

ing constantly promotes an ideal of woman as a slender, youthful sex object for men to enjoy and for women to measure themselves against? Is there truth in this claim? If so, what are the implications for the ways we understand ourselves as male and female, and the ways we behave?

2. How can we better educate consumers? What alternatives to current advertising could be developed that would provide reliable information without the hard sell?

3. In recent years, advertising has emphasized more and more strongly the importance of targeting very specific audiences, especially consumers with deep pockets. This has meant that popular TV programs have sometimes been dropped because their audiences have not been sufficiently affluent. What implications does this have for the frequent claim by spokespersons of the television industry that they simply give the public what it wants?

organizing, and labelling consumers. Something is provided for all so that none may escape; the distinctions are emphasized and extended. The public is catered for with a hierarchical range of mass-produced products of varying quality. . . . Everybody must behave (as if spontaneously) in accordance with his previously determined and indexed level, and choose the category of mass product turned out for his type. Consumers appear as statistics on research organization charts, and are divided by income groups into red, green, and blue areas; the technique is that used for any type of propaganda.

Culture was no longer a form of creative expression but a standardized manufactured product, almost indistinguishable from the advertising that surrounded it:

The assembly-line character of the culture industry, the synthetic, planned method of turning out its products [factory-like not only in the studio but, more or less, in the compilation of cheap biographies, pseudo-documentary novels, and hit songs] is very suited to advertising. The effect, the trick, the isolated repeatable device, have always been used to exhibit goods for advertising purposes. . . . Advertising and the culture industry merge technically as well as economically. In both cases the same thing can be seen in innumerable places, and the mechanical repetition of the same cultural product has come to be the same as that of the propaganda slogan. In both cases the insistent demand for effectiveness makes technology into psycho-technology, into a procedure for manipulating men. In both cases the standards are striking yet familiar, the easy yet catchy, the skillful yet simple; the object is to overpower the customer, who is conceived as absent-minded or resistant. (p. 123)

Twenty years later, Marcuse (1964) argued that consumer culture produced "false needs" that induced individuals to buy into a consumer lifestyle. He was among the first to argue, as I have above, that the individuality offered by consumer culture is a pseudoindividuality, constructed and promoted for purposes of manipulation and social control. Thus to be genuinely free and individual, one must free oneself from a whole system of pleasures, consumption, and entertainment administered by the power structure. According to Marcuse:

Political freedom would mean liberation of individuals from politics over which they have no effective control. Similarly, intellectual freedom would mean the restoration of individual thought now absorbed by mass communication.

Not only is the consumer society based on a tremendous waste of resources and talents, but corporate control of the economy has made the United States look alike all over: Drive down any street in the United States and you will see generic America in the form of filling stations selling the same brands of gas, fast-food chains selling the same junk food, video stores renting the same (quite small) selection of films, and chains of other types selling the same goods everywhere. Through quasi-monopolies, advertising, price fixing, mergers, and other corporate developments, giant corporations have come to dominate economy and society in the United States. While enjoying less variety and diversity of goods, the consumer must pay for the entire corporate infrastructure and advertising and packaging, actually subsidizing the very industries that indoctrinate and exploit us.

Conclusion

Manipulation by the advertising and fashion industries can be avoided. Generally, generic products of the same or better quality can be had, and at lower prices. We can resist the machinations of fashion, choosing our clothes and other products on grounds of usefulness, durability, value, and actual need, instead of allowing ourselves to be manipulated by advertising. We must also learn to read and decipher advertising, to see through the hype so that we can analyze and criticize advertising's persuasive techniques. Corporate propaganda aside, advertising is a parasitic industry and a tremendous social drain. By the early 1990s, as noted at the outset of this chapter, \$130 billion was spent annually in the United States on advertising—far more money than was spent on schooling. Advertising is a disgraceful waste of resources, talent, and time. Eventually, citizens of the United States and similarly advertising-saturated nations are going to have to question seriously the priorities, values, and institutions of consumer capitalism if we wish to preserve the democracy, freedom, health rights, and individuality to which we pay lip service.

Further Questions

1. How has the advertising industry used images of women's and men's bodies? What do you think of some critics' claim that advertis-

used high-tech, fast-paced imagery to associate the beer with a modern consumer lifestyle of cars, dance clubs, bars, and urban street culture. The images were dazzling, the editing was fast, and the pictures were tracked with loud music and Michelob slogans. The ads thus sold both beer and the fast life in the fast lane, linking Michelob to the paradise of consumer capitalism. During the late 1980s we were also treated to nightly incantations that "the heartbeat of America [is] today's Chevrolet." The cars sped through attractive landscapes and showed individuals, couples, and families enjoying the mobile and fun-filled life made possible by their cars. These ads equated owning and driving a car with being a real American, and used patriotism to try to persuade U.S. citizens to buy "American" cars rather than "foreign" models (as if the two were clearly distinguishable any longer).

TV ads are highly sophisticated, highly creative, and produced with the newest high-tech instruments and aesthetic strategies. Tremendous amounts of time, talent, and resources are devoted to producing such images, which are typically more expensive than programming. Networks receive up to half a million dollars and more for each prime-time ad spot. Indeed, television programming itself is little more than bait for viewers who are sold to advertisers. One of the gigantic swindles perpetrated on the public today is that commercial television is free, that advertising pays for network television. In fact, consumers pay for the programming through higher prices for the goods they purchase. Many television series are themselves advertisements for wealth, luxury, fashion, and a high-consumption lifestyle (an argument developed by Sari Thomas in Chapter 26).

In a way, advertising is the art form of consumer capitalism, and it runs the gamut of aesthetic forms, from nifty-gritty realism to fantastic surrealism. As Robert Goldman (1984) has argued, certain ads promote an idealized version of American history and the institutions and values of corporate capitalism as they try to huckster their products. For instance, McDonald's ads frequently contain images of small-town America, family life, middle-class affluence, and integrated Americana that surround the images of the Big Macs and Macmuffins they are trying to sell. Other ads promote American ideology by equating consumerism with "freedom of choice" (e.g., between light and regular beer) or tell you to be an "individual" by buying this or that product. Note that individuality and freedom are here defined in terms of possession, consumption, and style, as opposed to thought, action, dissent, rational behavior, and autonomy,

which were the basis of previous definitions of individualism promoted by the U.S. Founding Fathers and nineteenth-century individualists such as Thoreau, Emerson, and Whitman.

Critical Perspectives on Consumer Culture

Threats to individuality, democracy, and community from consumer culture were a primary focus of a group of critical social theorists known today as the Frankfurt school. These social theorists, who included Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Theodor Adorno, Leo Lowenthal, and Herbert Marcuse, were forced in the early 1930s to flee Nazi Germany and emigrated to the United States (Kellner, 1989). While in exile, they developed one of the first systematic critical perspectives on advertising, fashion, and the consumer society. In a 1938 article, "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Hearing," Adorno (1938/1980) offers some critical perceptions on the newly emerging consumer culture in the United States, written in powerfully condensed language:

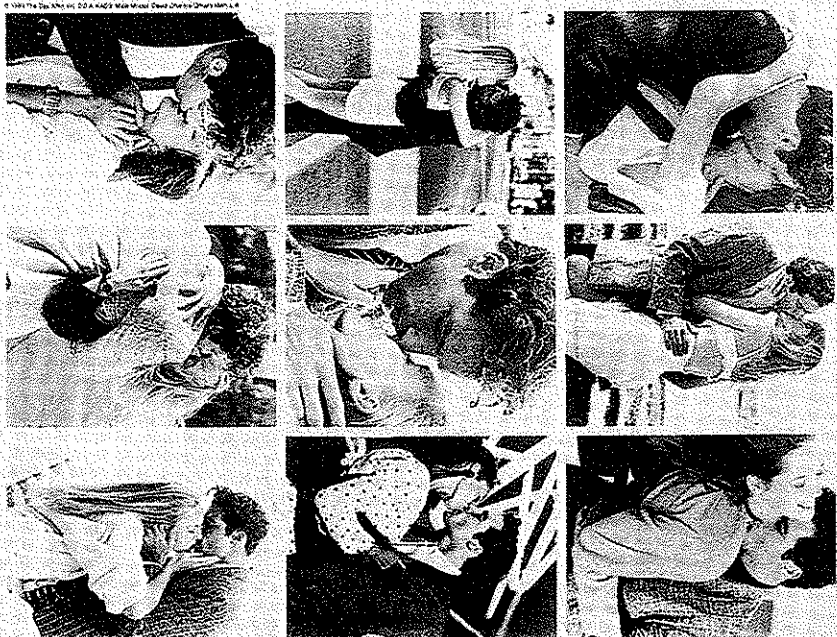
The couple out driving who spend their time identifying every passing car and being happy if they recognize the trademarks speeding by, the girl whose satisfaction consists solely in the fact that she and her boyfriend "look good", . . . before the theological caprices of commodities, the consumers become temple slaves.

For all the couple's apparent freedom and enjoyment, Adorno argues, they are actually slaves to the ever-changing demands of the fashion industry's new commodities, which act like a capricious and tyrannical deity of old.

In a later work by Adorno and Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, written in 1947, the authors analyze the way that mass culture and communication produce consumers for the "culture industries" (see Adorno & Horkheimer, 1947/1972). Their experiences in Europe sensitized them to the danger that the manipulative techniques of advertising and propaganda in the consumer society could be developed to usher in some version of Fascism in the political sphere:

The ruthless unity in the culture industry is evidence of what will happen in politics. Marked differentiations such as . . . magazines in different price ranges, depend not so much on subject matter as on classifying

SO MANY WOMEN
SO LITTLE TIME*



K.A.D.S.

THE CLOTHING COMPANY

Bloomington's The Broadway Macy's Marshall Field's Slevin's/Hill Place/Go Places Other Fine Stores

Classic television ads presented problems like "ring around the collar" and "tired blood" and commodities that would solve these problems. They portrayed numerous sagas of young men or women

The Survival of the Trimnest.



The Most Successful Store in America, since its opening in 1859, has been a store of the most successful stores and the most successful stores of the most successful stores. 155 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Since 1859, the store has been a store of the most successful stores and the most successful stores of the most successful stores.

unable to get dates because of bad breath or unappetizing hair, magically transformed into highly attractive and successful sex objects through the mouthwash or shampoo advertised. Television advertising is especially suitable for portraying such magical transformation and metamorphosis, building on fantasy imagery borrowed from myths, fairy tales, or contemporary media. Television is our primary storytelling medium, and ads provide brief narrative dramas that vividly present the agonies and ecstasies of life in the consumer culture.

Television stands at the center of our symbol system and provides mythic and ritualistic celebrations of dominant values and institutions (Kellner, 1982). Thus ads can be read as capitalist morality plays that celebrate dominant values, specific modes of action, and the "good life," much as medieval morality plays celebrated Christianity. Anheuser-Busch's "The night belongs to Michelob" ads of the late 1980s

wealth and luxury, which is still reflected in the current image. Thus ads sell not only products but social values and ideals.

The Virginia Slims woman is very slim, like her brand name, maintaining the powerful cultural pressure on women to achieve this socially desirable trait. In fact, Lucky Strike carried out a successful advertising campaign in the 1930s that associated smoking with weight reduction, and Virginia Slims plays on this tradition. The connection of smoking and slimness is far from innocent and has contributed to eating disorders, fadish diets and exercise programs, and a dramatic increase in anorexia among young women, as well as rising cancer rates. As Judith Williamson (1978) points out, advertising "addresses" individuals and invites them to identify with certain products, images, and behavior, and this is most powerful for women.

Advertising sells its products and view of the world through visual and verbal rhetorics, design, and layout, to which tremendous psychological research, artistic resources, and marketing strategies are devoted. Advertising, fashion, and consumerism are of crucial importance in producing the needs, values, and daily behavior that dominate our lives in contemporary capitalist economies.

Fashion and the Manufacture of Image

To keep a high level of consumer demand in place, the advertising and fashion industries have to persuade consumers to change deep-rooted habits, to throw away old products and buy new ones continually. Advertising and the fashion industry thus combine individuality and conformity in curious ways. Individuals consume and pursue fashion to individuate themselves, yet do so in order to be socially accepted—to fit in and be popular. Moreover, mass-produced goods and fashion are used to produce a fake individuality, a "commodity self," an "image."

In today's society, corporations, politicians, and individuals are all obsessed with image (Boorstin, 1962). Much magazine advertising is therefore devoted to stylish images, whether of clothes, cosmetics, automobiles, or liquor. Clothing ads show the "proper" image for specific social groups and classes. Upscale magazines directed toward the upper class and the upwardly mobile feature luxury items and high fashion as an essential part of a successful lifestyle. General-readership magazines and some specialty magazines sell less-expensive mass-

produced products that are promoted as magical roads to romance and popularity for middle- and working-class audiences.

The two ads reproduced here provide examples. The first projects to upscale male readers that they must have a variety of fashionable clothes in order to be popular and sexually successful. The sexist caption at the top, "So Many Women / So Little Time," appeals to the busy young man on the make. The nine images of different clothes and different women equates the two, projecting the idea that women are available for "consumption" in the same way new jackets are. The second ad highlights the message that in a competitive world a man must be well dressed and fashionable. The motto at the top, "The Survival of the Fittest" plays on the Darwinian thesis of the survival of the fittest in a dangerous and violent world. The menacing talons of the eagle at the top of the picture reinforce the image of danger. The young man in the center is coded as a hunter with a lethal crossbow and arrow, ready for the kill. The color of the exotic background of the desert and animals is a golden hue that provides a surrealistic aura to the scene. It signals to the attentive reader that the ad is an allegory of life in a competitive capitalist society, the jungle in which only the fittest survive, and it is the clothes that are the young man's "weapon." The sensual language and the phallic bow make it unclear exactly what the man's prey is. Indeed, despite their careful crafting, ads remain minitexts open to different critical readings if closely examined.

Television, Advertising, and Fashion

Television is one of the most ubiquitous and influential promoters of advertising and fashion. TV advertising is expensive, sophisticated, and ever more frequent during an era in which the deregulation of television allows the networks to show as many ads as they desire during a given time period. Television ads are typically 60-, 30-, 15-, or even 10-second dramatizations of the value of consumerism as a way of life and the joys and benefits of the consumer society. TV ads frequently adopt the conflict-resolution structure of television programming. Situation comedies and action/adventure programs present problems and conflicts and then offer solutions that celebrate traditional values, institutions, and authority figures. Similarly, in advertising a problem is shown, the commodity is offered as a solution, and happiness is the outcome.

Reading Advertisements Critically

Learning how to read advertising critically thus provides individuals with important tools for interpreting contemporary American culture and avoiding manipulation. Ads are complex texts, the images, words, framing devices, and structures of which attempt to influence individuals into accepting certain values and role models and into adopting certain lifestyles.

In order to sell their products, corporations undertake campaigns to associate them with positive and desirable images. Thus in the 1950s, Marlboro undertook a campaign to associate its cigarette with masculinity and with being a "true man." Previously, Marlboro had been packaged as a mild, women's cigarette, and the "Marlboro man" campaign attempted to capture the male market with images of archetypal and culturally familiar characters such as the cowboy, with its connotations of masculinity, independence, and ruggedness. Thus consumption of the product was associated with socially desirable traits, here masculinity. For decades, the Marlboro cowboy has been the central symbol in Marlboro ads. Yet in the 1990s the cowboy has become a relatively small figure, overshadowed by images of snow, trees, and sky. Why this shift from masculine cowboy to images of nature?

All ads are social texts that respond to key developments during the period in which they appear. As the health hazards of smoking became more widely known, a mandatory health warning appeared on all packaging and advertising. "Light" and low-tar cigarettes are also responses to the health concern, so too Marlboro ads now feature images of clean, pure, wholesome nature, as if it were "normal" to smoke cigarettes and as if cigarettes were a healthy, "natural" product. The imagery is itself "light," white, green, snowy, and airy, often showing horses gamboling in snow or water, trying to associate cigarettes through the process of "metonymy," or contiguous association, with these natural elements. This glosses over the fact that cigarettes are an artificial, synthetic product, full of dangerous pesticides, preservatives, and other chemicals.

The Marlboro ads also draw on images of tradition (the cowboy), hard work, domesticating animals, and other values, as if smoking were a noble activity sanctioned by tradition. The images and text create a symbolic construct that tries to camouflage the contradictions between the "heavy" work and the "light" cigarette, between the

"natural" scene and the "artificial" product, and between the rugged masculinity of the Marlboro man and the "light" cigarette. In fact, this latter contradiction can be explained by the marketing ploy of suggesting to men that they can both be highly masculine and smoke a (supposedly) "healthier" cigarette, while also appealing to "independent-minded" women who might enjoy smoking a "man's" cigarette that is also "lighter" and "healthier."

A 1989 Marlboro ad featured the gnarled hands of an old cowboy holding a lighted cigarette. The subliminal message is that you too can smoke and live to a ripe old age (whereas the "real" person who played the Marlboro cowboy for many years had just died of cancer after giving many interviews warning of the dangers of smoking). It thus invites the consumer to a pleasurable experience and subliminally tries to allay fears that the experience is a dangerous one that might actually be life threatening.

Thus ads offer symbolic gratifications to consumers and try to associate their products with socially desired values. The well-known Virginia Slims advertising campaign, with its slogan, "You've come a long way, baby," tries to denote social progress for women, associating this progress with the right to smoke. Many of these ads try to visualize the positive change for women. They often depict the bad old days when, for example, a working woman lights up a cigarette and angers her boss, contrasted with the modern beautiful Virginia Slims woman confidently and happily holding a cigarette in her hand. The ads connote a message of progress, linking Virginia Slims to the "modern woman" who has progressed from oppressed servant of men to independent subject of her own life. The appearance of the 1989 Virginia Slims woman contributed to this message; for example, her hair was teased, her makeup perfect, her smile dazzling, and her clothes flamboyant, with mismatched earrings, connoting independence, style, and nonconformity. A red hat, carelessly tossed back over her shoulder, a gold bracelet, an exotic short shirt, all were carefully contrived to effect an image of individuality, daring, and sexuality.

It is interesting to compare contemporary Virginia Slims women with earlier images. As recently as 1983, the Virginia Slims woman was much more conventionally pretty, more conservatively attired, and less flamboyant and sexy. The shift in image reflects changes in cultural ideals and a "yuppie" emphasis on high fashion and individuality, as well as the collapse of moral taboos about women's sexuality. Also, during the Reagan 1980s there was increased emphasis on

as information and then present critical theories of advertising and fashion that provide more complete analysis as to how these two processes function to produce consumers and to integrate individuals within the consumer society. I will show how broader social values can be "read" from advertising content, and conclude with some criticisms of consumer culture and some proposals concerning how to minimize manipulation by the advertising and fashion industries.

Advertising: Information or Persuasion?

Mainstream writers essentially defend the institutions, lifestyles, and values of consumer capitalism, and apologists for the advertising industry interpret it as a form of information that provides consumers with up-to-date news concerning commodities and the impetus necessary to maintain a high level of production and affluence (Konig, 1973, p. 29). Likewise, defenders of the fashion industry claim that it, too, merely provides a constant turnover of new products and styles that meet consumer needs for novelty, change, and desire for style. They argue that fashion "opens up, with all its new developments, new horizons, enriches and diversifies life and makes it more attractive; it also acts as a powerful stimulus to the economy" (McClure & Fulton, 1964, p. 21).

In most standard textbooks and theories, fashion and advertising are therefore presented as beneficial aspects of an innovative and dynamic consumer society that provides individuals with the goods and styles that they themselves desire. Thus in "A Statement of Advertising Principles" defined by the Advertising Federation of America, one reads, "Good advertising aims to inform the consumer and help him to buy more intelligently" (Ulanoff, 1977, p. 22). Another defender of the industry takes the same position: "Advertising is an integral part of business. Its primary function is to sell products, services, and ideas by informing the public of their good points and their availability" (quoted in Harms, 1989).

Yet advertisers also admit that they are attempting to persuade buyers to purchase certain products, and divide buying motivations into "rational" and "irrational" behaviors (Switkin, 1981, p. 66). In the words of one mainstream theorist, whereas informative advertising aims to appeal to reason and provides "reasons why" individuals should purchase products, by contrast, "advertising that addresses

itself chiefly to the emotions, rather than to reason or intellect, is called human interest copy. This kind of advertising is based on appeals to . . . emotions to which the average person reacts" (Switkin, 1981, p. 4). Little advertising is purely "informative." There are informative ads in the classified sections of newspapers, but television ads are mainly image based, creating associations between products and desired conditions, such as happiness and success. Advertising is persuasive, relying on emotional appeals, dramatic or comic images, and manipulation of basic fears and desire.

Michael Schudson (1984) has compiled a great deal of evidence indicating that advertising has limited effects, and he cites a large number of unsuccessful advertising campaigns. Deeply suspicious of the view that advertising automatically has an impact on people, Schudson claims that ads have "only the most happenstance and eclectic theoretical foundation; they are not based on any serious understanding of people's attitudes about worldly goods" (p. 63). He claims that few people actually believe in advertising and that there is little compelling evidence that it actually persuades or manipulates consumers into buying.

Recent empirical research into advertising effectiveness tends to confirm Schudson's suspicions: According to statistics published in the September 1992 issue of the *Journal of Advertising*, advertising produced an increase in sales in less than half of the cases studied; indeed, advertising had little or no effect on product sales in more than three-quarters of the cases studied. Yet such dismissal of the effects of advertising covers over the fact that there is evidence that much advertising does work and that, moreover, advertising is part of a climate that promotes consumption, along with marketing, promotion, telecommunications, packaging and display, and an environment of stores, malls, and shopping. In this context, advertising helps shape values, thoughts, fantasies, and behavior.

Thus defining the impact of advertising purely in terms of its success in pushing specific products skates right past the wider question of how advertising forms part of a whole promotional culture that shapes citizens into consumers, transmitting endlessly the message that buying and consuming will solve problems and bring about happiness, social and sexual. It provides lifestyle models to emulate—or to avoid, because of their body odor, poor and outdated dress, or (for women only) lack of sufficient slenderness. Thus ads are important cultural texts that should be subjected to cultural criticism.

Perhaps nowhere is this argument more plausible than in mass advertising. Kellner mercilessly dissects the ridiculous—but still potent—advertising messages that play upon our fears and uncertainties about how to present ourselves socially, how to behave in public and in private. Kellner also analyzes the fashion industry, which is advertising's principal commercial bedfellow. These are pervasive components of our everyday cultural lives, of how we are pulled and tugged about by these corporate forces, unless we live as hermits in the wilderness. Even when we refuse to conform to the dictates of fashion and advertising, we are aware at the same time that we have resisted their pressure.

Furthermore, in sustaining an ongoing pattern of high spending and consumer debt, two economic objectives are realized. One is that mass-produced items always find buyers, which means the economy is less prone to crisis and collapse, in contrast to the 1930s, when between a third and a quarter of Americans were out of work. No one wants that experience repeated, but at the same time, the consumer products that have been sold most intensively are often dangerous and polluting, namely, cars and cigarettes. Auto and road construction, oil, and tobacco corporations improve their balance sheets, the economy seems stable—but what about our lungs, our limbs, our lives, the balance sheet of our physical and social health?

The second economic objective realized is work discipline. A currently popular bumper sticker says, "I owe, I owe, so off to work I go." People moonlight to meet their consumer debt payments. Few people really relish Monday mornings. Yet our culture tells us we can enjoy ourselves to the limit—of our ability to work.

According to figures published in the September 1992 issue of the *Journal of Advertising*, in the early 1990s in the United States more than \$130 billion, or roughly 2% of the gross national product, was spent annually on advertising (p. 130). When one considers that an ever larger amount of money is also spent on design, packaging, marketing, and product display, one sees just what is squandered on advertising and marketing. Only 8 cents of the cosmetics sales dollar goes to pay for ingredients; the rest goes to packaging, promotion, and marketing (R. Goldman, 1987, p. 697). Advertising commands a

tremendous amount of resources and talent and is a crucial component of the capitalist economic system.

The expansion of marketing and advertising was originally the result of mass production. By the early years of the twentieth century, industrial capitalism had perfected techniques of mass production. The assembly line, scientific management of the labor process, and the emergence of the modern corporation revolutionized production and made possible the creation of new mass consumer goods. New modes of advertising, marketing, packaging, and design helped produce the mass consumption necessary for the purchase of all these new commodities. By the 1920s, corporations, advertising agencies, and market research organizations began planning ways to "produce" consumers (see Gandy, Chapter 11) and to promote consumption as a way of life in the United States (Ewen, 1976, 1988). Individual resistance to new products had to be broken down, and individuals had to be convinced that it was acceptable to purchase goods they had previously produced themselves and that it was morally justifiable to consume, to spend money, and to gratify desires.

Previously, puritan work and savings ethics and a morality of delayed gratification prevailed, so advertising had to convince individuals that consumption was now a morally acceptable route to happiness and satisfaction. Advertising also attempted to create problems and fears to which commodities were a solution; thus, for instance, unless individuals bought products to combat their bad breath or body odor, they would not be socially acceptable. In this way, a "commodity self" emerged in which different products allowed individuals to communicate different aspects of "their" personalities that could be shaped by using the right products and producing the right images. Advertising tells us that new commodities will make us happier, more popular, and successful. Fashion in turn provides the constant cycle of new products, styles, and images that keep consumer demand at a high level. Advertising tells us that to be up-to-date we must be fashionable, we must buy and exhibit all the latest products and fashions. Advertising and fashion also promote a worldview complete with ethics, politics, gender role models, and a sense of appropriate and inappropriate daily social behavior.

These two industries thus have crucial economic and socializing functions in creating consumer demand, shaping behavior, and inducing people to participate in and thus reproduce consumer society. In this chapter I will examine some "mainstream" approaches to advertising

19 Advertising and Consumer Culture

DOUGLAS KELLNER

Some critical analysts focus mainly on the political economy of media, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 of this volume. Others concentrate overwhelmingly on cultural studies, as in this section. Kellner tries to fuse these perspectives together, examining not just the economic basis of U.S. broadcasting and the press—advertising—but also advertising's impact in creating a consumerist culture that seems at times to envelop us all.

The intellectual source of much of his critique is a group of German intellectuals who were forced into exile, mainly to the United States, by the Nazis' accession to power in 1933. Based originally at a short-lived research institute at Frankfurt University, they are the founders of what has become known as the Frankfurt school of critical theory. Their view of contemporary mass culture has been highly influential since. They are noted for their insistence on how mass-produced contemporary culture provides us with substitutes for genuine experience, for love, for curiosity of the mind; on how it manipulates our anxieties about ourselves; and on how it caters to a fraction of our intelligence and effectively sells us short as human beings.

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Questioning the Media

A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

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