

PUT YOUR BEAR TO WORK: A VERY ADAPTABLE MARKETING TOOL FOR AMERICAN INDUSTRY

Alfred C. Holden, Fordham University
Laurie Holden, New York University

ABSTRACT

The authors examined five categories of U.S. products during 1875-1925 that utilized bears as brands, promotional symbols, or a major part of the product. It is evident that these manufacturers and retailers capitalized upon a number of key associations with bears, even as America changed from a rural to an urban country.

"The 'Cracker Jack' bears from Lincoln zoo
Together away in an airship flew,
And vowed that they would not come back
Until the world ate Cracker Jack."
["The Cracker Jack Bears" Card No. 1 (1907)]

"The Polar Bear shines in family life;
He's kind to his cubs and polite to his wife
Having one's feelings always on ice
The Polar Bear says, keeps them fresh and nice.

While the Polar Bears sojourned in the Ark,
Their bliss was the cause of frequent remark;
When at length Mrs. Noah became so bold
As to ask the secret, the Polar Bear told:

The fact is, that ever since I was wed,
I've given my wife Willimantic thread,
And from here to the open Polar Sea
There isn't a happier couple than we."
[Willimantic thread trade card (1895)]

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's (T.R.) ascension to the U.S. presidency and the formal 1903 birth of the stuffed "Teddy" bear, it is useful to review some important predecessors and successors of that enduring commercial product. That is, for decades before Roosevelt entered the White House in 1901 and well afterward, a diverse number of American manufacturing and services firms actively used bears as a brand or as a promotional device to identify or publicize their consumer and industrial products. Many others featured a bear as a major part of the product.

This paper examines a cross-section of instances where bears featured as a brand, promotional symbol, or product-line during 1875-1925. The authors chose that period because of the generally expanding economy (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1975) and the well-documented proliferation of promotional efforts by firms seeking to achieve national distribution and national recognition of their products. It is an era that also nicely surrounds the Roosevelt years.

The objective is to determine and to categorize key associations that businesses of 1875-1925 sought to bring to a customer's mind when putting their bears to work. Some of the results could thus be

interesting for marketers today who are devoting considerable attention to investigating issues of branding and customer loyalty.

VIEWING TODAY'S BRANDS AND MARKETING SYMBOLS IN THE LITERATURE

The American Marketing Association identifies a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors..." In this regard, such issues as brand recognition, brand management, brand associations, brand personality, and the role of symbols are important topics within today's marketing literature (e.g., Spears, Mowen, Chakraboty, 1996; Keller, 1993; Triplett, 1994; Aaker, 1997; Fournier, 1998). Typically, conclusions from such research are covered in the chapter(s) on product differentiation in strategic marketing texts (e.g., Aaker, 1998) and are given substantial attention in personality and lifestyle discussion in consumer behavior texts (e.g., Solomon, 1999). However, the authors found little appreciation in the marketing literature for the fact that some manufacturers/retailers were successful in their brand management efforts vis-à-vis customers in the era before the marketing discipline fully emerged.

This paper thus represents a preliminary assessment of a brand's association with one type of animal--the bear--and the use of that animal in related promotional and product-line activities in the period before close attention was given to such needs by professional researchers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The well-publicized surge in prices for vintage plush teddy bears over the last decade and the equally sharp increase in the popularity of modern "designer" bears (e.g., see Ayers and Harrison, 1991; Cockrill, 1991; Hockenberry, 1992; Mullins, 1986 and 1995) have prompted people to search their attics for both teddies and bear-related ephemera. In turn, the authors have been granted access to a wide range of the latter from the 1875-1925 era now in private collections, here and abroad. This paper could then proceed in two research steps: (a) analyzing such primary source information in order to sort it into product-lines and (b) categorizing the intentions of branding and/or promotional efforts directly involving the bear. The authors hypothesized that the results would provide insights into determining how the contemporary customer of American businesses viewed the bear.

To make this research manageable, the authors elected to examine five of the many diverse product-lines featuring the bear as an integral part of a company's branding strategy, or promotional activity, or as a key aspect of the product. Specifically, sufficient examples of bears at work during 1875-1925 allowed us to analyze the following product-lines: children's books; trade cards; sheet music; postcards; and games.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS: SOME KEY ASSOCIATIONS EMERGE

In each of the product-lines examined, patterns emerge quickly regarding the usage of bears by American businesses.

Marketers in Victorian America were keen to tap a large market for illustrated children's books. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, McLoughlin Brothers and others discovered that the Goldilocks and three bear story had timeless appeal and the added benefit of no copyright. The result was dozens of different editions for the child's parents to choose among by early in the twentieth century. Typically, publishers created beautifully illustrated covers and profusely illustrated texts, with the bear family a prominent part of the product. But as time went on, the success of these books encouraged a broadening of bear-family tales and the introduction of additional adventures by bears.

For example, a pre-teddy book, Old Mother Bruin and Her Foolish Cubs (no author or publication date), recounts the adventures of two cubs who demonstrate bear-like behavior but who were not "as good and obedient as they should have been." This book, with magnificent color illustrations, was probably published in the late nineteenth century and was designed to encourage obedience in children, since the mother was killed and the cubs placed in captivity as a result of their disobedience.

A Very Small Tale of Two Very Small Bears, by Grosvenor (1905), is a charmingly illustrated unisex tale about two bear cubs who run away from the circus and go off to seek adventure, but are finally located by their worried parents. This story also has bears acting more like animals than like humans, as does a book by Ives, The Story of Teddy the Bear (c. 1905). In this tale, a very young cub is taught to be a proper bear by his mother. He gets caught in a bear trap, is nursed back to health by the hunter's family, is released, and enjoys a series of adventures before eventually locating his mother.

The Pup Dog and Cub Bear books are in a series of small, inexpensively produced books with black and white illustrations which appear to be primarily aimed at the boys' market. Most depict adventures such as boating, fishing, and camping. Other series of the era, such as The Teddies (where several toy bears come to life and go off on exciting adventures) and Little Bear's Adventures (which describes and pictures the exploits of a bear depicted as a small, mischievous little fellow who consistently gets into trouble when he disobeys his mother), were so popular that they were reissued a number of times in the 1920s through the 1940s.

Although The Busy Bears appears to have been a single book rather than a part of a series, its charming pictures were issued as a series of postcards in 1907; if judged by the postcards' present market availability, the book too must have been quite popular.

The overwhelmingly most successful marketer of such newly-written stories about bears was Seymour Eaton, the author of a series of four books recounting the adventures of his "Roosevelt Bears," Teddy-B and Teddy-G, who assumed human qualities and dressed rather nattily in human garb. It is worth detailing Eaton's contribution since these two bears would be widely reproduced in other product-lines.

The first of Eaton's four Roosevelt Bear books, The Roosevelt Bears: Their Adventures and Travels, was published by Edward Stern and Co. of Philadelphia in 1906 and illustrated by V. Floyd Campbell. It recounted the adventures of two bears who, thanks to newspapers lost by travelers in the wilderness, learned skills such as how to dine with the "smart set," dance, use a phone, send a wireless message, and drive a car. Bored with wilderness life, the bears set out to see the USA, taking along an extensive wardrobe which had been conveniently discarded by hunters. Their travels took them to Kansas, where they learned all of the skills required to run a farm in a single day, attended (and taught in) a school, and piloted a balloon at a county fair. They went on to Chicago, where they were finally outfitted in more suitable clothes, and then to Niagara Falls, Boston, and New York.

The second book, More About Teddy-B and Teddy-G The Roosevelt Bears, Volume 2: Depicting Their Further Travels and Adventures, was published by Edward Stern (1907), but illustrated by R.K. Culver. In his introduction to this volume, Eaton purports that the bears were created to "teach children that animals, even bears, may have some measure of human feeling; that the primary purpose of animals is not necessarily that of supplying sport for the hunter."

The bears put out a fire, visit the Wax "Musee," travel to West Point, play baseball, fly to Philadelphia in an airship, swim in Atlantic City, set off fireworks to celebrate the Fourth of July, picnic at the zoo, and go fishing. The bears also perform socially charged acts such as taking 1,000 poor boys to the circus and putting out a special edition of a newspaper, with the profits to go toward building a home for impoverished newsboys to prevent them from freezing to death when forced to sleep on the streets. He concludes with a visit to Washington, where the bears are, of course, entertained by another of their name. There are full-page advertisements at the back of the book for both the first volume and for the forthcoming volume.

The third book, The Roosevelt Bears Abroad, also illustrated by Culver, was published in New York by Barse and Hopkins. Chapter One finds the bears crossing the Atlantic. Their first port-of-call was Ireland, where they planned to give the country back to the Irish by presenting the concept of "Home Rule" to the U.K. monarch. They then explored Europe, eventually being thrown into a Russian jail. Russia, like Ireland, brought out Eaton's political bent:

As wicked a bunch as ever made
The countries of the world afraid.
They learned that hundred thousands died
In building the streets on every side,
From damp and cold on this marshy site...
Of people killed for royal whim
And thousands banished to regions cold,
Children in arms and peasants old,
For trifling cause, or none at all,
To please some upstart ruler small.

Following release from jail and further traveling around Europe and Egypt, it was

Back to the land where girls and boys
Keep teddy bears for chums and toys.

For after a quick trip to Canada, the bears return home to recount their adventures to their awestruck friends!

Eaton's books were written in plodding verse and, by the fourth and final volume, were losing their readership. However, the charming illustrations were widely reproduced on such diverse products as fabrics, tea sets, a highly successful series of post cards, and newspaper cartoons.

Analysis of this sample of bear books demonstrates that bears were portrayed as humane, home- and family-oriented, and definitely possessing such human characteristics as adventuresomeness, determination, physical and moral strength, love of family, and political sensibilities.

Trade cards have carried all sorts of symbols and scenes from their earliest chromolithographic days (c. 1875). The authors noted that bears were very popular subjects on these advertising items given away by retailers or promotional items placed in packages of a product. Since most such cards preceded the entry of Roosevelt into the White House, the bear shown is not a teddy and is not necessarily depicted as a threat to man. The following associations stand out vividly from analysis of the trade card category.

First, polar bears are heavily utilized during 1875-1900, in part because of their easy association with temperature. This linkage proved useful for many businesses, since heating and cooking apparatus was increasingly being installed in private homes in Victorian America--sales quadrupled between 1869 and 1906 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1975). Popular excitement about Arctic expeditions pushing toward the North Pole intensified the linkage with the exotic polar bear. Thus, "Round Oak" stoves (manufactured in Dowagiac, MI), "Quaker" ranges (with Lt. Greeley and his men shown), and "Gold Coin and Gold Medal Stoves and Ranges" (manufactured in Troy, NY) nicely integrate the polar bear and exploration theme for potential consumers. Such other manufacturers as Dr. Haas (of Indianapolis), with his "Haas Hog and Poultry Remedy," would also use the Arctic exploration theme--his well-fattened hogs are shown marching around the North Pole under the startled eye of a polar bear. Trade cards featuring "Tuft's Arctic Soda" (of Boston) emphasize how that "Cooling Centennial Drink" is desired by polar bears in 1876.

Second, bears in a well-groomed family group are also very popular, notably in colorful scenes of father, mother, and one or two youngsters. For example, "Smoke 'Manhatta' The Best 5¢ Segar" of 1881 has such a comfortable family eating watermelon; a similar family grouping (c. 1885) is shown to be quite dry at a picnic in a rainstorm in a card entitled "Our Happiness Complete by Using Fast Neptunate Dyed

Umbrella." An otherwise distraught bear family of 1891 is, fortunately, "Insured by Continental" as they watch their home go up in flames. "Silver Hair and the Three Bears" of 1894 pictures a startled young girl leaping out a window, while the reverse describes how Woolson Spice Co. of Toledo sends free pictures to those who mail in Lion Coffee wrappers. In sum, the bear family is made an upstanding household for any proper Victorian community and is depicted as a good friend of the nation's consumer.

Third, bears obviously make excellent characters for manufacturers and retailers of fur and other winter-related non-durable products. E.C. Hill, who is selling hats, caps, furs, and so forth in Pittsfield, MA (c. 1875), relies on a black-and-white trade card with bear to remind his customers of the change of season, as does Rosen Bros., "Manufacturers of Fine Furs" in Philadelphia. Several furriers in upstate New York use a similar card with the phrase "No Great Loss without Some Small Gain." In an interesting depiction from the 1880s, a male brown bear and female seal, both dressed in fashionable fur coats, promote the output of the Middletown Stove Works of the Raymond Manufacturing Company, whose stoves are "available at Renninger, Nagle & Company of Allentown, PA." This well-dressed theme continues as a bear studies his threads in a mirror from the local clothing retailer, F.E. Hartwell of Danbury, CT. Of course, the rougher side of winter is evident in promotion for "Isquimaux Lined Rubber Boots," a trade card that shows an Eskimo (in his warm boots) besting a polar bear in a fierce struggle on the ice.

Fourth, with a bear's strength and durability obvious to all Americans of the day, that association could be effectively used by many manufacturers and retailers who issued trade cards. Ferris and Singer, furniture dealers in Hillsdale, MI (c. 1885), for example, find the polar bear pulling a full-load of boxes to be appropriate for their customers, while a fierce polar bear squeezing a man is deemed right by R & J Gilchrist of Boston, dealers in dry goods at about the same time. Willimatic is also one of many companies that emphasizes its product's strength by comparison with the mighty bear.

Fifth, after the loveable plush teddy bear makes an appearance, business promotional offerings follow. Examples include: Prudential featuring a cook book premium (1910-11) with its cover showing two teddies being served breakfast by a little girl; the "Lightning Freezer" of the H.E. Hessler Co. allowing teddy to join four young children around a table for a ice cream dessert; the cut-out "Teddy Bear Chew Tobacco" bear alerting consumers to the "3 oz Union Scrap Special Premiums...See Friday afternoon papers;" a small teddy hugging a Burrell's container to his body reminding all to "Bear in Mind, Use Burrell's Tooth Powder;" and Arcade Toys (of Freeport, IL) handing out a story of "The Arcadians" that prominently features a teddy with Bobbie and Sue. Finally, the B.F. Wood Music Co. of Boston elects to show teddy dancing with his young mistress in a promotional feature for the company's "Ten Little Recreation Songs and Pieces."

Finally, the bear [and Behr and Baer] brand remains important for promotional material throughout the 1875-1925 era, with most examples having a prominently featured standing bear. Diverse examples include: "Grobowski's Bear Brand Salve" ("draws boil to a head without squeezing"); "Bear Photo Service" (for "enlarging your best negatives"); "Bear Brand Rubbers" ("Rubbers that wear are those with the Bear, Ask your Mother to get you a pair"); "Bear-Facts" cigars ("The Big Baer Cigar, a cigar you can't bear to be without"); B.C. Baer & Son wholesale lumber specialists in Reading, PA; and several variations of "Pettijohn's Breakfast Food" ("Bear in Mind our Trade Mark [a huge grizzly]"). But perhaps no bear brand product was ever better known by American consumers in the early twentieth century than the well advertised "Bear Brand Hosiery" of Chicago ("Wears for Men, Women and Children").

Some 25 examples of sheet music from Tin Pan Alley (TPA), each with bears prominently illustrated on the cover (i.e., a key part of the product), were examined. Most were issued within the 1904-1912 era, but this sudden upsurge represented no surprise. Research shows that TPA specialized in timely new product development (Holden and Holden, 1995), and the coming of the plush teddy bear certainly presented the type of environmental change that triggered popular demand for other bear-related items. Several characteristics of this TPA output are of interest for marketers.

First, Anna Held (one of the most popular singers of the era) goes nose to nose with a little plush teddy bear in her 1907 "Parisian Model" repertoire, releasing "Be My Little Teddy Bear" and a slightly

modified "Will You Be My Teddy Bear" (both by Jerome H. Remick Company of Detroit/New York). Included in the many other popular offerings directly linked to the teddy theme are: "Stung" ("dedicated to all the little teddy bears") of 1908 (Victor Kremer Company of Chicago); "Teddy Bear Pieces" (issued in several colors) of 1907 (McKinley Music Company of Chicago/New York); "The Bad Boy and His Teddy Bears" (the boy dances with Flossie and Teddy, while Papa and Mama bear look on) of 1907 (M. Witmark & Sons of New York); "Stingy" (sung by Mamie Harnish whose companion teddy, Stingy, served as an intermediary between children forming their first boy-girl relationship) of 1907 (Will Rossiter of Chicago); and "The Royal Gewgaw" (teddy dancing with a crown on his head) of 1907 (E.E. Guilford of North Adams, MA).

The mischievous antics of teddy, echoing the output of popular books by Eaton and other product-lines of the era, would certainly induce TPA to rise to the occasion. Perhaps the best example is the 1910 "Musical Echoes from Teddy Bear Land" (Gamble Hinged Music Company of Chicago), with no less than 10 scenes of teddies having a grand set of adventures on the cover.

A second major association for the bear springs forth from the nation's ragtime music craze. By 1910, all sorts of "animal" dances had become the rage, and TPA's bear was the grizzly, e.g., "Dance of the Grizzly Bear" and "Grizzly Bear Rag" (both by Ted Snyder of New York). Moreover, bears were among the menagerie of zoo animals participating in a ragtime hit of 1911 ("When the Band Plays Ragtime at the Zoo" by Will Rossiter). And, not surprisingly in this era, a young man's girlfriend was often referred to as his "bear" (as in "Oh! You Little Bear" by the Joe Morris Music Company of New York of 1912). Of course, all this craziness with bears began with such earlier TPA offerings in the new century as "That Ever Lovin' Bear Cat Dance" (c. 1905) by Mentel Brothers of Cincinnati and "Come and Be My Peski-Eski Mo" of 1907 (Teschner Music Company of New York), with a cover depicting an attractive Eskimo lady and a huge polar bear.

In yet another association, bears have long been utilized as symbols in promotional efforts of certain parks, regions/states, and tourist stops. Perhaps no symbol is as long-standing and widely-recognized as the grizzly facing front for the nation's first national park (created by Roosevelt); "Yellowstone Park" of 1904 (Louis B. Malecki of Chicago) is just one early TPA contribution to the differing product-lines that used bears to highlight Yellowstone Park. Similarly, the 1914 offering, "The Gem of the Nation's Crown, California" (by Roxana W. Weihe, c. 1914), with its bold golden bear, is also one of many diverse products in various lines that depict that state's symbol as brand, promotional activity, or product during 1875-1925. Finally, "Overland" of 1911 (Vinton Music Publishers of Boston), with a bold grizzly poised on a promontory overlooking the vast U.S. west, illustrates the majestic isolation of the continent's strongest animal in the disappearing grandeur of the pre-urban age.

The postcard industry--which got off to a rather slow start because of the U.S. prohibition on written messages on the back--exploded mightily following authorization (as of March 1, 1907) for Americans to write a message on the split back of the now redesigned 1¢ card. Interestingly, this date neatly coincided with a peaking of teddy mania, and so a considerable number of postcards featured various bear themes as the key product. In all, the authors examined more than 25 sets of cards (c. 1906-14), with each set comprising anywhere from 2 to more than a dozen postcards issued by a U.S. distributor [most cards were actually printed in Germany]. The authors also examined a large variety of individual cards that highlighted the bear as promoter/vendor and others that utilized a comic/risqué theme. Overall, no category of bear products demonstrates more fully the diverse ways that bears would be put to work by American business early in the new century.

Nine general themes or associations emerge when analyzing the sets. First, bears are presented as industrious home-makers. This is highlighted in both a leather and several color sets (c. 1907) showing mother bear undertaking different standard household chores each day of the week under the gaze of her youngsters...much like any mother of the era. Second, the polar bear clearly projects a mid-winter image. One set, for example, has Santa's presents (and Santa) being carried by his polar bears out of the frozen north, while another very popular set (c. 1911-1914) has polar bears featured on New Year's Day postcards. Third, bears can be very adventuresome. In one of the most striking, colorful, and largest sets of the 1907 era, the two Roosevelt bears (of Seymour Eaton) effortlessly undertake around-the-globe travel

and so meet all sorts of famous and ordinary folk, with a description below each activity. In a related theme in a set of 10 postcards, another pair of adult bears engages in vigorous activities.

Fourth, bears are a wonderful and highly desired Christmas toys. Several sets (c. 1907) feature delighted children waking up to see their dream come true at the bottom of the bed, while others confront bears (big and small) on the family Christmas tree. Fifth, bears seem to be perfectly adaptable for other holidays, too. Two sets feature gentle brown bears fully participating in Easter celebrations with chicks and eggs, while several individual cards have bears wishing you a happy birthday or a glorious fourth.

Sixth, bears are perfect to characterize or mimic T.R. during 1907-09. The rare "Teddy Rosa" set features a crew of bears digging the Panama Canal, charging up San Juan Hill, playing football, and so forth, all with nicely-rhyming lines from the lead bear. Another set features four teddy bears engaged in activities that directly illustrate favorite T.R. expressions (e.g., "strenuous life", "delighted", "square deal"). Seventh, a lengthy set--featuring the profile of T.R. on a postcard with rhyming color paste-on teddy bears--shows the recipient how many ways the sender misses her.

Most fascinating is how bears on postcards are integral to the work of selling or publicizing goods or services. Dozens of individual postcards use bears to inform both a targeted and a general public about such items as the Rock Island train to the Rockies, Tarwid's Russian Bear restaurant in New York, Bear Brand Hosiery, "Alice Teddy" at a local roller rink, a McLoughlin Brothers book, the National Sportsman Headquarters, travel to Plymouth Rock, Listerated Pepsin Gum, Buchan's soaps, Wales Goodyear shoes, rally days at a local Sunday school, and zoos (especially "Teddy B" and "Teddy G" at the New York Zoological Park). Unique in such promotional efforts are the 16 different and colorful postcards featuring the two young Cracker Jack bears who, upon leaving Chicago in 1907, zoom around the nation, spreading four-line rhymes about their snackfood on each card; the last card has them heading for Mars (the ringed [!] planet) in their glider aircraft, determined to conquer a new market.

Finally, Victorian (c 1907 - 10) postcard manufacturers spared no opportunity to use the comic or risqué opportunity provided by "bear" and "bare," as well as variations of "barely." Most popular were variations of winsome little girls shown with their bare (and bear) behind, a theme only slightly more numerous in execution than one with shapely young ladies (dressed in modern form-fitting dresses) with their bear behind. Meanwhile, endless variations exist of men being chased by big bears (and so barely able to make it or to write), men pinned down by bears (pressed for time), men squeezed by a bear (just barely living), shapely young women climbing trees to escape a dangerous (or even a cute) bear below and so losing bits of their clothes (a bear escape), and so forth.

Finally, games for boys and girls were exceedingly popular in Victorian America. Bears in brilliant colors were featured on many covers of game boxes. For example, "Hunting the Grizzly" (c. 1880), printed in Bavaria for the U.S. market, shows two hunters in a snowy landscape confronting a vicious bear at close quarters. Who is to win in this struggle of man against beast? Equally dangerous on the box cover of "Can You Find the North Pole?" (c. 1890) is the polar bear threatening the U.S. explorer and his native companion as they approach the icy "pole," with their sailing ship (and American flag) afloat in the background.

In an entirely more civilized vein, several McLoughlin Brothers games of circa 1890 cleverly reused color plates from their books as covers for board games. Among those that stand out boldly are: (a) "The Game of Bear Hunters," where a nicely-dressed mother and father bear are at a picnic (with father presenting mother a rabbit for lunch--one that he had just shot); and (b) "Home Scroll Puzzle," where three nicely dressed adult bears are floating comfortably along in a small boat.

The 20th century brought forth many new games. Examples of box covers include one by Milton Bradley, "Game of Bear Hunt," showing three nicely-dressed family-like bears at home. "Game of Three Bears," by Russell Manufacturing Company, has a similarly posed family, but baby bear is crying to the obvious discomfort of his parents.

The bear comes into his own in an entirely different way in the "The Great Japanese Puzzle" of circa 1905. Here a bold Japanese soldier is battling a Russian imperial (polar) bear, with the young game player being asked "Can You Get the Japs in the Fort and Drive the Bear Out?" American families were clearly willing to have the struggle over Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War provide a historic background for their children's recreation.

Amidst the many examples that featured "Teddy" in bear games, we have "Who Can Kill Teddy Bear?" (described as "a new and jolly game for all" in 1906 by the American Printing Company and designed for the boy and his air pistol pitted against a wild grizzly). Interesting variations of pin the tail on the donkey of circa 1907 include: "Who Can Put the Specs on [a very T.R.-like] Teddy Bear?" by the WSH Company; and "Teddy Bear Party: Feed the Teddy Bear" by the Saalfield Publishing Company, where cherries are the food demanded by a very fat but hungry brown bear.

Finally, by the early 1920s, the Arctic region was considerably less formidable, and so we have examples like that of the Parker Brothers who have two polar bear cubs spinning a red top on an iceberg in "The Funny Animal Top Game."

IN SUMMARY

It was not difficult to sort bear ephemera of 1875-1925 into a number of different product-lines. In addition to the five examined, it is apparent that bears were also extensively used as brands, symbols, and integral parts of product in such diverse output as tea sets for children, canned and packaged consumer non-durables, a variety of corporate stationary, photographer's aids/props, and many three-dimensional promotional items.

The intentions of the manufacture or retailer were also evident. Associations with the grizzly could be ideal for products built to last. But as the country consumed more children's books and the frontier closed after about 1890, the bear's image would change from an outdoor wild animal to a sophisticated playmate and adventurer. Bears (black, brown, and white) could still be tough when needed by an advertiser, but increasingly their image would become more aligned with the new urbanizing American, that is, more urbane, a companion for children, and a model for middle-class values. Credit must be given to Seymour Eaton for completing that popular transformation. By World War I, a manufacturer or retailer thus had a spectrum of images or associations to choose among when putting a bear to work.

American consumers of the pre-1900 era needed little education from business about linkages between usage of the bear and characteristics of the country's strongest animal, while arctic exploration added knowledge about a heretofore unfamiliar bear. That is, the grizzly of the western frontier, his smaller cousins, and the polar bear possessed such characteristics as aggressiveness, strength, and a sense of isolation. Judging by the sheer amount of post-1900 bear ephemera that remains today, it is also clear that consumers were able to follow the shifting and softening of the bear image. Ultimately, the country would fall completely in love with teddies by 1907, to the point where scores of manufacturers and retailers could profit by linking national brands and carrying on national distribution on the back of their bear.

Overall, the bear could be tough and be strong--ranging from the symbol of a state or national park to a target for a skilled rifleman--or be undisputed ruler of his iceberg while watching fragile sailing ships push ever northward. Or he could be big, but playful, loyal, and tender with his family. Or he could dress up like any other American...and in fact enjoy adventures in exotic places that most citizens knew would never be seen in person. The advent of teddy, of course, was exactly the product for young boys and girls, whether as dancing partner, tea guest, or sleeping companion, and teddy's mischievous escapades would be legendary. Yet he could, to others, represent President Roosevelt. And, finally, immigration from central and eastern Europe, which brought the Baers, Behrs, and others to American shores, also brought enterprising entrepreneurs who discovered the promotional beauty of linking family name to a

familiar image...much as the English language gave consumers the opportunity to see Mary and her little bare/bear behind in endless variations.

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