

Julita

Maria Vellios

THE memories I have of my grandmother extend over a period of ten or twelve years of early childhood. Grandmother, or Julita, as we were permitted to call her, controlled three homes from her favorite rocking chair. Unable to walk except with the aid of a cane, she compensated this deficiency with her keen eyes and sharp tongue.

A tiny woman of seventy at the time I first remember her, Julita kept my maiden aunts under complete control, and demanded daily visits of her married sons. Seated at her favorite spot on the wide front porch of her home, she was well informed about neighborhood affairs by passing acquaintances. Her other pastimes included reading of novels and religious articles, and a week-long discussion of the Sunday edition of her favorite newspaper. As I recall, Mr. Roosevelt and his New Deal found favor with my grandmother, although I was not very sure of his identity. The weekly rolling of my grandfather's cigarettes was a special event for Julita.

Perhaps the interesting physical appearance of Julita attracted many children to her home. Standing less than five feet in height and usually found in a sitting position, Julita resembled a fat dwarf. The clothes she wore undoubtedly aided in magnifying her odd appearance. Her wardrobe consisted primarily of voluminous ankle-length skirts and little blouses which resembled bed-jackets. These were worn in varying layers, depending on the season of the year and in keeping with her conception of modesty. Since Julita mourned her dead relatives for long periods of time, the colors of her clothes ranged from gray prints to solid black. Black shoes with small buttons were hardly visible under the full skirts and petticoats.

Julita's dearest possession was the big trunk in her bedroom. Occasionally, in the presence of the children, she opened the trunk with the keys which jangled in the pockets of her inner blouses. The keys rested there with the coins for the children and her assortment of religious medals. When the trunk was opened, the fragrance of apples enveloped the room. Julita liked clean smells and those apples, while never eaten, provided the wonderful odor. Any child desiring a piece of fruit was welcome to enter the kitchen and help himself. The apples in the trunk were Julita's property and stayed in the trunk until it was obvious that they must be replaced. The tray of the trunk contained mysterious family records and possessions wrapped in pieces of cloth. Strong teeth were essential when opening these packages, and Julita provided this force.

Underneath the tray could be found the treasures. Her blouses, in varying degrees of construction, were neatly folded among the

remnants of cloth collected over many years. These pieces were recognized as old friends. Here and there one recognized a dress or blouse long ago outgrown or outworn. Julita took these pieces, cutting them into all shapes, and then reconstructed them with her needle and thread into pieced quilts. Fan shapes and wedding rings made beautiful and warm quilts for wintry nights, and the ingredients were like old friends.

Julita left us many years ago, but her belongings are still with us. Her trunk, without the apples, will probably outlive other members of the family. It holds her clothes and is always referred to as "Julita's Trunk." The sight of that trunk and the smell of ripe apples bring back memories of the one grandmother I knew so well.

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Television Commercials—the Scourge of the Age

Jay Judd

THE American public is today being subjected to one of the most monstrous onslaughts of propaganda in history. Sometimes deceptive, often exaggerated, this propaganda has but one goal—to entice the gullible citizenry to purchase something it often neither needs nor wants. Commonly known as the television commercial, this form of mass paycheck murder comes in a variety of shapes and forms, but it can generally be categorized into one of four basic groups. These are the "Super Salesman Type," the "Something for Nothing Type," the "Best in the Business Type," and the "Negative Approach Type."

The "Super Salesman" commercial is aimed at citizen Gullible Gus, who has too good a credit rating, too little intelligence, and no sales resistance. Gus can readily be convinced that he is presently using an inferior product and, furthermore, is paying too much for it. He is fair prey to the King and Charles Antell, and undoubtedly deserves what he gets.

Gullible Gus is not alone in his affinity for punishment. He is joined by a host of his compatriots in his eagerness to be taken by the "Something for Nothing" boys. He has a house full of topless cereal boxes, wrapperless bars of soap, and unlabeled fruit cans, for which he has received model airplanes, combination potato-peeler-and-back-scratchers, and other worthless trivia. Gus could stop all this, but only at the risk of having little Aloysius call him a traitor to Wild Bill Hickock.

The "Something for Nothing" advertisements, however, have nothing on the "Best in the Business" commercials. Aimed at creating dissatisfaction and undermining competitive products, these commercials keep poor Gus and his neighbors in a tizzy trying to figure