

PROMOTING INCREASED GLOBAL AWARENESS AMONGST
YOUTHWORKERS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND: WORKING TOWARDS
CREATING A SOCIALLY JUST WORLD

GLOBAL BITS

change for a just world | issue No. 3. 2004



“ CREATING CULTURE YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADVERTISING ”

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About the theme of this issue

The rise in advertising, in particular the marketing of ‘lifestyle and culture’, has raised many questions about the role that advertising plays in shaping cultural values and attitudes.

The purpose of this issue of Global Bits is to explore the impact that global advertising has on young people around the world.

The reality is that advertising is here to stay. We can’t change this fact. However, we can change the way we interact with advertising, and assist young people to become active members of our communities rather than passive recipients of corporate values.

Services offered by GEC

Lending Library
Schools programme
Community youth programme

Global Youth Work....

- Starts from young people’s experiences and encourages their personal, social and political development.
- Works on the principles of informal education and offers opportunities that are educative, participative, empowering and designed to promote ? equality of opportunity.
- Is based on an agenda that has been negotiated with young people.
- Engages young people in critical analyses of local and global influences on their lives and their communities.
- Raises awareness of globalisation within an historical context, and encourages an understanding and appreciation of diversity locally and globally.
- Encourages an insight into the relationships and links between the personal, the local and the global and ensures that these links are based on equity and justice.
- Insists that the peoples and organisations of the north and south are seen as equal partners for change in an interdependent world.
- Encourages active citizenship by giving young people the opportunity to participate in actions, and build alliances, that seek to bring about change locally and globally.

Global Bits is a quarterly publication providing youth workers and educators with information and ideas for exploring global issues and how they impact on youth and their communities. It includes perspectives and suggestions from practising youth workers throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

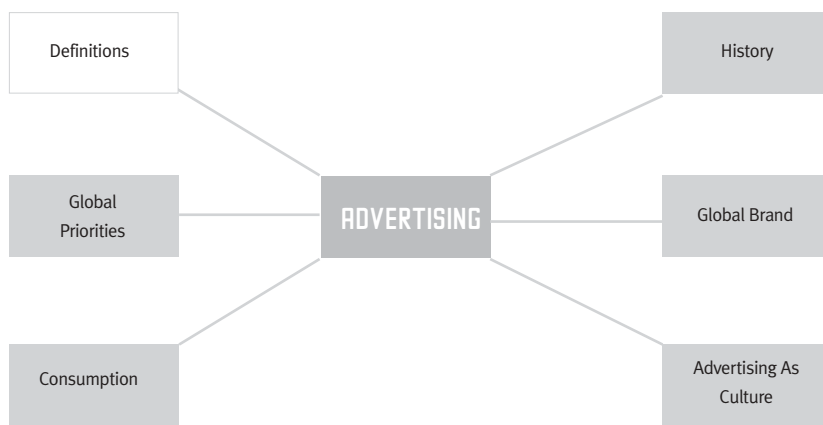
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WHAT ARE “ADVERTISING” AND “CONSUMERISM”?

In order to understand the impact that advertising and consumerism have on the lives and choices available to people, we first need to have a common language and understanding about what each of these mean.

Advertising

Here are two different slants on defining advertising. One legitimises advertising as a crucial business tool, the other questions its function in defining and shaping culture.

(1) The activity of attracting public attention to a product, business or concept, as by paid announcements in the print, broadcast or electronic media, so as to increase sales. Definition taken from dictionary.com

(2) “(a) The fine art of lying to consumers about what is actually being sold. (b) A notable amendment of capitalist theory, whereby the market comes to favour, not the producers who sell the best product, but those who sell the best image. (c) A substantial misallocation of economic resources, whereby a tremendous portion of the economy which could do something useful, is wasted. (This misfortune has the additional demerit of providing a substantial competitive edge to those who use it.) For example, for each packet of mixed vegetables sold at the supermarket, more money is spent to place a colored picture on the packet than actually goes to the farmer...”
jonathanscorner.com/writings/hud/hud.html

Consumerism

"Consumerism is the tendency of people to identify strongly with products or services they consume, especially those with commercial brand names and obvious status-enhancing appeal. For example, an expensive automobile or piece of jewellery. To those who accept the idea of consumerism, these products are not seen as valuable in themselves, but rather as social signals or a reducer of anxiety about belonging".
<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/consumerism>

History of Advertising

For the majority of people, exposure to advertising is as normal as breathing, eating or sleeping. It is a bit like living near a main road, eventually you learn to block out the noise. The same applies to advertising, except that it is not only noise, but a constant visual reminder of how we should look, feel and live. For example, we are now exposed to an estimated 3500 advertising images a day. We tend to block out the majority of images because they become background noise – but they still have an impact on us.

So where did advertising come from, and how has it evolved over time to become such a powerful influence in shaping (young) people's lives?



“In preparing young people to move ahead in a consumer driven world, we first need to give them the tools to liberate themselves from the unrelenting images and values of the powerful advertising masters, and then give them a vision of what is real and human.” anonymous

Timeline

3000 BC

Babylonians introduce the first known forms of advertising - store signs and street barkers.

1525 AD

First printed and publicly distributed ad (mass media) appears in a German news pamphlet.

1840s: The emergence of style

The Industrial Revolution: mass urbanisation in Europe and North America as people moved from rural areas to fast growing cities, where mass production required a large labour force.

"People began to learn not only that 'others' were strangers, but that they themselves were often seen as 'strangers'.... There was a shift from the importance of 'character' (intrinsic self) to the importance of 'personality' (a mouldable extrinsic self)." Managing Our Dreams: Stuart Ewen. New Internationalist 146, April 1985

Crucial to this new 'personality' was a sense of style. As style entered the popular imagination, it was not merely reflected in people's lives. It entered their language. It was used and altered by people. And so the businesses built on this growing sense of style as advertising increasingly focused on depicting entire lifestyles built around a personality or new sense of style.

1930s: Fashion

The idea of fashion emerged and helped in the "stirring up of anxieties and restlessness over the possession of things that were not "new" or "up-to-date". Fashion pressured people to buy not out of need but for style - from a desire to conform to what others defined as "fashionable".

1980s: Brands and hyper-consumption

Major designer brand companies, formerly targeting exclusively to elites, now started producing for the high street and for ordinary people.

Brand loyalty became a hot selling device. Companies such as Nike, Microsoft, Intel and Tommy Hilfiger became synonymous, not with manufacturing of goods, but rather with the creation of values and promises of desirable lifestyle advantages associated with loyalty to their product. Under these 'Brand companies', production of actual goods could be contracted out to generic manufacturers, predominantly in developing countries where labour laws are less restrictive. This period of time saw a dramatic rise in the exploitation of workers in the developing world, and the demise of longstanding textile industries in developed nations.

Naomi Klein (2000) No Logo

Free trade deals opened non-traditional markets and increased access to an enormous variety of products and services not previously available.

Hyper-consumption became a norm as advances in technology, the speed of change, and the increasing spread and number of global brand campaigns, shaped consumer spending patterns.

1990s – present day: Buy now, pay later

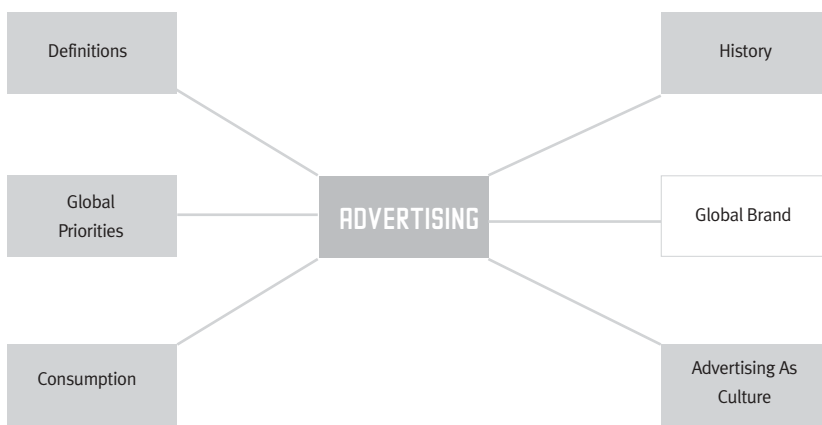
Consumer spending rose in the 90s. Technology such as mobile phones became the number one seller. In just less than a decade the market for mobile phones was saturated. For the phone industry to survive, consumers today need to buy phones more often than their grandparents did the car.

Sped up obsolescence emerges as a key marketing tool; the speed at which things become obsolete is so quick that consumers are forced to replace goods to continue feeling good about themselves. This is most evident in the creation of the "teen craze" where being cool changes from week to week, rather than from year to year.

Hire purchase becomes a popular service available to those wishing to purchase goods priced beyond their saving ability. Access to finance and debt for low income families increases, as young people apply pressure on already stretched incomes, in the struggle to be accepted and benefit from a consumer-driven society.

Sources of information

New Internationalist 146 April 1985



TARGETING YOUTH AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE GLOBAL BRAND

Branding youth

Branding acquires its power because the right brand can surpass the actual product as a company's central asset. Smart firms pour most of their money into improving their brands, focusing more on the values and emotions that customers attach to them than on the quality of the products themselves. Since markets are flooded with indistinguishable, mass-produced items, firms have tried to individualise their goods by associating them with an "attitude brand," pushing a particular lifestyle or image rather than simply a T-shirt, soft drink, or shoe. In today's secular age, the brand has become a form of surrogate religion. The British management consultant Peter York has even argued that Nike's "swooshfitick logo means precisely what the crucifix meant to an earlier generation in ghettos -- it promises redemption, vindication and a way out."

Young people have more money than ever before. This is a fact not lost on the advertisers:

- The average child views 20,000 TV ads per year
- Brand loyalty can begin to be established at age two
- Young children can't distinguish between ads and TV programmes
- In New Zealand four hours of programming can contain up to 120 ads
- In 1985 US teenagers aged 12 to 17 spent US\$48 billion. In 2000, US\$155 billion. They spent it on clothing, video games, snacks, cosmetics and CDs
- Six month old babies can form mental images of corporate logos and mascots. Many children's first recognised letter is the 'M' of the golden arches
- Cradle to grave strategies are extremely profitable and a lifetime customer may be worth US\$100,000

Kids are targeted through:

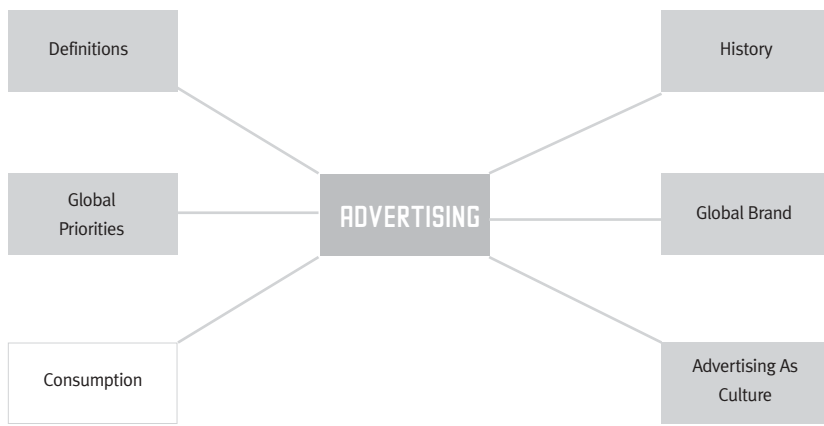
- Children's magazines
- Promotional toys that tie into cartoons, TV shows and movies
- Cartoon characters on all kinds of products
- Brand websites with kid's games and sites
- Brands in schools
- Sports and brands
- Giveaway promotions e.g. Happy Meals

As holders of the latest technological knowledge, kids also influence the purchase of big budget products like computers and TVs.

[Source: Business Week , 1997]

“In much the same way that the British Empire tried to take over Africa and profit from its wealth, corporations look at [teens] like this massive empire they are colonising and their weapons are films, music, books, CDs, Internet access, clothing, amusement parks, sports teams.” – Robert McChesney

"Images of affluent 'western' lifestyles flood film and television in developing countries. Nepal is ranked second only to Ethiopia as one of the poorest nations. The level of imports of cosmetics, soft drinks and cameras into Nepal belies the severity of the poverty of its people. The imports of cosmetic goods increased from USD227 thousand in 1992/93 to USD1.5 million in 1997/98, while the imports of cameras increased from USD223 thousand to USD1.3 million during the same period. Soft drink concentrates accounted for USD202 thousand in 1992/93 and rose to USD823 thousand in 1997/98."



ADVERTISING AND CONSUMPTION ...

“By the year 2050 there will be an estimated 9 billion people, who will require between 1.8 and 2.2 Earth-sized planets in order to sustain their consumption of crops, meat, fish, and wood, and to hold CO₂ levels constant in the atmosphere.” WWF - Living Planet Report - 2002

However, the pressure placed on the resources is not equal across countries.

Here is some food for thought:

One child born in New York City, Paris or London will consume, waste and pollute more in a lifetime than as many as 50 children born in the average developing country.

Inequalities in consumption are stark. Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditure - the poorest 20% a minuscule 1.3%.

More specifically, the richest fifth: use 58% of the world's energy and consume 45% of all meat and fish. They own 87% of the world's vehicles and have access to 74% of all telephone lines.

In 1986 a survey showed that Americans believed they needed at least US\$50,000 a year to "fulfil their dreams". By 1994 the figure had doubled.

The average person in North America uses more than twice as much electricity as someone in the European Union and 14 times more energy than someone in the developing world.

In 1997 the world spent US\$435 billion on advertising, mostly in Europe, North America and Japan. [Development Choices Magazine 2001]

Buy now pay later: credit makes the world go round

Advertising and consumerism go hand in hand. Since the late 1980s global political thinking has been dominated by the ideology that a country's economic success is largely related to its citizen's ability to consume. The reality however is quite different.

The high levels of consumption in western countries has become less a reflection of wealth, and more an indicator of individual debt.

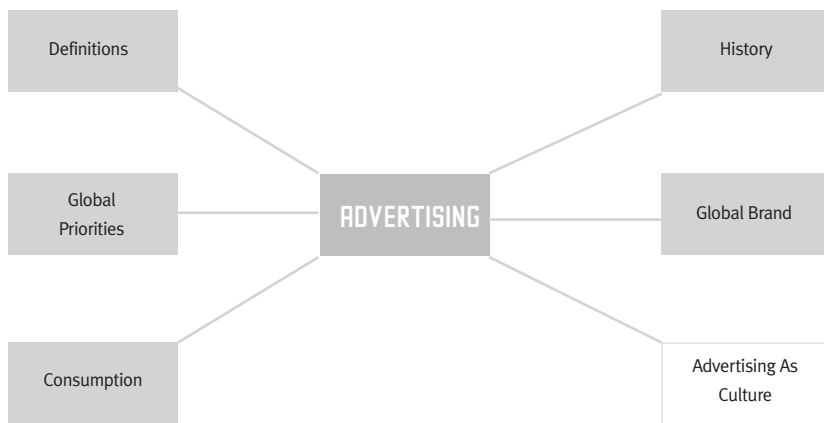
Advertising and consumption are largely dependent on an individual's desire to own things at any cost. For the majority, this means taking on debt. In fact, increasingly, trends in consumer debt over the last 30 years indicate that taking on debt has become a normal, accepted part of New Zealand society.

So what does this mean for New Zealand, in particular for young people?

To answer this let's look at the relationship between advertising, consumption, and poverty:

- How many young people focus more on 'luxury or non essential' products as opposed to essential "basics"?
- What messages do young people receive about debt? Are the messages in magazines, ads etc. the same as those being emphasised by the community?
- How many of the social issues facing young people, can be traced back to advertising messages, in particular, impossible ideals about style, coolness, universal wealth, and consuming equals feeling good and being happy?

“I can imagine it, therefore I want it. I want it, therefore I should have it. Because I should have it, I need it. Because I need it, I deserve it. Because I deserve it, I will do anything necessary to get it.” (Anonymous)



ADVERTISING AS CULTURE

Living the American Dream

The impact of living the American dream not only dramatically affects those living in America, but has far reaching effects across the planet.

Ever wondered what impact global advertising is having on your community? To understand the impact on the local, we first need to understand how it affects countries where western consumer patterns are just beginning to emerge. This piece looks at the role of the media, of which advertising is a major form of cultural transmission.

"As with other markets, the players [advertisers] of the cultural market place are unevenly matched. Global media is increasingly in the hands of a few, large, powerful organizations, as is the production of music and film. For example, by 1997, the MTV television station was available to 280 million households in over 70 countries. Fearing a loss of viewers, local television stations in many African countries have filled their transmissions with cost

effective Western produced shows, superficial news broadcasts, quiz shows and, of course, advertisements. Consequently, TV programs all over the world resemble each other more and more and so do the products in the field of music, film and publishing companies.

The common aspect of globalized culture is that it pursues the same "one size fits all" ideal: the archetypal middle-class family according to the American model in which consumerism is the norm. The result of this cultural process of homogenization is that a large section of the world's population dreams of living like Cosby & Co. or like the characters in any other stereotypical American soap opera. In addition, the dream of living a better life causes thousands of people to move to already overcrowded cities like Lagos, Nigeria's sprawling commercial capital; this city has grown from a population of 18,000 in 1901 to over 12 million in 2001.

The majority of these new immigrants end up in slum quarters leading to poverty, pollution and misery.

Such a radical undermining of people's existing values and cultures has a corrosive impact on their sense of who they are, what they want and what they respect. It attacks spiritual values and faith traditions. The cumulative effect in Africa is a crisis of cultural confidence, combined with the increased economic uncertainty and crime which global integration often brings. This creates real problems for social solidarity, whether it is at the level of nation, community or family. While it offers shiny new goods as compared to old faded ones, the market offers no replacement for such community solidarity."

Excerpt taken from The Drawbacks of Cultural Globalization, by Wole Akande
Yellow Times November 10, 2002

GLOBAL PRIORITIES

Take a deep breath and ponder these stats.

- In 1993 the total calculated expenditure for global advertising was US\$362.6 Billion. For the same year approximately US\$68.5 Billion was spent on aid to poorer developing countries.
- To provide basic education for everyone in the world will cost U.S\$6 billion; Water and sanitation for everyone in the world US \$9 billion; reproductive health for all women in the world US\$12 billion; and basic health and nutrition for everyone in the world US\$13 billion.

Examples of countries with GDP lower than annual amount spent on advertising globally

Country	Population (million)	GDP US\$ billion
Turkey	65.5	164.8
Norway	4.4	145.9
South Africa	40.5	136
Poland	38.7	117.7
Malaysia	21.8	85.3
Philippines	74.4	74.2

Sources: FIPP Magazine World, issue 41
Global priorities in spending in 1998.
www.globalissues.org
UGI 97/11, p3

FROM REFLECTING CULTURE TO BECOMING CULTURE

Advertising has literally colonized western culture because it takes up more and more space and has become the dominant voice. In the 1980s, studies showed the average person was exposed to 1,500 commercial impressions each day. By the late 1990s the average was 3,600 per day.

"Advertising has been called a CULTURAL THREAT, to the extent that it pushes us toward material things and away from social relationships -- and pushes us down the road to increased economic production that is driving us toward economic catastrophe, to the extent it focuses on individuals and puts aside the collective interests (and usually from a male viewpoint because of the male dominance of advertising).

Culture allows society to tell stories about itself, where values are articulated and experienced, where notions of good and evil, of morality and value are defined. In western culture, the story of advertising dominates and shapes our narratives about self and identity."

Source: Advertising and the End of the World, 1998

Young people and sense of self

For many young people, finding their place in the world is often a painful and confused journey. In fact there are very few people who can say that the transition to 'adulthood' was a smooth and painless ride. There are many factors that influence and shape identity, such as family, culture, religion, and social networks. One area that is often overlooked is advertising.

Everyday, young people are bombarded with images and sounds, telling them what is cool, how to act, what is important and how to be happy. For many, the messages of 'global advertising' do not match the realities facing young people in society.

Contrary to popular advertising myths, 'money does not grow on trees' and owning a pair of Nike trainers does not 'make you be the best that you can be', using Lynx antiperspirant doesn't 'make you irresistible to the opposite sex', and wearing Lee Jeans will not 'make you thin'.

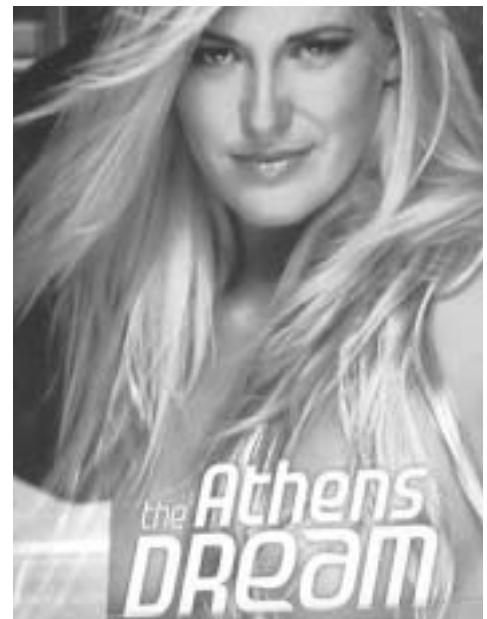
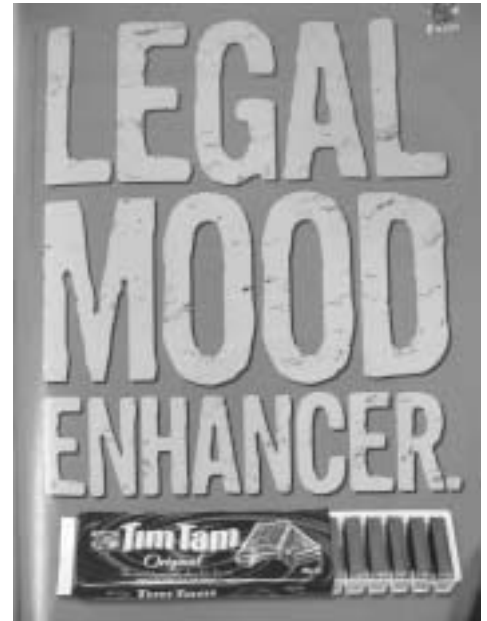
Who controls our stories

- If anthropologists from Mars looked at us, they'd conclude this society was dominated by a belief in magic.
- Scholar Raymond Williams has called advertising a "magic system" where material things have immense power of transformation.
- Advertising replaces cultural stories by replacing them with myth. They can bring instant gratification. They can promise a world of desire.
- The problem of capitalism is not one of production -- but instead is one of consumption. It invented the institution of advertising in the last part of the 1900s to solve this problem.
- Advertising has changed from sponsoring culture to becoming culture (e.g. Sprite sponsoring a concert as opposed to Sprite becoming a component of hip hop culture). What's the difference? What happens to culture when its purpose is sales rather than expression?
- Distinguished scholar George Gerbner has asserted that those who control a society's stories have the power to shape that society's values.

Source: Advertising and the end of the world, 1998

Some questions to reflect on:

- Who has control over your stories?
- How does commercial control (i.e. control by those who are primarily of media) influence the kind of stories our society hears?
- How can our stories be heard over the noise of advertising?



"Everyday, young people are bombarded with images and sounds, telling them what is cool, how to act, what is important and how to be happy."

What does advertising mean to you?

Advertising for me is learning about a product and the ways in which it either advantages or disadvantages me. However this ideal of pure learning and total awareness is not the full story. Although companies aren't allowed to do false advertising, there are certain ways in which they fudge the line and provide selective information. With chocolate for example, they'll completely advertise its luxury side and how it's going to make you feel so good if you buy it, but there's absolutely no mention of any negative health impacts that can arise from over-consumption.

Why is advertising successful?

Well, advertisers play on your emotions, that's what advertising is all about – if you buy this product, you'll suddenly be fit and healthy and beautiful, and everybody will love you, and all in 10 weeks! It's all about pitching it at the right level, manipulating your feelings and insecurities to ensure that people want, and more importantly, need the product. "Hey, if you buy this you'll feel better and gorgeous!"

How do you think advertising impacts on young people?

It influences them massively. It's easier for companies to exploit young people. Take for example the clothing brands where the kids end up as walking billboards for big companies, while actually paying twice as much just for the 'privilege' of wearing their name. Looking around the room today, out of about 20 young people there was probably only about 3 that were not wearing a brand of some sort as their top. That's actually exploitation...

Also with companies like Nike, they never tell you where they're making their products, how much they are paying people to make them, or under what conditions those people are working. That's the sneaky advertising that doesn't tell the kids the whole story, but just the icing on the cake. So they'll be running along the street in their Nike product, thinking of "Just do it" and its positive image of being fit and healthy, while being totally unaware of all the background stuff. So advertising influences them massively, it kind of builds up a



false view of what the world is about, and they grow up not knowing any differently.

Does advertising impact on young people and their communities in more readily apparent and immediate ways?

For sure! For one, it contributes to peer pressure that can turn into more serious bullying. Take for example a group of cool kids with the 'right' kind of surfer or skate brands, and then a kid who's wearing something from the Warehouse – they'll pick on him. So these advertising messages are actually becoming an excuse for gaining credibility in that particular peer group. And in the meantime our 'uncool' young person is feeling isolated and lacking in self-worth.

Socially it has particularly huge implications for people from lower socio-economic families. I actually started out with my youth work in England, and there the situation is even more pronounced. Brands are really huge, and kids with no money but who want to belong will go out stealing just so they

can fit in. At times you see people who haven't got money to feed themselves or their family for the week, but at least they've got a new pair of trainers. Same impact with advertising for alcohol, cigarettes, gambling... It plays most on those who are the worst off – it goes back to this thing of making you feel better.

There are of course other impacts as well. Going on for months and months at parents to satisfy the latest artificially created fad fosters friction within families. And then there's stereotype creating. So yeah, it's affecting young people as well as society as a whole.

What do you think drives the advertising industry?

Money at the end of the day. Advertising is a powerful tool – it can make the company grow two-fold overnight because of a successful campaign. It's money and it's status, and it's also influence and association...

THIS INTERVIEW IS CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE >>>

In working with young people, how does one deal with the force of advertising and its dominant messages that “consuming brings happiness”?

I think that challenging young people on their views, opinions and stereotypes is just so useful. And doing it through a supportive discussion, rather than simply telling them whether they are right or wrong in my opinion. Where a young person comes out with a blanket statement like “everyone wearing black must be gay” or “Starbucks is cool”, it’s up to me as a youth worker to challenge these comments and get them thinking on where they come from.

I think that this skill of talking the young person through, and making them place their reality within a wider New Zealand or global context, is just so

important to us as youth workers. And from one challenging conversation you can do a whole lot of group work...

Do you think there are any positive aspects to advertising?

Sure, take our youth café for example. To fulfil our aims of breaking even and giving something for young people to do, we must make sure that the right kind of information gets out to people. A lot of great community projects fail due to an inability to advertise effectively...

But leaving aside socially aware community-based advertising, what about the global for-profit advertising industry?

I guess it opens up financial avenues to different countries. On the other hand if a kid is being shoved McDonalds flyers every day and doesn’t get

one for a New Zealand burger shop, they are going to go to McD’s and then where’s the money going to go? If they are buying locally they can build up a local economy, and hence make the country stronger.... I’m sure there are positive aspects, I just can’t think of any right now.

Last comments, parting shots?

I’d like to see more global thinking with youth work in NZ. I know there are important issues going on with Maori and PI, issues that are very current indeed, but New Zealand is part of a greater whole. It may seem we’re out of the way, but we influence the rest of the world and the rest of the world influences us. People need to start thinking about this in their work; unfortunately it is still quite rare now. We need to be able to educate the youth workers to educate the kids; perhaps we need some sort of global youth work qualification.

WHAT’S HAPPENING LOCALLY: YOUTH WORKER INTERVIEWS

Neil Young

Editor, Tearaway-The voice of youth, youth magazine

What does advertising mean for you?

As an editor, advertising gives me space for editorial. I think that’s quite contrary to how people selling the advertising look at it – for them it’s a means of getting their message out, but for me, I don’t pay any attention to the message – it just generates space in the magazine.

Has the advertising evolved since you’ve been in the business?

There is a lot more guerrilla advertising around. Advertisers will always try to associate with what is cool and latch their product onto that, but the ways they do it now are becoming more sophisticated. Take the street team concept for example, where young people are recruited, linked up by email and sent out to spread the word about the ‘coolness’ of the product. When the X-box was launched in NZ, bar staff were encouraged to mention it to their patrons. The pay-off was that should they strike an X-box representative they’d get a free machine, but really the whole scheme was just about getting people talking about it.

Same with stencilling, that is like a form of graffiti that you see around town and is usually done by young people on the fringes. Some companies appropriate the style and use it for their ads, trying to cash on the popularity of the alternative. Do you remember the TV ad where the Vodafone team are

‘jamming’ (changing) the billboard by night to their message? That’s a great example of a global company turning the tools of the anti-globalisation movement and using them for marketing purposes.

Where do you think advertising will go from here?

I think that in comparison to the UK or the States it’s still fairly mild here, but it is on its way. Also as technology proliferates you’ll see cleverer and more innovative ways to advertise. We already start to see that with mobile phones and text ads.

What impact do you think advertising has on young people?

I think that in the worst-case scenario it colonises the way they think and make sense of the world. Basic things like climbing a tree or reading a book are encroached upon and replaced by advertising. Instead of going outside and exploring the world you are stuck playing Playstation.

There is also the whole development of the tweens, where companies like Mary-Kate and Ashley are marketing intensely towards little kids. Suddenly they become fashion conscious, style conscious and aware of their sexual attractiveness, where in my opinion that shouldn’t be the concerns of a ten-year-old kid. I remember when I was little I wasn’t that concerned with style...



That's because you've always had it, right?

Ha-ha, yeah, that's right! But really, I think that this invasive sense of having to be cool, stylish and wearing the right gear is pushing further towards younger and younger children. It impinges on young people's development and their abilities to be individuals.

Do you think the advertising industry has a responsibility to promote realistic lifestyles and positive choices, or if the government allows it, anything's fair game?

I think they have an ethical responsibility, but for them it may run counter to their ultimate goal - maximising profit by selling as many units as possible. So I'm always a bit distrustful and sceptical of advertisers that seem to promote to you the idea of choice. Like McDonalds for example revamping their menu, and getting people like Sarah Ulmer to be their spokesperson – they are sort of promoting moderation and healthy choices, but still being a fast food company trying to make money.

In your role as an editor have you faced any moral dilemmas with regards to advertising?

Probably the most significant dilemma was our conflict with McDonalds, who at the time were the main distribution centres for Tearaway. We did a cover story on gay young people in New Zealand, and McDonalds refused to distribute that issue saying it was offensive to the family values that the franchise stood for. So here was an example of advertisers sort of censoring freedom of speech. We could have agreed to pull the story or perhaps allow them not to distribute this one issue, but this would set a precedent of them deciding what was OK for the magazine and what wasn't, and you really cannot have that. So we just said that the relationship has to end. Regrets? Not at all, I'm glad we stood up for it, and the young people have supported us all the way through. It did make things more difficult for a while, because McD's is everywhere and an ideal distribution point for the magazine. But we've re-established new networks; it just took a bit of time.

So to what extent do you think the media is controlled by the advertising dollar?

I think to a very large extent. Media will always be linked with advertising, just look at television for example, where one of the main reasons it exists is to deliver viewers to advertisers. Programmes are structured to keep people watching so they'll be there for the ad break. It wouldn't be able to exist without advertising, just like Tearaway wouldn't be able to exist without advertising...

Finally, what are some things that young people need to know about advertising to promote their positive development?

I'd say never take advertisement at face value and always do your own research. It's not about being distrustful, but rather cynical about the messages you're being fed by advertising. Those messages are always hooked over to their goal of selling. Everyone should try to make informed choices about what they buy and whom they buy it from. Even if a company's conduct isn't ethical, as a consumer you can be.

WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY: YOUTH WORKER INTERVIEWS

Helen Fletcher

Peer Support Worker- Evolve Youth Service, Wellington

How Does (Global) Advertising Impact on Young People in New Zealand?

At its most basic level, advertising impacts on New Zealand young people by encouraging them to buy products they may not otherwise have gone for. But is it as simple as "Seen it on TV. Gotta have one"? No. Not every advertisement aimed at youth will appeal to every member of this target audience. What makes the difference is the young person's interests and what their peer group is buying.

Youth are not only influenced by the product being advertised. Take the Air New Zealand TV ad where a N.Z. band flies to America, plays on top of a building and catches the attention of a record producer. The band featured did not really exist - it was manufactured for the purposes of the ad. However, the singer attracted a lot of attention and was subsequently given a recording contract. It is not just the advertised product that makes an impact on sales it is everything being showcased - the music, the clothes, the lot.

Unless young people have travelled extensively or lived overseas their main ideas about other cultures are likely to come from film and television. Product placement including music and fashion is influential. If a young person sees that in Hollywood films people are drinking a certain type of soft drink and wearing a particular style of clothing, the assumption made is likely to be that this is part of American culture rather than that these items dominate product placement.

Everyone knows the phrase "sex sells". This advertising was originally aimed at adults but it's being around has an impact on what is deemed appropriate for youth and has a desensitising effect. The cliché is that women are objectified in advertising but if you take a closer look men are objectified in just the same way. Despite this, recent NZ research into advertising showed different results. The roles men and women took in a wide range of ads shown on TV here were not based on sex symbols but on controversial gender myths. Women appear in professional roles, researching products for home and family, attending university.



Men were more likely to be shown consuming alcohol, drink driving or acting the fool. These images are helping New Zealand youth to build up stereotypes of the opposite sex.

Advertising has a subliminal influence on any audience. With the majority of ads aimed at children and young people it is bound to have an impact.

SHOPPING

BIGGER THAN RELIGION

These statistics, taken in America, provide insight into consumer patterns in similar western countries such as Aotearoa NZ.

Ask a young person what their number one past time is, and see whether buying, or wanting to buy, are near the top of their list. Percentage of American teenage girls who report store-hopping as favourite activity: 93%

Average time spent shopping per week: 6 hours

Time spent playing with children per week: 40 minutes

About 53% of grocery and 47% of hardware store purchases are spur of the moment.

Percentage of shoppers surveyed across the country who were shopping for a specific item: only 25%

Stats taken from

<http://www.ecofuture.org/pk/pkar9506.html>

Statistics, compiled by the New Road Map Foundation, describing USA consumption patterns and their effects on personal lives and the environment.

Over the last few years "buy now pay later" deals have made instant gratification possible for those previously excluded because of income or credit ratings. Everything from electronics, household items, to travel can be taken advantage of now, with no payments for 12, 24, and 36 months.

A thought... if everything can be deferred for 36 months, how many additional purchases does the average person make during that 36 months using other credit deals?

ACTIVITIES:

How an advertisement message is created

The exercise that follows is a fun way for young people to think about who puts together a advertisement message and why.

Ask young people to choose an ad campaign message, such as Nike-Just do it, or Coke-refreshing taste of life.

Then answer the following questions about it. Television commercials are easy to practise with because they are short and often contain powerful words, images, and music. You could also pick a video game, the packaging for a children's toy, or a music video. The choices are endless.

1. Describe the kinds of people involved in creating the message. These can include writers, photographers, designers, special effects people, or stunt people.
2. Depending on the media message you choose, talk about the visual effects that were used (lighting, camera angles, computer-generated images, etc).

Also discuss the sound (the words that are

spoken, who says them, music, special effects, and other sounds). How do these different things affect the power and meaning of the message?

3. Discuss the purpose of the message. Are the people who made the message trying to give you information? Do they want you to do something (such as buy a product)? Or is the message just to entertain you? Many times the true meaning of a message is hidden below the surface and is not always stated in the message. As children gain more experience questioning how messages are put together, they will be able to get at the true meaning of any message.
4. What do young people think about the message? Do they agree with it or disagree with it, and why? One reason to accept or reject a message could be to decide whether it is realistic or agrees with their values.





ACTIVITIES: MEDIA AWARENESS

Activity

Companies appeal to consumers in many different ways to persuade them to buy their products. As individuals, or in small groups, list television, magazine or newspaper advertisements that use each of the techniques described below. Make a list of specific products and describe how they use the techniques.

Advertising Techniques

avant garde: the suggestion that using this product puts the user ahead of the times e.g. a toy manufacturer encourages kids to be the first on their block to have a new toy

bandwagon: the suggestion that everybody is using the product and that you should too in order to be part of the group e.g. a credit card company quotes the number of millions of people who use their card

facts and figures: statistics and objective factual information is used to prove the superiority of the product e.g. a car manufacturer quotes the amount of time it takes their car to get from 0 to 100 k.p.h.

glittering generalities: "weasel words" are used to suggest a positive meaning without actually really making any guarantee e.g. a

famous sports personality says that a diet product might help you to lose weight the way it helped him to lose weight

hidden fears: the suggestion that this product will protect the user from some danger e.g. a laundry detergent manufacturer suggests that you will be embarrassed when strangers see "ring around the collar" of your shirts or blouses

magic ingredients: the suggestion that some almost miraculous discovery makes the product exceptionally effective e.g. a pharmaceutical manufacturer describes a special coating that makes their pain reliever less irritating to the stomach than a competitor's

ordinary people: the suggestion that the product is a practical product of good value for ordinary people e.g. a cereal manufacturer shows an ordinary family sitting down to breakfast and enjoying their product

snob appeal: the suggestion that the use of the product makes the customer part of an elite group with a luxurious and glamorous life style e.g. a coffee manufacturer shows people dressed in formal gowns and tuxedos drinking their brand at an art gallery

transfer: words and ideas with positive connotations are used to suggest that the positive qualities should be associated with the product and the user e.g. a textile manufacturer wanting people to wear their product to stay cool during the summer shows people wearing fashions made from their cloth at a sunny seaside setting where there is a cool breeze

testimonial: a famous personality is used to endorse the product e.g. a basket ball player recommends a particular brand of sneaker, or popular band recommending a brand of soft drink.

wit and humour: customers are attracted to products that divert the audience by giving viewers a reason to laugh or to be entertained by clever use of visuals or language

(based on Tressler and Lewis, Mastering Effective English (Third Edition), pp.470-472)

Reflection Activities

- Get young people to think about what their lives might be like on \$5 a day -what would they do/buy...?
- Research international Buy Nothing Day, come up with something they could do on this day (www.buynothingday.co.uk)

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE?

WEBSITES

Media Awareness Network

Resources and support for everyone interested in media and information literacy for young people. The Media Awareness Network promotes critical thinking in young people about the media.



Adbusters

www.adbusters.org

A global network of artists, activists, writers, pranksters, students, educators and entrepreneurs who want to advance the new social activist movement of the information age. Their aim is to topple existing power structures and forge a major shift in the way we will live in the 21st century.



Popular culture

If you are wanting to explore how global culture impacts on local culture, or learn more about popular youth culture, this site offers a variety of perspectives.



Movie analysis

This website may help you intelligently discuss movies with young people.



Cultural Survival

This web site is dedicated to providing current information about human rights and indigenous populations. Cultural Survival includes a list of action alerts and information about various efforts to preserve cultural identity and awareness that are taking place around the world.

<http://www.cs.org/cshome.html>



Other Resources

These resources and more, are held in the GEC library. Membership is free. To register, or search the catalogue, visit the library section of our website: www.globaled.org.nz/library.htm
Please contact us if you would like to receive a comprehensive listing of youth worker resources.

Social inclusion T-kit (Training Kit) Council of Europe 2003

How do youth workers and youth organisations go about being inclusive? This T-Kit aims to provide both conceptual and practical tools from which to begin to explore and approach this question. Excluded young people are difficult to reach. Making contact is not enough. We need to engage and work with them. The manual contains practical exercises and methods to work on issues.

GEC has a lending copy, or you can access the manual online at:

Development Education Tool Box. Just Business UK 2002

This resource provides a variety of transferable methods and activities that can be used in the classroom or youth work settings to incorporate ideas of co-operative learning and respecting the values of others while raising awareness of issues related to global justice and inequality.

No Logo (2000) by Naomi Klein

This book is a must for anybody wanting to understand the impact that brands have on young people.

" If the world really is just one big global village, then the logo is its common language understood by, if not accessible to, everyone"

Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers. by: Alissa Quart 2003

This book provides an in depth look at the role global brands play in the formation of youth identity.

"Branded offers a chilling portrait of the commodification of youth and the innovative ways that kids resist. Quart's analysis of the intrusion, co-optation and commercialisation of young people is a must-read for parents, youth activists, educators and teenagers alike".

Culture jam : hijacking commercial culture: 2001 Right To Jam Productions Inc

Video

Culturejam: Hijacking Commercial Culture delivers a fascinating rap on the 20th Century movement called Culture Jamming. Pranksters and subversive artists are causing a bit of brand damage to corporate mindshare. Jammers, cultural commentators, a billboard advertiser and a constitutional lawyer take us on a wild roller coaster ride through the back streets of our mental environment.

Killing us softly 3: advertising's image of women. (2000) Media Education Foundation

Video

A look at gender stereotyping in advertising. Includes examples of ads and discussions with leading commentators. Covers topics such as, image; eating disorders; feminism; men; sex; media; consumerism; corporate control; and society.

Advertising & the End of the World. (1997) Media Education Foundation

Video

Focuses directly on the world of commercial images, asking some basic questions about the cultural messages emanating from this market-based view of the world: Do our present arrangements deliver what they claim-- happiness and satisfaction? Can we think about our collective as well as our private interests? And, can we think long-term as well as short-term?





About the Global Education Centre

Global Bits is produced by the community youth arm of the Global Education Centre (GEC), a programme of the Development Resource Centre (DRC) – a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation governed by a charitable trust. We are core funded by NZAID Nga Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti (The New Zealand Agency for International Development). The DRC's vision statement is change for a just world and its mission is informing and educating to empower people to take action to create a just world.

The Global Education Centre (GEC) provides services to the formal and informal education sectors, and the youth and community sectors on global education through its Schools and Community Youth programmes. GEC provides training and resources to teachers, teacher trainees, students, youth workers and community groups. Services include workshops, youth advocacy, Global Issues magazine, teaching resources, a website including fact sheets and links, and a free lending library.

GEC's sister programme at the Development Resource Centre is Dev-Zone, a resource centre focused on international development and global issues. They operate a free library, manage a comprehensive website, and publish a magazine. Services include answering quick enquiries, email updates, information projects, and literature searches on a variety of development topics. Dev-Zone works with the development and human rights sector, as well as students and the general public.



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