

The morbid philosophy of advertising

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"The misguided philosophy of unbridled economy - growth is the overheated engine of a sick development which is manifestly evident in advertising"

Sut Jhally

Unfair competition, wilful deception, surreptitious or camouflaged advertising, plugs, subliminal 'product placement' (disguised ads - in television shows, unobtrusive on-screen brand and products), staircase advertising (provokes the risk of falling), misleading advertising (false promises and wrong information by quacks and health - freaks), questionable purchase appeals to children and youngsters - 'deadly persuasion' (Sut Jhally), AIDA (acronym for Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, - Push-pull marketing), bestseller lists, couponing, cross-promoting , loyalty cards, customer loyalty, discount brands, pay back, fragrance or 'scented' ads (below the threshold of conscious perception - subliminal priming (?)), alcohol, nicotine - advertising, manipulative, suggestive motivating, (triggers for 'positive emotion '), (post-) hypnotic ads, sex-related ('sex sells'), false promise, ' hidden persuaders', ('improvement' of health, ego-inflation '(C-G. Jung)), ' Sex' advertising, advertising gifts, promotional games, fear-mongering, intrusive - annoying advertising, loathsome election ads. Advertising terror, disfigurement, 'Light Pollution', 'cluttering' of advertising billboards (distracting traffic participants), offensive ads, trespass, online advertising (malware, adware, Trojan horses, third party cookies), pop-ups, spam, search engine manipulation, mobile bullying, ad-word attacks, digital signalling, interactive manipulating, phone-fax-mail advertising, brawl, templates - abuse), winning games, pyramids systems (captivating-circles), denigration (comparative ad, disparagement of competition), breaches of law, secret treachery, Sky - Writing, Sky - Beamer, Light Graffiti , Laser -Show -ads etc. etc.

Neuro-marketing: Does the benefit of 'Buy it Now' outweigh the pain of paying? " (Prefrontal deactivation - blocking purchase decision, nucleus accumbens - 'reward') - the credit card alleviates the 'pain' for the time being - payment will be made later - almost unnoticed.

After scanning the above lines a subtle unease is sneaking up. The colourful facets and varieties of the magical arts of the Masters of Persuasion ("monkey business") paint a pretty genre-mosaic of 'late post-modernism' and a peculiar 'promising' future.

Reaction: Consumer criticism - Denial: Ad-Busters (fr. Déboullonneurs. ripping-down- against 'visual pollution') Guerrilla Marketing Communication (street art), 'Buy - Nothing' Day, Culture Jamming (Kalle Lasn) against the rule of the brands, companies and the power of consumer capitalism on spirit and soul. Billboard Liberation Front - Against - Urban Un-commissioned Art etc.

Law, Disclaimer: Advertising, general, product-specific, media-specific, ad in public, in nature ..

'Power': advertising works on peer -groups. This (among others) influences buying behaviour. Without a certain fashion or brand - clothing, shoes - or mobile-phone, i-pod etc. youth today might rank as 'also-rans'. They do not belong to the gang, they believe being not appreciated duly, not 'valued' sufficiently.

The 'media - dependence' of 13 - 14 year-olds attains a kind of 'saturation' after two or three years (Bart Helms / Sandner 2001) - thus self-responsibility begins to develop gradually ('Medien Kompetenz', Geretschlaeger 2005). No one can be hypnotized against his will or 'forced' to buy a product by suggestive advertising power.

Side effects: He who trusts misleading advertising gullibly - he ends up paying for it (Gruber W, Oberhammer H, Punter M (2010): Wer nichts weiß, muss alles glauben. Ecwin.).

The propaganda machine hazards the consequences and takes a loss when 'outshining' the competition with SUPERbright daytime running lights (DRL). The bluish-white 'isotropic' (radiating into all directions) light pattern composed of HI-LED (high intensity Light Emitting Diodes) irritates by 'branding' the logo into the retinae of the other road users. Children at pedestrian crossings ('Schutz'-Weg = zebra crossing, 'protected' way in German) go to rack and being overlooked and oblivious to distracted drivers. ('Inattentional Blindness' and related phenomena).

Cluttering: promotional items heaped immediately adjacent to the road. Placards as large as huts, panels, election poster stands, varied with friendly welcome greetings from the community, announcements, local notices, traffic signs, even temporary notice boards, cast-in time - advertising, etc.. All this BEFORE the Zebra Crossing. Consequently there was a fatal accident (one car, one pedestrian, dry road, unobstructed view). After the zebra crossing: No trace of advertising. Empty space - until the vicinity of the next crossing.

Illuminated advertising in the traffic scenario, 'dynamic' advertising, moving bright, colourful flickering lights, film sequences, such as a sports car hurtling forward. All these eye-catching force un-divided attention. 'Worst case scenario': Fatal consequences.

Dynamic, moving advertising in the soccer stadium provokes or even causes incorrect referee-decisions, irritates and distracts linesmen, players and fans. 'Animated' advertising screen show images resembling soccer balls. Hence cognitive processes might be incapacitated. Several failures are provoked.

Laser shows, light graffiti, 'decorative lighting', spectacular light 'arts ', sky beamers, gleaming, glittering glistening and blazing light-advertising, intrusive glaring and dazzling in shining colours (bright blue causing more stray light, all these light-effects are competing for potential buyer's attention.

Summary:

The particular method of advertising could be the wrong one. Deception, false promises, creation dependencies thereby risking addiction etc. Direct psychosomatic damage caused by overdoses of stimuli (light, noise), exceeding physiological limits and the capacity of cognitive processing, the violation of legal limits (headlights, daytime running light - intensities etc.). 'Wrong' advertising methods might cause wrong reactions and unwelcome side-effects.