements, or votes. A committee was formed that included “all the sources of power, nationality groups, etc., so that the letterhead has someone on it from every force.” The committee directed a campaign that used all kinds of printed materials, newspaper publicity, radio propaganda and stunts, such as having a blimp fly over the city to advertise the project. The campaign was a smashing success and Cleveland got its hospital.<sup>27</sup>

Many of these themes were orchestrated near the end of the decade by H. A. Overstreet in a paper that he presented to the NCCP. Overstreet asserted that “most people do not act from their reasoning power but from their emotions,” and that the emotions can be harnessed by appealing to such instincts as self-preservation, acquisitiveness and competition. Since the average person visualizes ideas better than he thinks them, pictures should play a major role in channeling these instinctual wants. Moreover, people can be conditioned to accept what they might otherwise question:

Advertisers have long since learned that mere repetition has an almost compelling effect. . . . The same thing should be true in matters of public welfare. Say ‘city planning’ enough times and people will take it for granted that city planning is one of the accepted procedures in our civilization.

Once these principles are mastered, said Overstreet, the city planning publicist must learn to apply them through the voluntary associations that abound in American society, for it is in them that power is centered. “When an individual is purely an individual,” he said, “he is about as powerless as any being can possibly be.” Organizations as different as Tammany Hall and the League of Women Voters knew this, and it was time that city planners profited from the experience of such groups.<sup>28</sup>

As the Twenties drew to a close, people like Wing and Overstreet were bringing Edward Moree’s pre-war suggestions up to date with the latest thinking and research about opinion formation, and were beaming the message clearly and often to new professionals across the land.

It is tempting to explain these developments as an expression of the ethos of a business culture, and let it go at that. Certainly we would not

be off the mark in doing so for the 1920s. But they reveal a different aspect, and a much larger meaning, if we view them instead as an American variant of the world-wide phenomenon of *modernization*. Although theorists differ over precisely how to define this term, most of them would agree that it embraces urbanization and the vast expansion of new kinds of knowledge, and that when modernization challenges the established institutions and beliefs of a society it generally leads to political dislocation and readjustment, as new groups reach out for power.<sup>29</sup> We recognize this process readily enough in the third world, where it so often erupts with volcanic force, but in the United States, where modernization unfolded without the dramatic intensity of revolutionary upheaval, its wider implications went almost unnoticed for decades. Only in recent years have historians begun to use this concept widely in discussing twentieth-century America.<sup>30</sup> The tension between democracy and expertise, and the adjustment they made to each other, seem clearly to have been a phase in this process.

Democracy, after all, had matured in the nineteenth century as the political framework of a diffuse agrarian society. It was rooted in egalitarian values, guided by a chronic fear of centralized power, and regulated by periodic elections in which candidates debated issues with information that was accessible to everybody. That was the theory at any rate, and if realities never fulfilled the ideal, they never completely lost contact with it either.

The new professionals, on the other hand, emerged in response to the urban crisis of the 1890s. In a society which believed that democratic politics depended upon democratic information, they trafficked in knowledge that was inscrutable to the general public. Nothing had prepared the common man to believe that sickness and death were caused by plants and animals that were present everywhere but visible nowhere. Nothing had prepared him to grasp the dense mathematical formulae that determined the amount of open space necessary, so the planners said, to end urban congestion. The experts might lay out the arcane facts and theories of their programs to an upper tier of civic leaders, but they knew that they could not get through to the urban masses on those terms. On the whole, their activities would have been better served by protection *from* periodic elections than by exposure *to* them, but that was out of the question. Instead they would have to bend the system somehow to their own needs.

Thus it was a political imperative that sent the new professionals out to woo the public. Early in the century they felt their way toward a strategy designed to engage the feelings more than to inform the intellect. That was the hidden implication of the splashy Congestion Show of 1908, and the Boston-1915 exhibition, where they used the symbolic *representation* of issues to evade the systematic *presentation* of issues. In that respect the publicity efforts of the professionals broke

completely from their commitment to the rational evaluation of scientific data.

Soon they began to absorb ideas from other new areas of expertise quite unlike their own. Technicians and tinkerers were experimenting with new modes of communication; psychologists were probing for the roots of human behavior; advertising men were discovering how to manipulate vast numbers of people with the new media and the new psychology. Even before the war the professionals had begun to adapt their publicity campaigns willy-nilly to these developments.

As they refined their methods in the 1920s, they committed themselves increasingly to the communications revolution and commercial ethos that reached far out into American society at the time. Their efforts to influence the public moved rapidly toward the conscious manipulation of non-rational drives. They wrapped their messages in bright packages—cheerful tuberculosis films, happy smallpox posters—and marketed them as if they were peddling chewing gum and cigarettes.

At the same time, they worked out a more complex notion of the public. For years they had perceived it as a more or less shapeless mass of individuals, but that perception yielded before a growing appreciation of group dynamics in an organizational society. This growing tendency toward group persuasion reinforced the manipulative aspects of social publicity, since the message was no longer inherent solely in the information, but now as well in the groups at which the information was directed. Thus to round out his professional training the publicist had to familiarize himself with social research, so that he could frame his message effectively in different ways for different groups.

This process proceeded along similar lines among all of the new public professions. It was not isolated, it was not random, it was scarcely even controversial. On the contrary, it became an integral part of the efforts to move public opinion and was treated with respect in the various professional organizations. By the 1920s each of the associations had added, under one name or another, a separate section on publicity. In the professional journals and at annual meetings these agencies furnished articles, papers and colloquia on publicity methods, reported on the publicity campaigns that were proliferating in the country, and designed courses on social publicity which they offered to the universities. Ironically the professionals had come full circle. Their efforts to spread technical knowledge in non-technical terms had grown into a whole new field of expertise with its own cadre of technicians to administer it.

And so the abrasive impulses of democracy and expertise were gradually reconciled by the new marketing techniques of business enterprise in the early decades of the century. The professionals did not have things all their own way, of course, for if they found in advertising a means of access to power, their use of power was always restrained by an awareness of the next election. Nevertheless, in the end they succeeded in making

a nineteenth-century political system more relevant to their own vision  
of a twentieth-century America. Simon Fraser University

## footnotes

1. It was this line of analysis that informed Robert Wiebe's impressive interpretation of the Progressive era in *The Search for Order* (New York, 1967).
2. Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), and Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums* (Pittsburgh, 1962), 124-126.
3. Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (October, 1964), 157-169.
4. James H. Casedy, *Charles V. Chapin and the Public Health Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 44-45.
5. Harriet Leet, "The Problem of Many Tongues," *Visiting Nurse Quarterly* (July, 1910), 30-39.
6. Mary Buell Sayles, "Housing and Social Conditions in a Slavic Neighborhood," *Charities* (December 3, 1904), 257-261; Lawrence Veiller, "Room Overcrowding and the Lodger Evil," *American Journal of Public Health* (January, 1913), 11-23.
7. "The Referendum in Public Health," *American Journal of Public Health* (July, 1912), 535-536.
8. M. N. Baker, "The Municipal Health Program," *National Municipal Review* (April, 1913), 200-207.
9. Mel Scott, *American City Planning Since 1890* (Berkeley, 1969), 85.
10. Everett Mero, "An Exposition that Mirrors a City," *American City* (November, 1909), 95-101.
11. Edward E. Shaw, "Publicity in Charitable Work From the Newspaper Point of View," NCCC, *Proceedings 1908*, 267-274. Roy Lubove suggests that social work publicity developed so that welfare could "compete with business for the consumer's dollar." See Lubove, *The Professional Altruist* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 202-206.
12. John A. Kingsbury, "Right Publicity and Public Health Work," NCCC, *Proceedings 1909*, 333-338. See also Claude C. Hopkins, "The Psychology of Advertising as Applied to Social Publicity," *Ibid.*, 1910, 547-558.
13. Woods Hutchinson, "Publicity in Public Health Work," *American Journal of Public Health* (August, 1913), 777-779.
14. J. Scott MacNutt, "Publicity: Some Observations on Its Uses and Misuses," *Ibid.* (February, 1914), 108-112.
15. Edward A. Moree, "Public Health Publicity: The Art of Stimulating and Focusing Public Opinion," *Ibid.* (February, 1916), 97-108.
16. The relationship between advertising and the new psychology in the Progressive era is explored in A. Michael McMahon, "An American Courtship: Psychologists and Advertising Theory in the Progressive Era," *American Studies* (Fall, 1972), 5-18.
17. The role of advertising in the war is discussed in Otis Pease, *The Responsibilities of American Advertising* (New Haven, 1958), 17, and in James P. Wood, *The Story of Advertising* (New York, 1958), 354-357.
18. E. G. Routzahn, et al., "Symposium on Motion Pictures," *American Journal of Public Health* (April, 1922), 269-279.
19. Mary Swain Routzahn, "Available Channels of Publicity," National Conference of Social Work, *Proceedings 1926*, 643-645.
20. C. J. Hamlin, "The Buffalo City Plan," NCCP, *Proceedings 1922*, 191-197.
21. "Health Films Committee of the National Health Council," *American Journal of Public Health* (July, 1923), 597. The section often stressed the importance of avoiding depressing presentations and of maintaining a happy tone in health publicity.
22. E. G. Routzahn, "Education and Publicity," *Ibid.* (July, 1925), 668.
23. Philip P. Jacobs, "The Health Worker's Point of View," *Ibid.* (February, 1925), 125-128.
24. Herman N. Bundesen, "Selling Public Health—A Vital Duty," *Ibid.* (December, 1928), 1451-1454; italics in original.
25. P. L. Brockway, "Study Your Public, Mr. City Engineer," *American City* (May, 1929), 91-93.
26. Virginia Wing, "Making Human Geography Talk," National Conference of Social Work, *Proceedings 1928*, 633-634.
27. Virginia Wing, "Arousing Voters to Action: A Story of a City Campaign," *Ibid.* 1929, 620-627.
28. H. A. Overstreet, "Arousing the Public Interest in City Planning," NCCP, *Proceedings*

1928, 125-136. See also Virginia Wing, "Some Psychological Experiments in Health Publicity," National Conference of Social Work, *Proceedings 1929*, 258-263.

29. C. E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization* (Princeton, 1966), is a good general introduction to the concept of modernization.

30. Both Robert Wiebe and Otis Graham have emphasized modernization as a unifying theme in their recent bibliographical essays on the Progressive era and the New Deal. See William H. Cartwright and Richard L. Watson, Jr., eds., *The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture* (Washington, D.C., 1973).