

**MEDIA EDUCATION**  
**FOUNDATION**  
**STUDY GUIDE**

**CONSUMING KIDS:**

THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF CHILDHOOD

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## NOTE TO TEACHERS

This study guide is designed to help you and your students engage and manage the information presented in this video. Given that it can be difficult to teach visual content – and difficult for students to recall detailed information from videos after viewing them – the intention here is to give you a tool to help your students slow down and deepen their thinking about the specific issues this video addresses. With this in mind, we’ve structured the guide so that you have the option of focusing in depth on one section of the video at a time. We’ve also set it up to help you stay close to the video’s main line of argument as it unfolds. The structure of the guide therefore mirrors the structure of the video, moving through each of the video’s sections with a series of key summary points, questions, and assignments specific to that section.

**Key Points** provide a concise and comprehensive summary of each section of the video. They are designed to make it easier for you and your students to recall the details of the video during class discussions, and as a reference point for students as they work on assignments.

**Discussion Questions** provide a series of questions designed to help you review and clarify material for your students; to encourage students to reflect critically on this material during class discussions; and to prompt and guide their written reactions to the video before and after these discussions. These questions can therefore be used in different ways: as guideposts for class discussion, as a framework for smaller group discussion and presentations, or as self-standing, in-class writing assignments (i.e. as prompts for “free-writing” or in-class reaction papers in which students are asked to write spontaneously and informally while the video is fresh in their mind).

**Assignments** for each section encourage students to engage the video in more depth – by conducting research, working on individual and group projects, putting together presentations, and composing formal essays. These assignments are designed to challenge students to show command of the material presented in the video, to think critically and independently about this material from a number of different perspectives, and to develop and defend their own point of view on the issues at stake.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

*Consuming Kids* throws desperately needed light on the practices of a relentless multi-billion dollar marketing machine that now sells kids and their parents everything from junk food and violent video games to bogus educational products and the family car. Drawing on the insights of health care professionals, children's advocates, and industry insiders, the film focuses on the explosive growth of child marketing in the wake of deregulation, showing how youth marketers have used the latest advances in psychology, anthropology, and neuroscience to transform American children into one of the most powerful and profitable consumer demographics in the world. *Consuming Kids* pushes back against the wholesale commercialization of childhood, raising urgent questions about the ethics of children's marketing and its impact on the health and well-being of kids.

# INTRODUCTION

## Key Points

- There are now more than 52 million kids under the age of 12 in the United States, representing a very powerful and lucrative demographic for marketers.
- Children now spend \$40 billion dollars of their own money and *influence* another \$700 billion in spending annually – roughly the equivalent of the combined economies of the world’s 115 poorest countries.
- Corporate marketers have studied the shopping behavior of kids, including the so-called “nag factor,” to help maximize the number of times children ask their parents for a product.
- Children are now marketed to in unprecedented ways – through brand licensing, product placement, viral marketing, via schools, DVDs, video games, the internet, cell phones – so that there’s a brand in front of a child’s face virtually every moment of every day.
- Because kids are now multi-tasking with media – simultaneously surfing the web, watching television, listening to their iPods, etc. – they are bombarded with over 3,000 commercial messages every day.
- In what the industry calls a “cradle-to-grave” strategy, marketers want to get to children early, often, and in as many places as they can – not just to sell them products and services, but to turn them into life-long consumers.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) How have children’s purchasing power and influence increased, and why?
- 2) What factors would you attribute to children spending more time with media? What do you think children’s heavy media use might be taking away from? Do you see reasons for concern?
- 3) How have new technologies like the internet, iPods, cell phones, and 24-hour children’s TV programming made children more available – and vulnerable – to commercial messages?
- 4) Do you think it’s reasonable to believe that people can be transformed, from the earliest ages, into “life-long consumers”? Do you feel that there are, or should be, societal or moral reservations about marketers approaching children at such early ages?

## THE FLOODGATES OPEN

### Key Points

- While companies have advertised to children on television since the 1950s, in the beginning the amount of youth marketing was relatively confined and inexpensive.
- Things began to change in the early 1980s, as a result of a long battle between government regulators and businesses over policies designed to protect kids from excessive advertising.
- In a nutshell: The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) had tried to ban all advertising aimed at children eight and under, but the toy and cereal industries fought back and eventually won, convincing Congress to pass the FTC Improvement Act of 1980.
- The FTC Improvement Act actually did the opposite of banning advertising to kids: it mandated that the FTC would no longer have *any* authority whatsoever to regulate advertising and marketing to children, leaving marketers virtually free to target kids as they saw fit.
- By 1984, the Reagan administration had succeeded in dismantling the last vestiges of government oversight, completely deregulating children's television.
- One result of deregulation was that it became possible to create a television program for the sole purpose of selling a toy, essentially turning kids' shows into program-length toy commercials. And sure enough, the year after deregulation, all ten of the best selling toys were based on media: Transformers, G.I. Joe, Carebears, Voltron, Mask, Cabbage Patch Kids, He-Man, Super Gobots, WWF Figures, and My Little Pony.
- The numbers show the overall impact of deregulation: In the two decades prior to deregulation, kids' consumer spending increased at a modest rate of roughly 4% a year. Since deregulation, it has grown a remarkable 35% every year, from 4.2 billion dollars in 1984 to 40 billion dollars in 2008 – an 852% increase.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) According to the film, how does marketing to children today differ from the 50s, 60s, and 70s? Can you think of other ways it may have changed?
- 2) How has deregulation contributed, specifically, to these changes in marketing?
- 3) What do you think it is about kids, specifically, that makes them such a ripe demographic for marketers?
- 4) Do you feel the Federal Trade Commission should be in the business of regulating unfair and deceptive marketing to children? How about marketing to children, more generally, whether it's deceptive or not?
- 5) With the increase and growth of media-linked toys and products, there has been a rapid growth in children's consumption. Do you think we should be concerned about this? Why or why not? Is there special reason for concern regarding the use of licensed characters to sell junk food and other products to children?

## Assignments

- 1) In 1984, Ronald Reagan deregulated children's television. This was not a surprise, given his overall economic philosophy. Four years prior to deregulation, upon taking office, he had famously declared, "Government is not the solution to our problems. Government is the problem." And it is this conservative economic philosophy that continues to justify lax government oversight when it comes to advertising to kids today.

With this philosophy in mind, prepare an argument for or against the conservative belief that government should stay out of the way of child marketers. Draw up a list of key reasons you think this reasoning is either sound or wrong, and put together the most persuasive case you can against the best arguments on the other side.

- 2) Research the Federal Trade Commission's proposed ban on marketing to children in the late 1970s. What were the circumstances that led to the proposed ban? Who opposed the ban? What were their reasons for opposing it? What was the argument for regulation? What was the argument for deregulation? How, specifically, did the resolution end up affecting children's media as we know it today?
- 3) Think of a popular children's program today, and draw up a list of all the products linked to that program. Then think of a program you watched as a child and the toys and games you played with. Do you see any differences between then and now? Between the number, or kind, of products out there today compared to when you were a kid?

## BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

### Key Points

- Beyond advertising specific products, marketers try to win kids' loyalty by injecting brands into the very fabric of their emotional lives.
- Marketers take advantage of the powerful emotional attachment children have to their favorite characters, leveraging the stability and continuity and sense of belonging they get from these characters to make money.
- Marketers have also begun using product placement in kids' entertainment, weaving products directly into programming without adequate disclosure.
- Given that some five million kids between the ages of 8 and 12 now have cell phones, this too has become a prime mechanism for marketers looking to sell kids products.
- But perhaps the most promising and lucrative tool is the internet. And with more than 40 million kids online daily, marketers are targeting kids with particular force on social networking sites like Webkinz.
- One of the reasons marketers find these social networking sites so appealing is because of their ability to gather valuable personal information from kids.
- Finally, in what may be the last frontier of youth marketing, the commercialization of childhood has now penetrated our schools – the very place where one would expect kids to be thinking critically about and independently of commercialism and corporate manipulation.

### Discussion Questions

- 1) How does branding beloved children's characters serve the interests of marketers? How does this process work, specifically? What kind of psychological, social, or behavioral impact do you think this might have on the targeted child?
- 2) What is the difference between product placement and regular advertising? In your view, does product placement in children's films, family programs, or video games qualify as *deceptive* advertising?
- 3) In what *new* ways might new technologies, like the internet and cell phones, be making children more vulnerable to advertising? Do you see these advertising tools as somehow *different* from advertising vehicles used in the past (like television, radio, and billboards)? Explain what you mean, specifically.

- 4) Do you feel the government should oversee and regulate these advertising methods, and place some limits on advertisers? If so, why? And what types of regulations do you think could fairly be put in place? If not, why not? Why might you support regulations in other areas (regulations against children drinking, smoking, etc.) but not in this case?
- 5) According to the film, and your own understanding of this phenomenon, what factors have contributed to the increasing commercialization of our schools? How do you think the presence of advertising in schools relates to the overall mission of public education? Can a case be made that it somehow strengthens and advances the goals of public education? Can a case be made that it fundamentally contradicts and undermines these goals?

## Assignments

- 1) Choose one of these children's movies: *Sleepover*, *Zoom*, *Aquamarine*, *Agent Cody Banks 2*, *Shark Tales*, *Herbie: Fully Loaded*, or some other recent children's movie. Watch the film and identify any examples of product placement you come across (it may be visual or verbal product placement). Write down your findings, summarizing the example and the context in which it occurs.

Now put yourself in the position of a child watching this film and seeing these particular scenes. Write up an analysis of how you think this kind of advertising might affect you, consciously or unconsciously. Do you think you would notice the product placement? Would it matter whether you did or didn't? Why or why not? How do you think this sort of thing might affect your desire to buy the product being "placed"? As you think about this marketing practice, do you feel there is something about children, in particular, that might make them especially vulnerable to these kinds of advertising appeals?

- 2) Explore a virtual world that's popular with kids: Webkinz, Club Penguin, Neopets, Nicktropolis, or another website where kids gather. Look around the site, then write up a report describing any examples of advertising or branding or product placement you see. Talk about the extent to which product placement and branding are foregrounded or used as a backdrop to the regular activity on the site. And analyze how you think this kind of marketing might affect a child who visits this site.



## UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

### Key Points

- Marketers solicit the help of psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and behavioral scientists to help shape and cement children’s brand preferences.
- Marketers employ psychologists to understand children’s developmental differences in order to fine-tune their marketing and communicate their messages more effectively.
- Marketers also organize focus groups and other kinds of ethnographic research to observe how children respond to and interact with products on the most personal levels.
- One particularly striking example of how marketers have designed sophisticated ways to study kids’ reactions to products and brands is The Girls Intelligence Agency (GIA) – a marketing firm that recruits girls as “secret agents” to push product or conduct focus groups with their unsuspecting friends.
- Other more scientifically advanced forms of marketing research include such things as brain scans and blink tests, where experts study the brain activity and eye movements of kids as they watch programs to see how they react to certain colors, characters, and movement.
- Concerns about the ethics of these kinds of methods, and marketing to children more generally, usually take a back seat to the primary goal of marketers: to sell kids stuff as effectively as possible.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) How do you think the contributions of psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and other behavioral scientists have affected marketing to children? Do you think that youth marketing would be as successful without these new intrusive research methods? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you feel that advanced research techniques exploit children's vulnerabilities, by definition, or do you think a case can be made that marketers are simply trying to find out what kids want in order to better meet their needs and desires?
- 3) Do you think this kind of market research is ethical? Professionally responsible? Why or why not, specifically?
- 4) Do you agree that marketing schemes like The Girls Intelligence Agency undermine or exploit important relationships in children's lives?
- 5) When asked about the ethics of marketing to children, Lucy Hughes, a child marketer, responds that she is just doing her job. Should child marketers and corporations have to address the ethical side of marketing to children? Should they be held responsible for the potentially negative consequences of their professional approaches? If not, why not? If so, why? On what grounds? And by whom?

## Assignments

- 1) Go online and download brochures and other materials from some youth marketing conferences (Kidscreen, KidPower, etc.). Read through the descriptions of the presentations and workshops, and research the topics (ex. "Internet Café: Engage with Kids through Online Branded Entertainment"). Then write a summary and analysis of what you find – describing what you see as the most interesting offerings, and providing your own personal reactions.
- 2) You are a journalist, and your assignment is to interview a child marketer for a piece on how childhood has become increasingly commercialized. Come up with a list of questions – and potential follow-ups – for the interview.

# BRAND NEW WORLD

## Key Points

- Companies have moved increasingly away from advertising products based on their actual characteristics to a new kind of symbolic advertising that emphasizes the alleged social meaning of products.
- In the process of trying to push the social meaning of products, marketers have also begun to push a specific set of highly materialistic values about what it means to be “cool.”
- Kids toys, games, and products have become more and more expensive and sophisticated, and values embedded in the marketing messages to children glamorize self-indulgence, instant gratification, and narcissism.
- Child psychologists have noted that children’s top aspiration today, increasingly, is to be rich, to make a lot of money, and to have a lot of stuff – a vast change from the goals of kids in the past to be a nurse, an astronaut, or a teacher.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) One of the dominant themes of children’s marketing today is the selling of cool, as marketers have shifted from the selling of products to the selling of emotional meanings tied to brands. How do you think marketers draw on or play into kids’ normal social interactions with their peers in order to make their appeals effective?
- 2) Do you think these advertising appeals might, in turn, end up affecting the way kids actually interact? If so, how? Do you see evidence of that in your own life?
- 3) How does the marketing of cool and other expensive branded products correlate with kids’ attitudes toward money, status, and materialism?
- 4) What types of values are being sold to children in commercial culture? What role do you think marketing has played in shaping children’s values and aspirations?
- 5) What are the effects of material values on children, their relationships, and society more generally?
- 6) Are the values and messages that marketers tend to push at odds with the kinds of values we expect parents to instill in kids? Do you think this might make parents’ job more difficult? Might it complicate the common claim that it’s up to parents – and nobody else – to make sure kids are looked after and cared for as much as possible? Explain.

## Assignments

- 1) View some children's ads for food and toys from the 1940s through the 1960s. (A good place to start with this is on YouTube or at [www.retrojunk.com](http://www.retrojunk.com).) Next, view some current children's ads on Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, or any other network with programming for children. Analyze the ads from the past in relation to the ads from today. Summarize what you see, note any differences that you find striking, and write up anything you find especially interesting or important.

More specifically, do you notice any shift in the ads, as the film suggests, from exaggerating product characteristics to a more symbolic form of advertising? If so, give examples and explain.

- 2) Watch some children's programming, advertisements, and/or movies, and think about the predominant values that are being conveyed. Give some specific examples of how these values are communicated and portrayed. Do the values and messages you detect seem to differ based on gender; in other words, based on whether they're targeted at young girls or young boys? If so, in what ways?
- 3) Spend some time with a child or children in your life, and ask them what programs they watch and how much time they spend each day with media. Talk to them about some of their favorite actors or characters, and about why they like them. Next, ask about their aspirations. What do they want to be when they grow up, and why? What or who has influenced their decisions?

Also, ask them how they feel about money. Do they have money? Do they save money? What types of things do they spend their money on?

- 4) Later, reflect on your conversation and the kids' responses. Most importantly: do you feel you can make a correlation between the role media has in their lives and their responses to your questions? Why or why not? Write a paper exploring these questions.

# CRADLE TO GRAVE

## Key Points

- As the size and scale of advertising to kids has accelerated, so has the drive by marketers to reach kids at younger and younger ages.
- To build brand loyalty as early as possible, youth marketers use a technique known as “age compression,” meaning that they take advantage of a child’s natural developmental urge to be older and more mature than they actually are.
- A prime example of age compression is the industry invention of so-called “tweens,” kids who are seen as “in between” childhood and adolescence and are now among the most coveted marketing demographics.
- Through the process of “tweening,” children as young as four years old are targeted with teen and adult products and entertainment.
- One of the most disturbing consequences of this sort of age compression is that kids are getting bombarded with adult content and messages that carry specific ideas not about childhood or being a kid, but about what it means to be a *man* or a *woman*.
- A Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report on marketing media to children found that the media industry was marketing material to children that even their own rating systems said were too young for the material.
- In addition, Hollywood films and other entertainment programming rated for older viewers are often accompanied by entire lines of toys and products that are in turn marketed to children 3, 4, and 5 years old.
- Age compression has now become so extreme that marketers have begun explicitly targeting babies virtually from birth, so that children as young as six months of age can now recognize brands.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) What are some specific examples of age compression? What do you see as some potential risks or threats posed by this strategy to children's health and well-being? Why do you think marketers use this tactic?
- 2) As marketers continue to sell their products down the age scale, what gendered messages are young girls and boys receiving about what it means to be a man or a woman? How are gender stereotypes commercialized in children's media and toys? What impact does this have on children's play, and on how kids shape their identities and understanding of the world?
- 3) Do you see reasons for concern with the branding of babies? Why do you think marketers are so keen on making character and/or brand associations so early in life?
- 4) Think about products or characters you were exposed to at an early age. How do you feel about those characters now? Would you purchase products with those characters for your own children? Do you feel there is a difference now? Why or why not?

## Assignments

- 1) Spend some time watching children's media and other kinds of commercial messages targeted at kids, and note how these messages are *gendered*. Create a log of what you see, with separate columns (or sections) for descriptions of ads and messages that seem to be targeted at both girls and boys. When you're finished compiling these descriptions, analyze your data. How are the ads for young girls' products and ads for young boys' products different from each other? Are there differences in the products advertised? The colors used or the themes? What are the gendered messages in these ads? What effect do you think these ads might have on a child's identity? What effect might they have on the way children play and form relationships with one another?
- 2) Visit your local food store, department store, or Babies 'R' Us. Explore the infant and toddler sections, where you'll find diapers, bottles, clothes, bedding, etc., and make note of what you see. Analyze your findings. And as you do, for guidance, consider the following series of questions: How much of the baby paraphernalia you came across was branded with media characters or logos? Were there products that were free of media characters or noticeable brands? In cases where the products carried likenesses of characters, what kind of relationship do you think the children have with those specific characters? What do you think these relationships are based on? In turn, how do you think these characters help strengthen the relationship between the parent company (Walt Disney, Nickelodeon, etc.) and the child? If children as young as six months of age can recognize brands, how may early exposure to brands lead to what marketers call "cradle-to-grave" brand loyalty? And finally, on a more personal level, do you support character licensing on infant products? Why or why not?

## REWIRING CHILDHOOD

### Key Points

- The last decade has seen explosive growth in infant DVDs and other multimedia “learning systems” that purport to be educational.
- But there is little to no credible scientific evidence that educational DVDs, such as “Baby Einstein” or “Brainy Baby,” actually teach children anything of value, or enrich their ability to learn.
- In fact, directly contradicting the claims made by even reputable proponents of these kinds of “educational” media products, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that there be no screen media use for children under the age of 2.
- During the first two years of life, as a child’s brain rapidly develops, research has shown that basic interaction with other human beings and creative play are far better for kids than the best ‘edutainment’ software.
- A recent report from the American Academy of Pediatrics found that the amount of time 6 to 12 year olds spend playing creatively has been declining dramatically over the past decade.
- Increasingly, when children do play, they play with toys linked to media products – which research has shown leads to less creative, imitative play.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) Although the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under 2 years old should not be exposed to any screen media, we have seen an explosion in the amount of infant programming and DVDs purporting to be educational. What factors would you attribute to the rise of this new market? What are the potential concerns about media use among very young children?
- 2) Since scientific research evidence suggests that children under the age of 30 months cannot learn anything from an electronic screen – and that, in fact, watching screens may be harmful to the developing brain – do you feel it is irresponsible for the creators and promoters of infant DVDs and television programs to encourage parents to expose their children to media at such an early age? Do you feel there should be regulations on this kind of thing, especially on industry claims? Why or why not?
- 3) Why is play important? In what specific ways are media threatening children’s play? How, precisely, are children’s play and creativity limited and threatened by media exposure, commercial programming, and character tie-ins?
- 4) Children’s consumption levels are rising at an alarming rate. What impact will rampant consumerism have on children’s well-being and on society as a whole? Is there reason for concern? Are there environmental concerns attached to children’s consumption?

## Assignments

- 1) Watch an infant DVD (for example, Baby Einstein or Brainy Baby), and write out your reactions as you watch. Describe what you see, and give your reactions to it. What are your thoughts about the content of the DVD? Is it what you expected? Do you see why people might think it’s educational? Do you see why studies have shown that it isn’t?
- 2) Read chapter four, “Endangered Species: Play and Creativity,” from author Susan Linn’s book *Consuming Kids: The Hostile Takeover of Childhood*. Based on that chapter, and the film, write a response paper that answers the question: Why do children need “free play?” Why is play essential to children’s mental health and creativity? How do media linked toys – and commercial media more generally – threaten children’s play?



## OUR FUTURE

### Key Points

- The rise of children’s media, and kids’ increasing involvement with consumer culture, have been linked to a growing number of health problems in children, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, anxiety, and depression.
- Over the last two decades, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in teenagers, and the life expectancy of kids is now shorter than that of their parents – the first such decline in modern times.
- Juliet Schor argues that policy changes are needed, and increased regulation, as in other areas involving child safety.
- Susan Linn challenges the common marketing industry spin that “it’s all up to parents” and that “parents should be the sole gatekeepers” when it comes to possible harm to children caused by youth marketers, pointing out that it’s a \$15 billion industry that works relentlessly – and often explicitly – to undermine parental authority.
- Child advocates have likewise challenged the industry’s repeated claim that regulating how they target kids would violate marketers’ free speech rights, and that they are the ones who can best regulate themselves.
- When it comes to protecting kids from aggressive child marketing practices, the U.S. lags far behind other industrialized countries.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) Do you feel the First Amendment should protect corporations and the youth marketing industry? Why or why not?
- 2) What role and responsibility do you feel parents should have when it comes to addressing the commercialization of childhood? Is it fair to expect them to cope, on their own, with a billion dollar industry? Or should there be policies in place that help parents protect children from marketing?
- 3) Why do you think the U.S. government has not taken an active role in protecting children from commercial culture? Do you see a difference between this issue and child labor laws or laws mandating that children wear bike helmets or protect children from the marketing of tobacco?
- 4) Do you feel that voluntary guidelines, or so-called “self-regulation,” by the youth marketing industry offers enough protection for children? Are self-regulations working? Or do you see a need for stricter policies and regulations that limit marketing that directly targets children?
- 5) How has children’s media led to measurable declines in children’s health? What correlations or connections can be made? Should the commercialization of childhood be considered a public health problem?
- 6) Do you agree that we have become a nation that places a lower priority on teaching our children how to thrive socially, intellectually, even spiritually, than on training them to consume? Explain why or why not.
- 7) Where do we go from here? What are some ways that a less commercial childhood experience can be constructed? What actions need to be taken and on what levels?

## Assignments

- 1) Research what other countries are doing with regard to marketing to children. What policies are in place in other countries to protect children from commercial marketing? How and why were these policies created? Could these policies come to fruition in the United States? Why or why not?
- 2) Research obesity, diabetes, anxiety, depression, and attention deficit hyper-activity disorder. See if you can confirm the film’s claim that there are links between these ailments in children and their exposure to media.
- 3) Do some research into the First Amendment, looking specifically at how it has been interpreted in case law to protect corporate media and so-called “corporate speech.” Then prepare a paper or a presentation in response to this question: Is “corporate speech” free speech, even when it comes to the corporate targeting of kids?

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **Books**

#### **BORN TO BUY:**

The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture

By Juliet Schor

#### **BUY, BUY, BABY:**

How Consumer Culture Manipulates Parents and Harms Young Minds

By Susan Gregory Thomas

#### **THE CASE FOR MAKE BELIEVE:**

Saving Play in a Commercialized World

By Susan Linn

#### **COME ON PEOPLE:**

On the Path from Victims to Victors

By Bill Cosby & Alvin F. Poussaint

#### **CONSUMING KIDS:**

Protecting Our Children from the Onslaught of Marketing & Advertising

By Susan Linn

#### **FOOD POLITICS:**

How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health

(California Studies in Food and Culture, 3)

By Marion Nestle

#### **GIVING KIDS THE BUSINESS:**

The Commercialization of America's Schools

By Alex Molnar

#### **THE HURRIED CHILD:**

Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon

By David Elkind

#### **KIDFLUENCE:**

Why Kids Today Mean Business

By Ann Sutherland & Beth Thompson

#### **KIDNAPPED:**

How Irresponsible Marketers are Stealing the Minds of Your Children

By Daniel Acuff & Robert Reiher

NO:  
Why Kids – of All Ages – Need to Hear It and Ways Parents Can Say It  
By David Walsh

PACKAGING GIRLHOOD:  
Rescuing Our Daughters from Marketer’s Schemes  
By Sharon Lamb & Lyn Mikel Brown

REMOTE CONTROL CHILDHOOD:  
Combating the Hazards of Media Culture  
By Diane Levin

SELLING OUT AMERICA’S CHILDREN:  
How America Puts Profits Before Values and What Parents Can Do  
By David Walsh

SO SEXY SO SOON:  
The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Kids  
By Jean Kilbourne & Diane Levin

TAKING BACK CHILDHOOD:  
Helping Your Kids Thrive in a Fast-Paced, Media-Saturated, Violence-Filled World  
By Nancy Carlsson-Paige

TOXIC CHILDHOOD:  
How the Modern World is Damaging Our Children and What We Can Do About It  
By Sue Palmer

PARENTING, INC.:  
How We Are Sold on \$800 Strollers, Fetal Education, Baby Sign Language, Sleeping Coaches,  
Toddler Couture, and Diaper Wipe Warmers – And What It Means for Our Children  
By Pamela Paul

WHAT KIDS REALLY WANT THAT MONEY CAN’T BUY:  
Tips for Parenting in a Commercial World  
By Betsy Taylor

For more resources, including links to organizations and articles, please visit:  
<http://www.mediaed.org/wp/commchildren-resources>