

Our Youth - Hypnotized by Advertising

Think of a volunteer controlled by a hypnotist, and you will understand the control that advertising has over our society. Because our youth have impressionable minds, they are most affected by advertising. Indeed our youth are brainwashed into believing they must buy or use specific products.

In the modern world of globalization, everyone is interconnected through open markets and technology, and even through advertising. Companies produce large amounts of products for very little cost in other countries all around the world. Once these companies have completed production, they have to sell the products, usually through advertising. Companies focus their advertising dollars on the world's young minds and wallets, whether or not the products are useful or, more often, are a detriment to these young buyers.

How does this hypnotic deception work? For advertising to be successful, the commercials and advertisements must portray an item to be a necessity, attempting to convince the viewer that it will somehow improve one's very existence. This is similar to how a hypnotist has to convince the audience that what he is doing is real and not just an illusion. When an advertisement makes the product appear to be of great benefit, the viewer is seduced into agreement.

When this onslaught of advertising lies is directed towards the youth of the world, the effects are extensive and negative. Pediatricians have found that children under eight are psychologically unable to grasp the notion of what advertising is and believe the story of the ad is true ("Children"). For example, thin and anorexic models are used in all forms of advertising, so children think that they should be excessively thin. Regardless of the story, these hypnotic screens are the smoke and mirrors of advertising magicians, exploiting their skills to distort the reality of children.

It's not just the advertising, but the amount of advertising that is targeted directly to children. The American Academy of Pediatrics has calculated that, "The average young person views more than 3,000 ads per day on television, Internet, billboards, and in magazines" ("Children"). Companies are specifically targeting children because they wish to establish a brand-name preference at an as early age, hoping for a cradle-to-grave buyer. For example, some smartphone and tablet ads are currently being directed at children between the ages of six and 12 ("Children").

This link to technology places our future generations' at risk. Advertisements are teaching them that technology will make their lives easier and happier, hypnotizing them to be "connected" at all times. Think about the dysfunction advertisers are setting up, telling children to spend time on computers and video games, when parents are probably doing the opposite, telling their kids to unplug their minds from those technologies.

Then there are the real-world experiences that kids lose out on because of high technology use. You might argue that youth's involvement with technology is beneficial because it will eventually aid in the improvement of our future with more scientific advancements. But technology takes away precious life experiences that could also aid in advancements. The real world and its real people are ignored. The

virtual world becomes more important. Our youth no longer go outside; meet with friends; exercise; and so on. Instead they sit in a dimmed cave, hunched over the keyboard, slowly developing sensitivity to light. Their imaginations are stifled, and their bodies are stilled. The swirling screens of media isn't only inducing a hypnotic state, it also whispers messages of dangerous lies.

Another advertising area of grave concern is the constant barrage the young receive about alcohol and drugs like nicotine. Parents inform their children not to smoke or drink alcohol. Yet advertisers spend over \$11 billion per year on cigarette advertising, and \$5.7 billion per year on alcohol advertising. They subject young people to more than 2,000 beer and wine commercials annually. In fact young people see 45% more beer ads and 27% more hard-liquor ads in teen magazines than adults do in their magazines ("Children"). All of these advertisements contribute to a youth culture that's heavily influenced to take part in unhealthy habits.

Worst of all is the constant advertising of poor-quality foods that the young see every day. It is estimated that out of the 40,000 ads per year developing minds view, half are for food. Healthy food is promoted less than 3% of the time ("Children"). Instead, the spotlight is shone on fat dripping meals and sugary cereals.

It's no surprise, then, that Michael Reedy, from the Department of Cell Biology at Duke University, found that 40% of children's diets come from added sugars and unhealthy fats. One study found that when a group of children were exposed to television content with food advertising, they consumed 45% more unhealthy food than children exposed to content with no food advertising (Harris).

Continued advertising of unhealthy foods will have a negative effect on future adult health. Even five years after children have been exposed to promotions of unhealthy foods, researchers found that they purchased fewer fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and increased their consumption of fast foods, fried foods, and sugar-sweetened beverages (Barr-Anderson). According to the CDC, if current trends continue, 1 out of 3 U.S. adults will have diabetes by 2050 ("Physical").

If our society continues at this rate, we will have a population that is fully spellbound by a shiny watch, inevitably following its swing, back and forth, and back and forth. People will be overweight, unhealthy, smoking and drinking their way through life, urged on by advertisements that convince them these activities are sublime. Even if the trance is broken, there will still be residual effects. We are a world forever doomed to empty our wallets at the snap of the advertiser's hypnotic fingers.

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