

[Read free] Tart Cards: London's Illicit Advertising Art

## Tart Cards: London's Illicit Advertising Art

Caroline Archer

ePub | \*DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#687539 in Books Mark Batty Publisher 2003-06-01 2003-06-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.00 x .38 x 7.721, .98 #File Name: 0972424040128 pages | File size: 60.Mb

**Caroline Archer : Tart Cards: London's Illicit Advertising Art** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tart Cards: London's Illicit Advertising Art:

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Got my 1 cent's worth to the 33rd power! By Jack Hawkins The best 1 cent I ever paid for a book (plus \$3.95 s/h). A funny look at the foibles of our English cousins, who aren't quite as Puritanical as advertised. Just hide it where the kids won't find it, 'cause you won't get it back! 13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A Curious Volume Proves It Pays to Advertise By Rob Hardy Marshall McLuhan wrote that advertising was the cave art of the twentieth century. He wasn't around to see a particularly interesting manifestation of the cave art in London starting in 1984. At that time, because of a loophole in the law, London prostitutes started advertising in phone boxes. The practice became so prominent that now a book reproducing hundreds of the cards, along with a brief documentation of the history and sociology of the practice, has been

produced: *Tart Cards: London's Illicit Advertising Art* (Mark Batty Publisher), by Caroline Archer, is a surprising and good-looking examination of the legal, social, commercial, and advertising issues involved in the cards, as well as an amusing collection of cards offering many different sexual practices. If you can't spend time in a London phone box, this book will take you there. Advertising in phone boxes, which belonged to the Post Office and thus the government, was illegal until 1984, when British Telecom was privatized. Enterprising prostitutes saw the loophole and moved their cards from news agents to phone boxes; after all, each card sported a telephone number, and it made sense to advertise where potential clients could use it immediately. Sometimes the women place their own cards, but they more often subcontract this work to "carders," often students or unemployed. Placing 600 cards a day might get a carder 200 pounds; thus mere card distribution is a trade of millions of pounds per year. Caroline Archer has her doctorate in typography, and is especially interested in the typefaces of the cards. A historic typeface from the nineteenth century tends to be used for cards offering mock schoolgirl services or flagellation. Massage services often have whimsical and feminine scripts. Domination cards can have "stern words set in Gothic letters." Archer is not the only person enthusiastic about the cards in their own right. Cards are traded, like Pokemon cards, and sometimes children do the trading. Some collectors are quite serious in appreciation of the cards' artistic merit or social significance. There have even been parodies of cards, used to promote tours of musical acts or to protest aspects of the use of public spaces. Archer has produced a very interesting examination of the phenomenon, but the best parts of the book are the pages and pages of reproductions of cards, all in full color and unexpurgated. "Have you been a naughty boy?" enquires a professorial-looking woman with a cane. "If you're feeling rather randy, always keep this number handy!" exults one, or "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but whips and chains excite me." There are even variants for Christmas: "Have a Cruel Yule." This is an amusing and handsome book, on an esoteric subject which the author has made interesting and pertinent. Try it on your coffee table. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. reviewBy cdmI found it is a great compilation! I will highly recommend it to others. Just what I was looking for.

In London, more money is spent on sex than going to the cinema. Tart cards are the means by which prostitutes advertise, and they have become as ubiquitous a symbol of that city as the red telephone booths in which they are found. Since the early 1980s these advertising cards, posted in public phone booths around London, have evolved with printing technology into a sophisticated graphic and sociological form. While illegal, about 13 million cards are distributed each year. More than 350 contemporary and historic tart cards are illustrated in color in this book. In addition, every page of text, including the wittily-designed chapter openers, contains a riot of colorful detail from the cards. The book also contains an eye-opening, comprehensive glossary of the suggestive and coded language they use. Some people find the cards offensive, other amusing; but for the prostitutes and their customers they are a commercial necessity. For anyone interested in graphic design the cards form a microcosm of evolving style, taste and technique in design. Tart cards are now a recognized art form and are collected by institutions and individuals worldwide. Love them or loath them, tart cards are an intriguing slice of the social and commercial history of sex.

Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. The practice of placing prostitutes' cards in phone boxes is known as 'carding'. It is a particularly English phenomenon specific to London and the seaside resorts of Brighton and Hove where they serve a flourishing tourist trade. There have also been small outcrops of cards on the coast of North Lincolnshire that cater for a transient maritime population. Elsewhere in the UK, prostitutes still hold to the older methods of notices in shop windows although advertising in local newspapers is also used. Behind the cards there is a vibrant and well-organised industry that comprises prostitutes, punters [clients], pimps and printers. It is an illicit business, but one that is thriving and persistent and where money changes hands swiftly and inconspicuously. Carding started as a kitchen table industry with a handful of prostitutes and their maids cutting out images, drawing their own illustrations, rubbing down lettering and then passing it all over to a trusted printer. It has developed into an extensive, professional, well-organised and highly technical production process that utilises the latest manufacturing systems. - Caroline Archer, from "Foreplay" the introduction to *Tart Cards*.