

When mass mind control is protected by free speech

Joshua Fraenkel
Guest Writer

Television advertisements are one of a handful of instruments in this society which are subjugating the people under their control. They are placing an entire nation under their grasp, using an ingenious network of people's favorite celebrities, and using them to invoke dependencies on certain products.

We trust that these celebrities want the best for us, and we start habits that eventually bring our ruin or addiction. We no longer choose anything of our own free will because one of the most powerful inventions ever created has been used against us. This invention is more powerful than cars, bombers, or war itself. It creeps into every home where every individual lets down his guard and relaxes before his secret TV dictator.

Television is such an ingenious medium that it has us believing we are in front of it, watching our favorite show, of our own free will, when we actually despise being forced to go before it with nothing to show in the end. I know, because every Sunday I am inevitably dragged before the TV for football as I scream and plead in desperation to be allowed to complete piles of my homework.

Advertisers know that every one of us have these cravings at certain times of the week and very cleverly slip before us appealing commercials selling beer and other objects that creep beneath us and lead a path to addiction. This analysis may seem hyperbolic, but it is not, considering the following happenings: a child's head is blown off by a fellow student for a pair of Reebok Pumps; a throat is slit for a leather jacket; fellow citizens are robbed of possessions by some-

one who is controlled by this longing deep inside, as if for crack, telling him, demanding of him to update his wardrobe with these fascinating shoes that will bring him respect, and even all those gorgeous girls and boys shown in the ads.

Ads rule the impoverished by making them believe that they become something they are not by only possessing a certain product. It creates hope in minds—hope that if they get a pair of shoes like these, they will become another Michael Jordan.

These are the more obvious examples of ads having people by the neck, commanding their next buy. Consumers are lead to purchase on loan, to be paid for years after, the most updated, technologically advanced car that no doctor in his right mind would be caught driving. TV ads are so convincing, being motion pictures, that people believe they portray reality.

Families feel it is their duty to uphold middle class standards and not betray their bretheren by having anything less than Tide near their washers. Television and its ads are so imbedded within our consciousness that we fail to distinguish them from reality, thinking, "What's the big fuss. Of course I

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am heading over to KFC like Magic Johnson told me to; he's such a god he ought to know what I'll like."

These ads set the very values and trends

of society, and are one of the greatest threats to American freedom. But, the populace calmly sits by, blindly urging that advertisers not be denied their free speech, unknowingly signing off their own personal freedoms. Advertisements grip us by the throat and mind while we calmly proclaim that freedom of expression should not be denied.

The Constitution purposefully favors individual freedom over the freedom of speech of colossal figures such as advertisers (and king George III), which have a powerful Hitler-like hypnotic effect in swaying the masses with their oratory. These advertisements don't innocently proclaim solely the merits of products, but expertly attach hidden promises and Cinderella fantasies.

And then rebellious masses, upon hearing of the fight for the banning of all TV ads, proclaim that they are mature and adult enough to think for themselves. This argument is totally soundless, as if crack addicts were also mature enough before and even during their addiction to protect themselves. Was not the entire population of Germany mature and brilliant enough, with all its scientists and ingenious men, when it popularly elected Hitler and supported his war efforts and efforts to exterminate the Jews?

Ads aren't so powerful, one may argue; they are simply cute, innocent pictures. If you feel that way, you may accompany me when I help out at middle schools (or visit one yourself) where kids make comments about others' cheap shoes. For example, the

other day a girl said to a boy, who commented that I had on Converse shoes instead of Reebok Black Tops, "Boy, you don't know your shoes."

Ads control the very acts of our freedom, thwarting personal decision making. Advertisements grip us by the throat and mind while we calmly proclaim that freedom of expression should not be denied.

Where does one go to be updated, after feeling pressure from peers to learn their tables of shoes, cars, clothing, fast food chains, and soaps—TV of course. Ads thus perpetuate

cycles which lead to ridicule, robbery, violence, addiction and death. No matter, the American people would certainly be willing to sacrifice these things for advertisers' freedom of expression. Certainly we wouldn't want to take that precious medium of societal reflection away, for without it the masses would be at a loss to judge or make decisions for themselves. Nevertheless, there is still hope that everyone could be weaned off the advertising bottle and have a hand at decision making and freedom of thought.

I propose that all television commercials be banned. Up to this point the reader may be convinced, except for a major reservation: "What about my TV, my *Simpsons*, my *Santa Barbara*, my *Oprah Winfrey*, my soaps." Don't start having coke depravation spasms due to my proposing the withdrawal of commercial TV funding by industry. You could still keep your television with a very realistic non-utopian, economic solution. Channels would be rented monthly in a similar fashion as cable television. This might

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to tolerate, but our obligation. Until we realize this, we will have all the problems in this world that we already have and many more. It is time for us to wake up.

David Eyre

Columnist's Issue Wrongly Linked to The Handmaid's Tale

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to Tanya Stiegler's letter of November 15, 1991. In her letter, she makes various attacks on beliefs that she has assumed I hold. Her basis for these attacks is *The Handmaid's Tale*, a book which I have read (and I've seen the movie), to answer her question. To ascribe the attitudes and beliefs expressed in that book to me is a gross misrepresentation of my

ideas. There is no basis in my article for implying that I hold any of the political ideas of the regime depicted by Margaret Atwood. Ms. Atwood has not met every person who believes that abortion is wrong, and as a result, her book is an alarmist generalization of pro-lifers' integrity as citizens of this country. Ms. Stiegler's use of her book to attack me is evidence of the acceptance of *The Handmaid's Tale* as a legitimate representation of mine—life opinion, which it is not, especially not

Convincing is something through discussion and education. Persuasion is the cornerstone of democracy. I in no way advocated coercing women into thinking that abortion is wrong. That would fail, as Ms. Stiegler asserted. I am well aware of that. That is why I said that people must be convinced, and why I did not say they should be coerced into changing their views on abortion. That is why I said that people cannot be legislated, i.e. coerced, into thinking that abortion is wrong. I in no way advocated, nor do I advocate, tyranny over the mind of anyone.

Ryan Page

Cobb Misguided

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter in regards to Ashley Cobb's article "Meat, when used properly, is healthy for your diet." First of all, meat is not used. It is eaten. Secondly Mr. Cobb's article lacks the "flashy statistics or quotes from authoritative sources" his article needs. If his statement sounds a bit fishy to you, you are in good company. The reason he has no sources in his article is because there are no authoritative sources supporting his viewpoint. What Ashley Cobb considers "common sense and common knowledge" is the healthiest thing to do with medical fact. Vegetarianism is the healthiest thing to do with medical fact. Food derived from plants, except coconuts, palm kernel oil and chocolate, contain no cholesterol. Heart disease is directly linked to the consumption of cholesterol. Meat consumption is also linked to health problems such as: colon, breast, prostate, ovarian and cervical cancer, not to mention ulcers, intestinal problems, arthritis, kidney and gall stones. This has nothing to do with the way meat is prepared, as Mr. Cobb naïvely claims.

As for Mr. Cobb's concern for our health, we can receive a more than ample amount of everything we need, this includes calcium and protein, from a purely vegetarian diet. In fact, the way our bodies are made dictates a vegetarian diet.

Mr. Cobb's summer farming experience is not representative of how the meat we eat is produced. I wish it were. However, the meat we eat was most likely produced in a factory farm. Factory farms show no concern for our well being. The meat we eat contains artificial hormones, pesticides, growth stimulants, larvicides, antibiotics, tranquilizers and radioactive isotopes. He is basing his argument on personal experience and not fact. Furthermore, his comment that meat consumption is natural, necessary, and has been part of "Man's experience" makes me wonder if he should look into a Women's Studies course in addition to reading some current books on factory farming and nutrition. Perhaps next time Mr. Cobb decides to state his viewpoint he should be aware of the facts.

Kelly Hannum

The information in this editorial is based on information from the books *Diet for a New America* and *Fit for Life*.