

Consuming want

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



CONSUMING WANT Consumption is correlational to living. It is part of human existence. More often than not, consumption is a means to an end. For example, we consume food to go on living. We consume medicines to preserve our health. We buy clothes to protect us from heat and cold.

But it is an entirely different matter if one buys something just for the sake of buying. When consumption becomes an end in itself, I think it's already a by-product of the dominant consumerist consciousness and attitude in society. Consumerists find satisfaction, if not happiness, in the purchase of certain things that may not necessarily be their immediate needs.

From the moment we wake up, we are bombarded with advertisements that blur the line between need and want. In newspapers, magazines, radios, televisions, the internet, billboards, marquees, buses ---almost everywhere --- advertisements for tons of products and services force themselves into our consciousness. They urge us to buy this or that product or avail of this or that service. The extensiveness of an advertising campaign spurs name-recall which, in turn, translates to profits.

Companies can spend millions on a single advertising campaign. Advertisers, on the other hand, target our vulnerabilities to build within us the desire to buy a particular product or try a particular service. Most advertising campaigns capitalize on individualism. Ad campaigns make us think that we should pamper or reward ourselves and/or our loved ones with a particular product or service. Or some ad campaigns would want us to believe that a

particular prestigious brand is available not only to the rich and famous but also to ordinary people. On the other hand, advertisers have ruthlessly targeted the young in their advertisements. Advertisers know that when children would hanker for a particular toy or a certain products, parents tend to buy these things for them. These children are started young in yearning for products available, though not necessarily necessary, for them in the market. And these children, if reared in a consumerist atmosphere, grow up with consumerist attitude. These children become parents in the future who will likely pass on to their children this kind of attitude. The survival of consumerist consciousness is ensured in this process.

There are many who regard shopping as a stress buster. Many find exhilaration in the mere act of buying but will tend to find the purchase unnecessary when the "shopping fever" wears off. No thanks to the relentless advertising campaigns to snare the young and old alike, but the consumerist attitude sometimes, if not most of the time, present skewed priorities.

According to The State of Human Development, a 1998 report of the United National Development Report, cosmetics in the United States of America alone raked in \$8 billion while basic education was only allocated \$6 billion (Shah). And while water and sanitation was allocated \$9 billion, perfumes sold in the US and Europe amounted to \$12 billion (Shah).

Sometimes it is scandalous to think on how much some people spend on a

designer jeans that may not fit well in the first place and will surely go out of fashion while there are millions of people around the world who die of hunger. Though I think it is good that we should treat ourselves once in a while. But we should reassess our attitude towards consumption and spending and make better use of our hard-earned money other than recklessly spending them on unnecessary and lavish purchases.

Work Cited:

Anup Shah. Behind Consumption and Consumerism. 10 June 2006. Global Issues. 30 November 2007. <http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Consumption.asp>