

Censorship turned into an instrument of manipulation

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Censorship is often regarded as a method of suppressing free speech; for many people, it is just a tool used by totalitarian governments to control the public opinion. However, censorship exists in every society, even in a democratic one, and sometimes this negative perception is not quite justified.

This paper will explain why it might be necessary to censor advertising and how it should be done. First, it should be mentioned that modern advertising does not simply aim to inform about a product; instead, it seeks to create a desire to buy it, and for this purpose various strategies are used; some of them are not very ethical. One of the most notorious examples is the marketing of drugs; pharmaceutical companies have successfully convinced a great number of people that drugs are the only viable solution to their health problems (Edlin, Golanty & Brown, 259). These advertisements force people into belief that medication will allow them to be healthy once again, and they will not have to make any effort. However, they seldom say that in the majority of cases, drugs can only mitigate the symptoms of a disease but they will never eliminate its cause. Unfortunately, many people tend to rely more on commercial rather than on the recommendation of a professional practitioner. This is an example of deliberate misinformation, and it seems that the government should pay more attention to such practices. The thing is that they can jeopardize the health or even lives of many people.

Similar things can be said about food advertisements which emphasize the deliciousness of a certain product while forgetting to warn about the potential risks like obesity or heart diseases (Wieland, Marcus, & Wabitsch, 93). It has to be admitted that we should not blame only advertising <https://assignbuster.com/censorship-turned-into-an-instrument-of-manipulation/>

agencies for it. For their part, people should re-evaluate their eating habits and probably change them. Still, advertising significantly shapes our attitude toward food, and sometimes this influence is not always beneficial. Another issue which should not be overlooked by the official authorities is the growing use of erotic images in advertisement (Hill, 270). These images often are frequently viewed as role models by many adolescents who are very inclined to imitate the things that they see on television. Under some circumstances, advertising contributes to the oversexualization of many girls and at this point governmental officials appear to be indifferent about it. Again, we have to stress an idea that advertising should not be considered as the sole culprit.

Oversexualization can also be accounted by the influence of television, Internet, and popular culture, in general. Overall, these examples show that advertising as any agent of socialization strongly affects our worldview. The key task of governmental officials is to make the advertising more transparent or more honest to the customers, for instance, if we are speaking about such issue as promotion of food. Furthermore, if a certain commercial deliberately misrepresents facts, it should be removed entirely. This argument is particular relevant to the marketing of pharmaceutical products.

There is no point in denying the fact that advertising makes a crucial contribution to the growth and development of modern economy. Yet, very often it is done at the expense of consumers, and the government should not overlook such practices. More importantly, advertisement must not be

turned into an instrument of manipulation that allows to shape people's behavior and value system without their consent.

Works Cited

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