



WHY ARE PEOPLE ANTI-MARKETING?

Johny K. Johansson
Georgetown University
ACR Doctoral Symposium
Portland, October 8, 2004



Outline

- The argument
- The evidence
- The explanation
- The result
- The society and the media
- The solution



The argument

- Is American marketing morally bankrupt?
- Marketing has helped turn the American way of life to its lowest common denominator
- “Why did I do it? I did it because I could.”

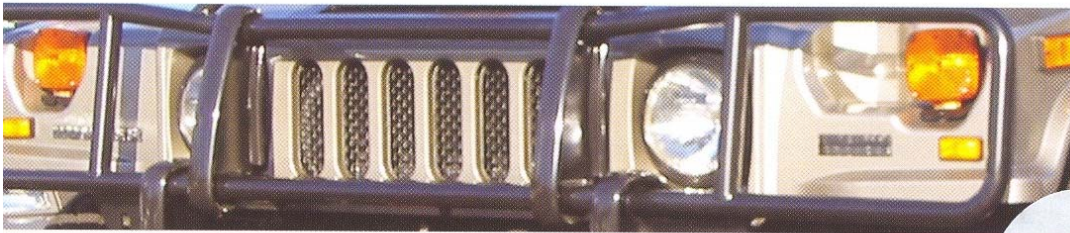


The evidence: The products

- Dangerous and unhealthy products: SUVs, Hummer, Fast food
- Technology driven, not customer driven: Computers, Cameras, Cellphones
- Me-too versions, no authentic choice: Shampoos, Autos, Music
- Creating demand, not meeting demand

Dear Mr Johansson:

There's a certain feeling that goes along with power. It's a compulsion that brings together the elements of respect, admiration, and yes, fear. And there's only one vehicle on the road today that delivers true power: HUMMER H1.



Moore HUMMER invites you to experience this incredible aphrodisiac. As the region's leading HUMMER retailer, Moore has the selection, accessories and product knowledge to make your aspirations of power a reality.

We think you'll agree: Power can be very, very addictive.



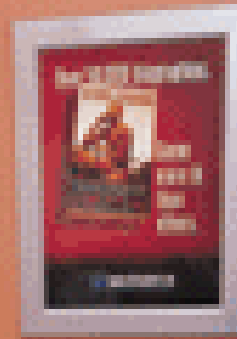






The evidence: The promotions

- Getting attention from satisfied customers: Captive marketing, experiential marketing, loud and aggressive, in-your-face
- USP: No sustainable product differentiation, competitive advantage = brand relationships
- Building brands: Affinity, meaning, “trusted friend” – viral marketing
- Sanctimonious, preposterous – privacy?



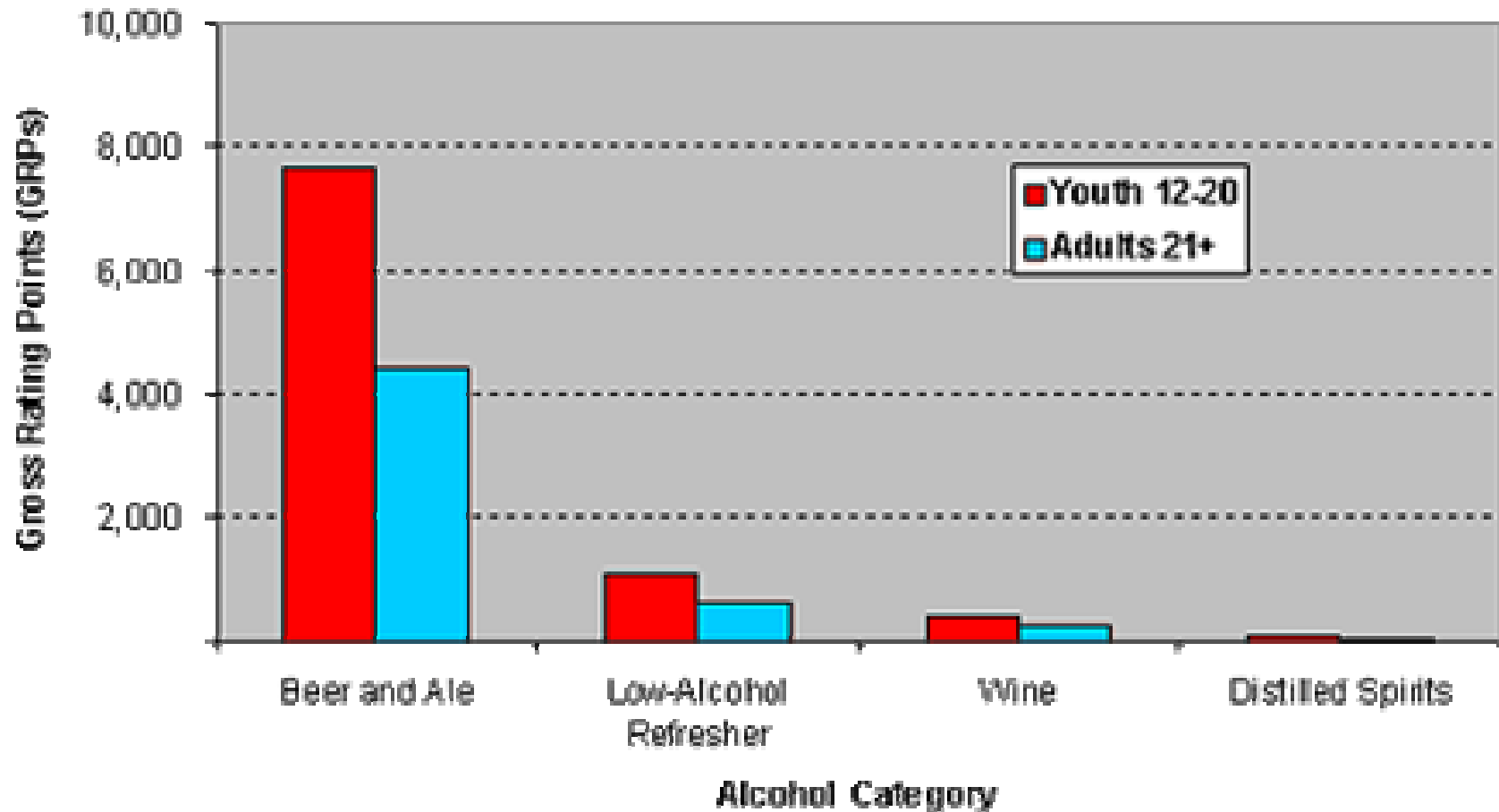
Aim higher.

You can stare at ads in the bathroom
and watch Channel 1 in class or...
you can **AIM HIGHER** and make your
school an ad-free zone.

CAMPAGNA PER CONTRIBUZIONI PERE SCHEDE
www.aimhigher.org



2001 Youth Overexposure by Alcohol Category



Analysis of 51,084 ads that youth were more likely to see than adults

Source: Competitive Media Reporting, Nielsen Media Research



The evidence: The new media

- New media: Telemarketing, Internet, cell-phones, infomercials, cinema, product placement
- IMC: Uniformity, saturation campaigns – to individuals
- One-to-one or Big Brother?
- Everywhere and all the time



TITLE: ADDRESS: CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE: (1800-3-SPICE ONLY)

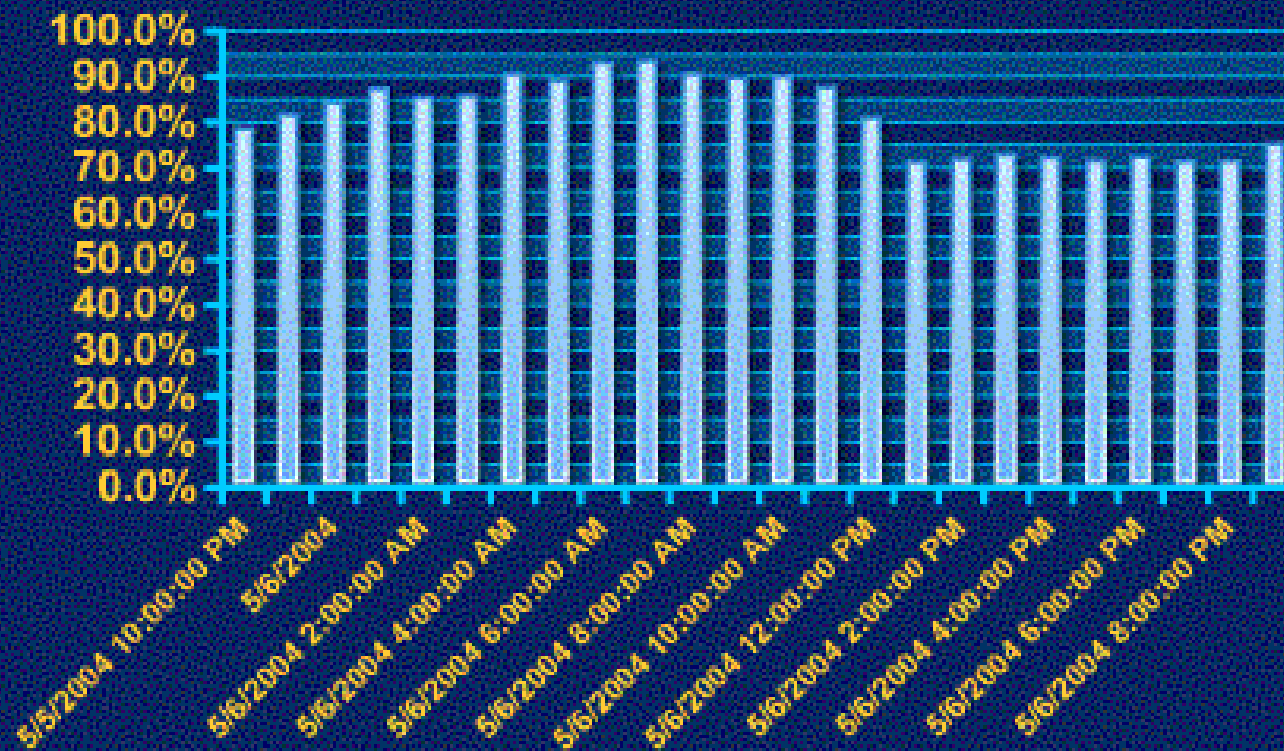


TITLE: ADDRESS: CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE: (1800-3-SPICE ONLY)



Hourly ▶ Daily ▶ Weekly ▶

Spam History



This chart shows the trend of spam over the day, week and month. Generally around holidays like Valentines, Christmas, and others you can see the spam volume increase above the normal trend. The overall trend of spam is increasing at about 20 percent per year.



Percentage of Spam to actual Mail - Times are listed in GMT (Greenwich Mean Time)



The explanation: Product technology

- Technology drives new product innovation
- Innovation is not demand driven
- “Wants” when products appear – not need driven.

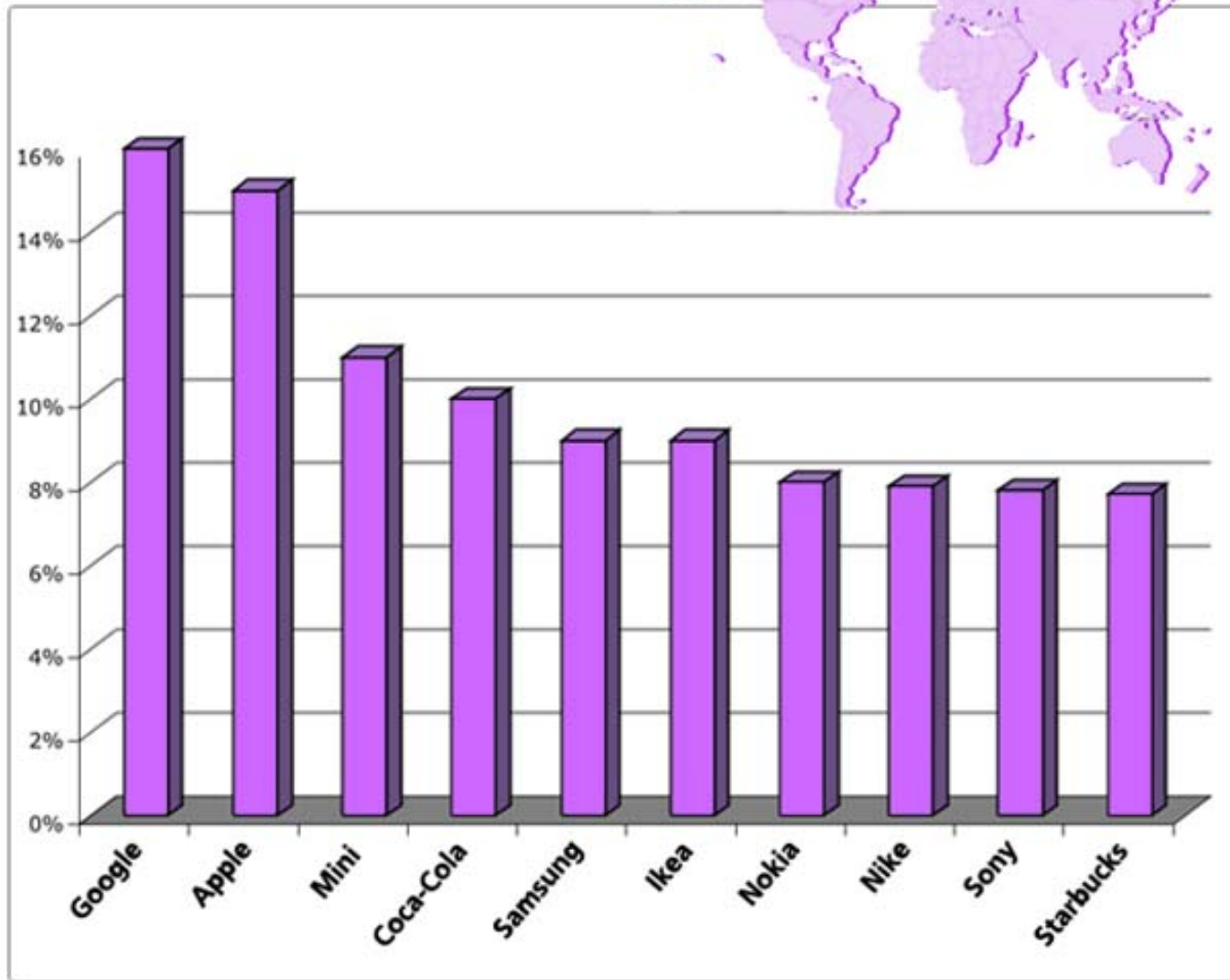


The explanation: Competition

- Open markets mean free competition (warfare)
- Technology diffusion, reverse engineering, benchmarking: Me-too versions
- Lack of product differentiation means competition is on soft power: Brands
- Brand building requires promotion

brand of
the year
2003
brandchannel

global top votes



*respondents were allowed to vote for up to five brands per region
respondents = 4009



The explanation: Privatization

- Deregulation and privatization means new industries face competition – they need marketing
- Gas and electric utilities, hospitals, professions, government services,...
- Doctors as well as presidents become “salesmen”
- Media are also profit-seeking



Park Plaza Hospital

YOUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL.

- Women's Services
- Cardio/Vascular
- Diabetes Services
- Diagnostic Radiology Services
- Hand & Upper Extremity Center
- Headache Unit
- Orthopedics
- Rehabilitation
- Wound Care
- 24-Hour Emergency Care Center

Need a Doctor?

Call our free Physician Referral Service.

1-888-TENET-4U

Available 24 hours a day, everyday.

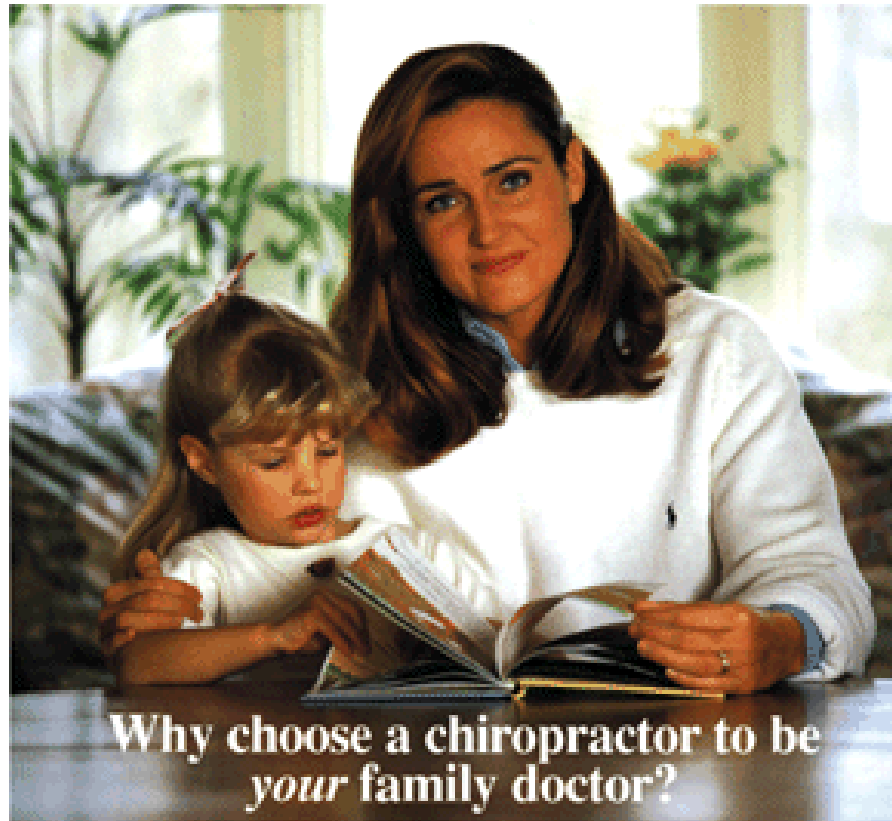
**Park Plaza
Hospital**

Tenet Houston HealthSystem

www.parkplazahospital.com

(713) 627-6000

1313 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX 77004



Why choose a chiropractor to be
your family doctor?

It's the natural choice.

A chiropractor is your coach through a lifetime of good health. Before any healthcare decisions are made, seek the caring advice of a chiropractor; one who is trained in keeping your body working at its full potential.

Unlike other healthcare choices, the chiropractor's education and philosophy is keeping you healthy... *naturally*.

For a doctor near you call:

1-800-888-7871

www.chirousa.com

Chiropractic America

For a "Well Adjusted" Nation™



The explanation: Diversity

- The multi-cultural quilt that is America makes messages brief and simple
- Marketing communications naturally reach for a lowest common denominator
- Complex products and services are sold based on a lot of faith and confidence – brand names become very important.



The explanation: It works

- Too many choices of me-too variants
- Choices in new and unfamiliar industries
- Too much promotion to digest
- Too many media that reach you
- Tipping point: Confused customer makes bad decisions
- Even the worst product can be sold



The result: Stressed-out consumers

- Shopping as a lifestyle
- Buying products is end in itself, not using them
- Eat to relieve stress, supersized - Obesity
- Boredom when not shopping – pure materialism
- New products create tension, not peace







Free choice.

Over
15,000 in
Stock!



The Progress Paradox

How Life
Gets Better
While People
Feel Worse



Gregg Easterbrook



The result: Stressed-out marketers

- Need to respond to competition, not focus on customers
- Speed is of essence, no time for reflection
- Work harder, longer hours, less rewarding
- Bottom line rather than creativity
- Always evaluated (scorecard)
- Little sense of greater good



The society:

It's not marketing's fault?

- “Marketing only reflects the values of the society at large”
- A two-way street: Marketing also causes what the society is like
- Marketing helps create the American Way of Life – but not only through its ties to transactions.



The society and the media

- “Society at large” is what the media portray
- The media also need to do marketing (even NPR!)
- Journalists/announcers are salesmen (not only for the vehicle but also for self).



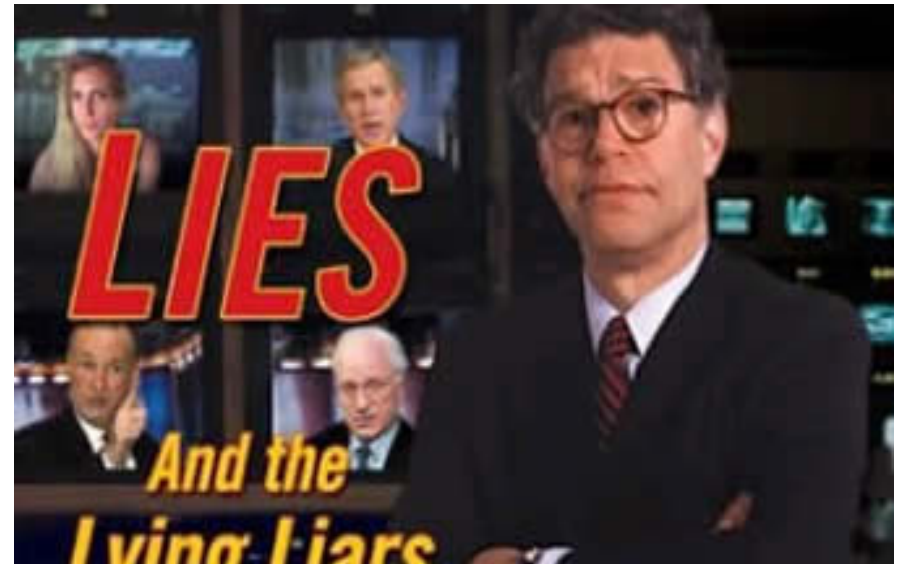
A Subversive Marketing Effect

- The media need to attract viewers/readers.
- Their “product” is the content – which shows the “society at large”
- The American Way of Life is what the media tell us it is
- The editors are motivated by marketing concerns
- Marketing shapes the society at large



The real reality show

- News = entertainment
- News journalists are stars
- News media are politicized
- Fox news against CBS
- NYT against Weekly Standard
- Favorite words: Ridiculous, Stupid, Ludicrous, Never, Absolutely,...



Fair and balanced.



The media: Marketing's role

- The problem with the media is not simply the commercials, the ads
- The problem with the media is that their stories are chosen and edited based on marketing considerations
- Marketing has corrupted news coverage – and created a marketing-influenced vision of the American Way of Life.



Marketing and the society

- American citizens are now marketing themselves – for jobs, for marriage, for looks, for success, for power
- Marketing infuses America's way of dealing with the rest of the world – the target market at the present is the American domestic market (9/11, Iraq, the election).



The individual solution: Take a moral stand!

- Moral: Adhere to “generally accepted standards of goodness in conduct and character.”
- Don’t hide behind relativistic statements: “Perception is everything,” “You don’t have to buy it...” “It never hurts to ask..” “What’s wrong with providing a choice?”
- The moral stand is taking responsibility for what we do to others – not just “buyer beware.”



The solution:

What can companies do?

- Educate customers – “You may not want to eat at McDonald’s every day.”
- Make marketing aspire to higher standards – as the TQM movement did for products.
- Help customers make choices that work for them, not against them.
- Don’t do it “because you can.”



The solution:

What if marketers don't fix it?

- More regulation will come:
- Do-not-call registry will expand to the Internet
- Cigarette smoking will be outlawed
- Fat levels in fast food will be regulated
- Hummers will be prohibited as WMDs
- Religious fundamentalists will run the U.S.



DOES MARKETING NEED REFORM?

- Yes – not because marketing is intrinsically bad, but because marketers have not accepted their greater role
- Saturated markets, technology, competition and privatization has put marketing in the center of American economic life.
- Marketing has become central to the media, shaping the American Way of Life.



DOES MARKETING NEED REFORM?

- Marketers need to take responsibility for the effects of what they do – and do the right thing
- Be true to American core values.



We want this...

A McDonald's new rice meal in Hong Kong





...not this;





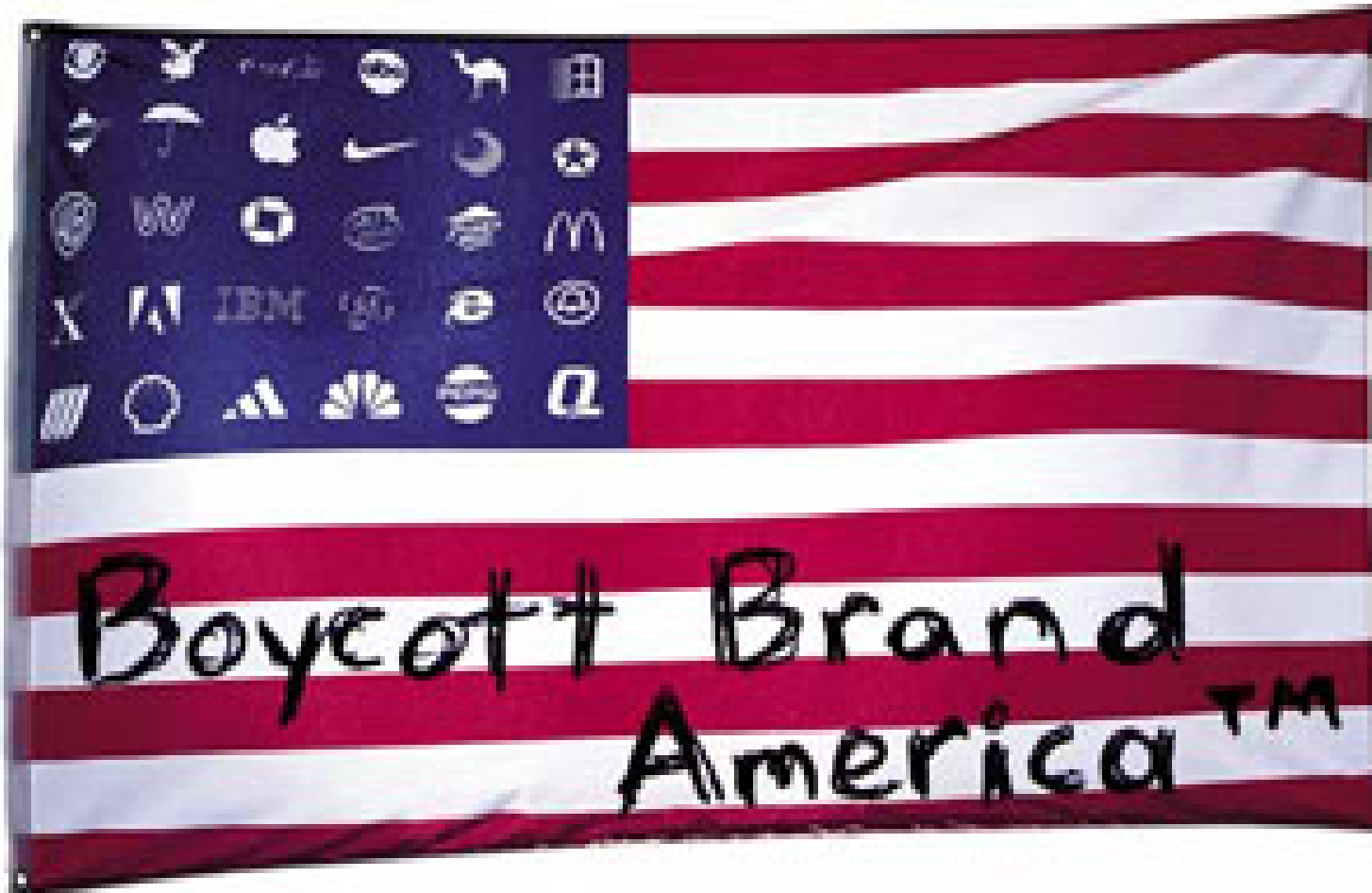
We want this...

"Tasty mouth happiness"





...not this;





We want this...



© Phil Stephens



...and this!

