

# [Subliminal advertising narrative](https://assignbuster.com/subliminal-advertising-narrative/)

“ They can manipulate anything from your political views to your reproductivebehavior, all in the interest of making a buck” says expert Wilson Bryan Key whowrote the most popular subliminal advertising book ever, Subliminal Subduction. Subliminal Advertising is an important method of influencing consumers to buy company’s products. Subliminal advertising, which first came to the public attention in 1957 is embedded, camouflaged, or hidden words and/or symbols in advertisements. Although most of the subliminal advertising is done in the media, subliminal messages are often played in department stores to discourage shoplifters from stealing. Some of the different messages are “ stealing is dishonest”, and “ I am a dishonest person”. Every 7. 5 seconds messages were played either under songs or really low so no one can consciously hear it. Another form of advertising not in the media is by a group called Interloc design who uses computers to do their subliminal advertising. They use the newest way of subliminal advertising which is screen savers. Text or images may be inserted in the screen saver and flash at 1/50 of a second. The only way to detect it would be with either laser disc or four-head VCR’s. There are many different techniques and symbols that advertisers use. There are also many ways of stopping advertisers from abusing your unconscious brain. There isn’t just one technique that advertisers use to brainwash buyers. A technique that can normally be viewed in movies or in television. What is normallydone by advertisers is they flash images that are pleasing to the viewers eye such asa flashy color or a sexual innuendo. A technique that is very effective is questioningthe buyer. When used, it makes the buyer ask themself the question “ would I be a badperson if I did not buy this product?” The next technique used is another way to catchthe buyers eye. “ Buzz words” which are words that make us want to see what all the fussis about, and to read the company’s advertisement. The way it’s used in newspapers isif your flipping through the pages, not really looking at what your reading. Whatadvertisers will do is put in big, huge word in an ad to catch the reader such as NEW!, or IMPROVED!. The way it’s used in magazines is advertisers would put the word 100% if they were trying to advertise for a product. The way it’s used in catalogues is theyput the word HURRY! in, or put something like $20 off!, and that’s all they have to doand people see that and they automatically think of saving money. The way it’s usedin billboards is if the advertiser is trying to get a new sandwich a little more hype, they would put the word Homemade! The celebrity technique is seen more on television, billboards, and magazines. The reason celebrities endorse products is to give theproduct a trait that it doesn’t really have such as wealth, fame, or even success. There are different celebrities that endorse for different products. Just to name afew: Michael Jordan always drinks Gatorade, Jerry Seinfeld never leaves home withouthis American Express card, and Paul Reiser never uses anything except AT&T. What this technique does is make people think “ well if the best basketball player in the world drinks Gatorade, then maybe if I drink Gatorade, I could be as great as Michael Jordan.

The “ bandwagon technique” asks you the question “ Everyone else is doing it, so why aren’t you?” What this technique implies is that it’s second nature to buy this product, and that it’s so popular that you would have to be insane not to have this product in your house. Some of the different slogans are “ Did somebody say McDonalds?”, and “ Thirsty? Drink Coke.” The last technique used is the fear technique. This technique lets the buyer know that not buying this product could be disastrous on your own self. The questions advertisers simply are “ Do you want to be fat?”, “ Are you trying to treat your hair badly?”, “ Would you like to have zits?”, “ Do you want to have dandruff on prom night?”. The mechanism that supports this technique is the Before/After scene. This is the scene where the advertiser has someone looking terrible in one picture, than in the after picture, they look terrific.

There are many ways to manipulate consumers; one is symbolism. The first symbol the unconscious sees is of death. Death is the most repressed fear of the unconscious mind. It represents the feared and repressed of the reader. The symbol most used when using the death technique is the skull-death symbol. Out of all of the death symbols is the most obvious embed. An embed is a subliminal mechanism which is a word, slogan, or symbol inserted faintly so it isn’t perceived. Another type of symbol used is a sexual symbol. According to expert Wilson Bryan Key, “ sex is the most frequently embedded word in the American advertising industry”. Fruit appears a lot in advertisements. However, the orange is probably the most common fruit symbol. The orange historically symbolizes women, and peeling the orange symbolizes undressing the woman. If one imagines a woman in place of an orange in all of the advertisements, the orange appears some rather interesting results may occur. The playboy bunny is also a very common embed. The playboy bunny represents, because of it’s universal popularity, the finest international class. There are many phallic symbols that are used in some advertisements which are neckties, arrows, flagpoles, automobiles, rockets, pencils, cigars and cigarettes. According to Wilson Bryan Key, there is, in a Hilton Hotel room service menu, the word “ Sex” embedded all throughout. Symbolism is also used in getting people to watch TV shows. Some people believe that just because “ Chachi” means penis in Korean, that the first episode of Happy Days, “ Joanie loves Chachi” was the highest rated American TV program in the history of Korean television. Coincidence? There were some other ways that symbolism has been used in the past. Vance Packard, the author of the book Hidden Persuaders saw something subliminal about the design of Cadillac’s. He described the bumper lumps on Cadillac convertibles as subliminal marketing tools appealing to sexual desires. Another way subliminal advertising was used in the past was to sell syrup. Aunt Jemima of Aunt Jemima’s maple syrup used to have the appearance of a southern slave, which was done to attract African Americans. Another way of using subliminal advertising is in ice cubes. In a soda advertisement, the advertiser used an ice cube, which had a mountain embedded in it, which represents a place of revelation. There are many different ways of defending the effects of subliminal advertising. First are the defense mechanisms. Repression is repressing, or hold back, any memories or feelings that have high anxiety producing potential. Repression is used more than any other in which to avoid reality. Isolation is avoiding acknowledging relations between related phenomena when acknowledging that relation is highly anxiety producing. One example of isolation is if someone had a fourth accident and driving under the influence of alcohol court conviction, they would be referred as an alcoholic. Sublimation is socially accepting the rechanneling of basic drives and emotions. The two examples of sublimation are sex and aggression. Denial is denying the existence of the basic drives such as sex or aggression. Projection is transferring anxiety through phenomena. The example of projection is the “ scape goat”. Introjection is making you the scapegoat. The first step, however, against subliminal advertising is believing that it exists. Until we accept the possibility that our buying behavior is subliminally manipulated advertisers and the corporations they represent will keep on bringing in profits through subliminal messages. There are six questions that, as a buyer, you have to ask yourself. In actuality, do you really need this product? This means is this product a necessity, and do you really have to have it. The second is has the advertiser showed more than just the basics of the product? For example, if a buyer is watching a toothbrush commercial, and it tells you how it will help you get more men or more women. The third question is: Do you catch yourself reciting a slogan or humming a jingle? If you see someone walking down the street whistling the Mentos commercial, you would know they have been affected by subliminal advertising. The fourth question the buyer needs to ask is do you ever find your presenter absolutely hilarious, enough to buy the product? For example if Bugs Bunny was on a commercial for a shoe company, and you went out and bought that shoe just because it was Bugs Bunny on the commercial and he made you laugh. The fifth question would be: Have you ever purchased a product just because the commercial says everyone has it? An example of that would be if there was a basketball sneaker commercial and it stated that “ Everyone has that sneaker, and it is the best around. The last question you would ask yourself would be: Do you believe that there is no such thing as subliminal advertising? If the consumer knows it exists, there is no way to manipulate them. If yes was the reply to any of these questions then that person was clear-cut victim of subliminal advertising. When we are aware of all of the embeds, they become ineffective. In the 1950’s, executive James Vicary flashed messages across movie screens. The messages flashed were “ drink Coca Cola” and “ eat popcorn”. Coincidentally Vicary’s research on the movie screen flashes reported increases in the sales of Coke and popcorn. Surprisingly, moviegoers bought 60% more popcorn than usual and almost 20% more Coke. According to expert Michael Buchenroth, “ Subliminal Advertising does not necessarily need to be highly refined or sophisticated to sell products; it just needs to be subliminal.”