Dear Mr. Galvin:

One mysterious aspect of business today is the mind-bending talent of the advertising agency. Increased advertising sophistication and an indefatigable quest for originality have produced campaigns which subordinate the client's chance of future profit.

Advertising theorists maintain if the campaign is creative, the product will automatically sell. Thus, ads today shock rather than sell, stimulate emotions rather than discuss the product. What is selling merchandise today is not the advantages of the product but the ingenuity of the ad.

The omnipresence of television has replaced other media in importance. Thus, TV commercials have to be more exciting than the programming; commercial breaks cannot bore the viewer.

Consequently, heavily advertised products have developed distinct personalities: the Volkswagen, the Lay Potato Chip, the Coca Cola ads all have distinguishable characteristics. Alka-Seltzer's introspective conversations between a man and his stomach, Excedrin's documentary analysis of the headache and Goodyear's tire for the woman with no man around are advertising marvels. But is selling the product the ultimate purpose, or is that purpose proving the ad-man's creative genius?

Thus the question: are today's ads designed to shock a media-controlled public into buying or to prove the creative splendor of the advertising business? I contend business is being trumped upon by the ad agencies' quest for creativity; and, therefore, if the product does sell it is strictly accidental.

Sincerely,

Arnold Shelby
Latin American Studies, Tulane

WHO CARES ABOUT STUDENT OPINION?
BUSINESSMEN DO.

Three chief executive officers - The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company's Chairman, Russell De'Young, The Dow Chemical Company's President, H. D. Doan, and Motorola's Chairman, Robert W. Galvin - are responding to serious questions and viewpoints posed by students about business and its role in our changing society and from their perspective as heads of major corporations are exchanging views through means of a campus (corporate Dialogue Program on specific issues raised by leading student spokesmen.

Here, Arnold Shelby, In Liberal Arts at Tulane, is exploring a point with Mr. Galvin. Keenly interested in Latin American political and social problems, Mr. Shelby toured various countries in the area last summer on a "shoe-string" budget. He plans a career in journalism.

In the course of the entire Dialogue Program, Arthur Klebanoff, a Yale senior, will probe issues with Mr. Galvin; as will Mark Bookspan, a Chemistry major at Ohio State, and David G. Clark, in graduate studies at Stanford, with Mr. De'Young; and similarly, David M. Butler, Electrical Engineering, Michigan State, and Stan Chess, Journalism, Cornell, with Mr. Doan.

All of these Dialogues will appear in this publication, and other campus newspapers across the country, throughout this academic year. Campus comments are invited, and should be forwarded to Mr. De'Young, Goodyear, Akron, Ohio; Mr. Doan, Dow Chemical, Midland, Michigan; or Mr. Galvin, Motorola, Franklin Park, Illinois, as appropriate.

Dear Mr. Shelby:

Advertising is one of the most often criticized and least understood professions. It is also one of the most complex, involving consumer needs and desires, market economics, tastes, semantics, the arts, persuasion, and a host of other factors. In advertising, as in many other fields, there is a constant quest for originality and creativity. Today's consumer - more sophisticated and better educated than ever before - demands it.

Different advertising techniques are needed to sell different products. Audiences must be carefully evaluated. Advertising that sells soft drinks could not be successfully used to promote heavy machinery, surgical instruments or textbooks. Effective techniques must be visually or graphically arresting - and augmented by carefully chosen language - to express the salient features of the product or service to the listening, viewing, or reading consumer. A "creative" ad that merely displays ingenuity, or shocks, without presenting the product in such a manner as to persuade its purchase on the basis of merit, as well as its intangible benefits, cannot be considered really creative.

Advertising is never an end in itself; its goal is to communicate knowledge so that the consumer may exercise choice, his intelligence, and his desire to buy or not. It never sustains sale of inferior merchandise; for very long.

Television has not replaced other media in importance. While the impact of television cannot be denied, use of print advertising, billboards, direct mail, and other media are at an all-time high.

Like you, I deplore pedestrian and tasteless advertising. Likewise, I deplore "trashy" books, inferior music, poor plays... Advertising has the complex task of appealing to all tastes, all intelligence levels, all ages, and both sexes. A person is subject daily to over 16,000 advertising messages. Many are informative, entertaining, motivating, precise, practical; many show a lack of creativity, poor taste, and over-use of gimmicks. In the final analysis, judgment is passed by each of us in our buying decisions.

In our sensitivity to that which we may find objectionable, we should also note that the advertising business donates some $250 million dollars' worth of public service advertising each year... Smokey Bear, the Peace Corps, Keep America Beautiful, the Red Cross, the United Negro College Fund, Mental Health, CARE, UNICEF, Radio Free Europe, and many more worthwhile campaigns.

From what I know of advertising firms and their people, I believe the profession offers one of the most challenging, fulfilling careers available. Keen young critics like yourself are needed to constantly upgrade the quality of its services, and shape them to fit the precise future needs of society. This will continue to assure responsiveness to the needs expressed by the consuming public.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Galvin
Chairman, Motorola Inc.