Tobacco Advertising Essay, Research Paper

Tobacco Advertising

Although the Tobacco Industry recently paid enormous fines to the US Government and Individual states, they continue to promote smoking and influence young human beings world wide to use their products through multi dimensional advertising. For decades Americans were not told the truth about the dangers of smoking. The media stayed silent because it did not want to lose the hundreds of millions of dollars it made from cigarette advertising.

The hopeful result of the tobacco lawsuits would be that the advertising target market would not be the young. The fact that the Tobacco Companies lose three thousand to five thousand customers each day causes the industry to look for replacements to the lost revenue resources. More then thousand die from using tobacco the rest quit or die of other causes. This reason alone justifies the expense of three to four billion dollars each year on advertising. This leaves little to wonder why the average age of new smokers in the US right now is twelve years of age.

One way Tobacco Industries lure victims is by propaganda. Propaganda is a systematic effort to influence people’s opinions. Propaganda may take many shapes and forms. For example, cartoon characters might be used to interest young viewers. Joe Camel is very appealing and fun. Also, the Marlboro man, depicted as a hard working man, who gets ladies with his charm is an obvious role model. Capri and Virginia Slims have many glamorous girls on their billboards and magazine advertisements, which illustrates a wealthy glamorous life to young women. To add to this, Marlboro offers prizes for collecting a certain amount of points located on the cigarette boxes. These points, if collected enough, can translate into expensive prizes. Again the public is tempted to buy more cigarettes with the idea that smoking results in positive things.

A very popular technique used in propaganda is plain folk. This is a technique when advertising makes the average American citizen feel he can relate to the people in the advertisement. For instance, an advertisement in Men’s Health depicted a family camping trip with a honorable father smoking while singing around a campfire to his kids. Also, an additional promotion that was found in this magazine was a healthy in shape man smoking. This is an unrealistic situation for healthy and well-respected fathers.

Another way people are shielded from the negative reality of tobacco use is through celebrities. This is called testimonial techniques of propaganda. Testimonial technique is an extremely important and controversial method. This technique is when a celebrity or notorious person gimmicks people into the product by making it seem better because they use it or promote it. One example of this is Emmit Smith using chewing tobacco. His slogan, “ Pinch between your cheek and gums”, is catchy and appealing to football fans. This is a extremely unhealthy promotion for young athletes. The catch with a testimonial technique is it might appear as though the celebrity enjoys a product when in reality he/she has never touched it.

The last technique of propaganda is Bandwagon. The bandwagon technique makes people feel like they should go along with the crowd. This technique usually succeeds because most people have a deep desire not to be different. Basically, the idea here is they all are doing it, so should I. A good model of this technique is a slogan by Newport “America’s number one cigarette choice.” Also, “Capris are preferred two to one over Kools” said one billboard.

As society realizes the negativity of the product it shows much initiative to stop the advertisement and distribution of cigarettes. A group called Truth has been started. It shows realistic effects of tobacco. The commercials and advertisement have a deep impact and make a strong impression on the public. Also, the Surgeon General warning has to be placed on every advertisement for cigarettes. Plus, people have suggested ideas, which have not fully come to fruition. These ideas suggest not allowing tobacco industries to have colorful advertisements, and terminating the suppliers from ever posting billboards which promote their products.

In conclusion, you can clearly see how the Tobacco Industries warp society’s minds, through the various types of propaganda they pursue. In the future, hopefully, the government will put a stop to their way completely, even though Tobacco Industries have paid enormous fines for their damage. If advertisement is put to a stop then most of the problems will decrease. It is hard to terminate an organization with such power. As we gain more information about the harmful effects of tobacco products, the Tobacco Organization will hopefully fall.