

Ethics in advertising assignment

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Advertising creates a consumer culture in which the foundation of society values and goals is based upon purchasing new products regardless of their need or usefulness. In this way advertising has adverse effects on the overall society. Excessive commercialism is creating a materialistic population where undue value is attributed to consumer products at an increasing rate. Richard and Joyce Willowier say, “ Today’s average American consumes twice as many goods and services as in 1950” (619). People as a whole want to fit in and material things help them do this.

Gary Risking and Juliet Scorch concluded that an annual UCLA survey findings show that students would rather succeed financially than develop a meaningful philosophy on life (625). In my grandparents’ generation, a person knew who he was from his ancestry, how much land he had, his religion, his accent, his job, and where he went to school. Now however, people build their identity around driving a luxury car or wearing the latest fashions. There is an apparent increase in materialistic consumerism which is increasingly defining our identity and place in society (Willowier 616-617).

Critics point out that consumers are capable of saying no, and that no one can force them to buy anything which they dislike or which they deem to be unneeded. First of all, advertisements are very prolific in today’s culture. Most common advertising techniques can be seen in every major information medium including television, radio, cinema, magazines, newspapers, video games, the internet and billboards (Risking and Scorch 623). Another marketing technique is called place-based, “ which coerces captive viewers to watch video ads” or other mediums of advertising as a prerequisite to completing a certain action (623).

An example of place-based ads are ads before a movie, on Tams, at the gas pumps, and inside stores which have to be watched before the intended service is provided (623). We are bombarded with pushy advertisements and it makes it hard to say no every time. People can not close their eyes and shut their ears forever. Advertisers may not be holding a gun to a person's head and literally forcing them to buy a particular product. They are, however, creating a very powerful incentive in the form Of persuading customers that they have to have a certain product.

With this illusion, advertisements make it hard to resist buying something that you ally do not need. The new Apple phone, for example, has witnessed incredible demand due to Apple advertisements prompting people to wait in line for hours all across the country. The phone is not a necessity, but the Apple advertisements have promoted the product so effectively that one of my coworkers waited over three hours in line for the possibility of purchasing one. He is convinced that buying the new Apple pod will bring him satisfaction.

One theory of consumption is that people shop to cheer themselves up. Another reason is to be useful and productive members of society (Rose 627). The proliferation of a materialistic consumer culture is a major cause of depression and low self esteem in today's society (Risking and Scorch 625). Advertising is effective because it plays on humans natural guilt, need for social recognition, and our desire to be " normal. " For example, numerous TV shows and commercials set unrealistic expectations for young girls in terms of how they should look and behave.

Maria Careers M perfume commercial, for instance, makes women think if they use that perfume they will look sexy, attract men, and become a goddess. Advertisers know how to epithelial On important issues and anxieties, like body image, peer acceptance, coolness, and a need for power. Marketers also use attractive themes like sex or alcohol and drug use, further escalating the “coolness factor” of the product. This correlates with self-esteem issues because it creates unattainable goals which advertisements promise their product will help attain.

Some critics will argue that advertising acts as an educator by generating product awareness among the general public. It is estimated that the advertising industry spends \$265 billion each year (Risking and Scorch 625), which is a substantial amount. It is hard to imagine that advertisers will spend that much money on bringing product awareness to the public. For example, if you hold two quarters up in the air, it is the advertiser’s mission to make you believe that those two quarters are different and that one quarter is even worth more than the other (Willowier 615).

In this way it is Apple’s goal to get you to buy their phone versus Sprint’s touch phone, despite the fact that both phones have the same qualities. This shows that ultimately the goal of advertising is not product awareness, but increasing the profitability of the reduce in question by boosting demand. Critics will continue to argue that advertising is good for society on an economic level. It is the main funding for the media, including newspapers, television and radio. Not only does advertising create thousands of jobs, it also creates revenue.

For example, Willowier says that “ Christmas was low key until the mid 1800s, when stores reinvented the holiday to sell off their surpluses” (617). On Christmas Eve of 1867, Macy’s placed ads of all of their special discounts and kept their store open until midnight setting a one-day sales record (617). Even today’s Santa Claus originated in the sass’s because Coca-Cola’s sales were low during the winter months (617). Ads started appearing with Santa drinking a coke and increased Coca-Cola’s revenue substantially (617). Furthermore, Kodak ads universalized the tradition of blowing out the birthday candles (617).

They increased sales with the ‘ capture the moment with a Kodak camera’ campaign (617). Therefore, without advertising people would lose jobs and companies would lose money. Also, according to Willowier advertising helps boost credit sales (618). Today, using credit is the American way of life. For instance, going back to examples of Christmas sales, today Christmas is all about giving gifts. The day after Thanksgiving is the biggest shopping holiday of the year and due to heavy advertising, stores set the highest credit sale records on that day (617).

Advertising persuades people into believing that they have to have something even though they can not afford it, leading Americans to have more debt now than ever before (618). Therefore, from an economic perspective, advertising is good for business but not for the consumer. Another major impact of advertising is the proliferation of market-related diseases. In Risking and Ocher’s article, “ Every Nook and Cranny: The Dangerous Spread of Commercialism Culture,” they discuss the dangers of

advertising. Fifteen percent of children aged 6 to 19 are now over weight (624).

Furthermore, due to advertisements, about 2, 000 children begin smoking each day (624). That approximates to about 730, 000 children each year and one-third of them will die from tobacco-related illness (624). Critics will argue that parents and schools should step in and curb the eating habits of children; however, it is the fast food advertising campaigns that are responsible for these eating habits in the first place. Their advertising establishes brand loyalty early in life so children will grow up eating at McDonald's, or Burger King or Jack In the Box as this is what they are familiar with.

There are a lot of children who know who Ronald McDonald is but do not know who the first president of the United States was. From a business perspective, fast food outlets have an incentive to encourage people to eat more food by supervising it for only twenty cents. Fast-food chains have formed marketing alliances with the movie studios, toy manufacturers and sports leagues (624). That makes it an ongoing challenge for teacher and arenas to step in and fight against the advertisements for unhealthy and otherwise deter mental products.