

MEDIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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Consuming Kids

The Commercialization of Childhood

Transcript

INTRODUCTION

The consumer embryo begins to develop during the first year of existence. Children begin their consumer journey in infancy. And they certainly deserve consideration as consumers at that time.

– James U. McNeal | Pioneering Youth Marketer

[TITLE SCREEN] ***Consuming Kids: The Commercialization of Childhood***

NARRATOR: Not since the end of World War II, at the height of the baby boom, have there been so many kids in our midst. There are now more than 52 million kids under 12 in all in the United States – the biggest burst in the U.S. youth population in half a century. And for American business, these kids have come to represent the ultimate prize: an unprecedented, powerful and elusive new demographic to be cut up and captured at all costs. There is no doubt that marketers have their sights on kids because of their increasing buying power – the amount of money they now spend on everything from clothes to music to electronics, totaling some 40 billion dollars every year. But perhaps the bigger reason for marketers' interest in kids may be the amount of adult spending that American kids under 12 now directly influence – an astronomical 700 billion dollars a year, roughly the equivalent of the combined economies of the world's 115 poorest countries.

DAVID WALSH: One economic impact of children is the money that they themselves spend – the money that they get from their parents or grandparents, the money that they get as allowance; when they get older, the money that they earn themselves. That is an increasingly significant amount of money, but that's not where the real money is. Marketers and advertisers have realized that the real money related to the children's market is in their purchasing influence.

MINI-VAN AD:

Girl: Any questions? Jared.

Jared: Does it do any tricks?

Girl: *(opens doors using remote)* Does that work for you?

DAVID WALSH: Because of their purchasing power, and because of their purchasing influence, marketers and advertisers have become much more deliberate in their strategies and attempts to how to influence those dollars.

MINI-VAN AD (cont'd):

Ad Narrator: Sienna. Because kids come first.

BETSY TAYLOR: It's the children who often determine what kind of car gets bought, what kind of computer gets bought, what kind of cell phone program, and even where they take family holidays.

NICKELODEON HOTEL AD:

Ad Narrator: What's your favorite part of the Nick Hotel?

Kids: The awesome pools. Having my own room. The arcade rocks. I like to shop. I like eating with SpongeBob.

Parents: We came on vacation, and the kids don't ever want to leave.

GARY RUSKIN: Most parents, and other people, just don't realize how corporate marketers intentionally try to – well, in essence – make parents absolutely miserable.

(Child throwing tantrum in store)

GARY RUSKIN: Corporate marketers have actually studied the whole nagging phenomenon – which corporations do nagging better – and they provide advice to corporations about what kinds of tantrums work better.

ENOLA AIRD: Children sometimes say, "Can I? Can I? Can I?" as much as nine times.

'THE SIMPSONS' TV SHOW:

Bart & Lisa: Will you take us to Mount Splashmore?

Homer: No!

ENOLA AIRD: And part of the Nag Factor is designed to help maximize the number of times children will keep asking and keep asking.

'THE SIMPSONS' TV SHOW (cont'd):

Bart & Lisa: Will you take us to Mount Splashmore?

Homer: No!

Bart & Lisa: Will you take us to Mount Splashmore?

Homer: If I take you to Mount Splashmore, will you two shut up and quit bugging me?

Bart & Lisa: Yeah, of course. Well, will you take us to Mount Splashmore?

Homer: Yes!

Bart & Lisa: Thanks, Dad!

BETSY TAYLOR: So these kids have a lot of power in the economy. The advertisers know it, and they are going after them in a way that is unprecedented.

BP GASOLINE AD:

Singing: It's the place where I want to be. I say, hey!

Text on Screen: Gas stations. A little better, baby.

SUSAN LINN: This generation of children is marketed to as never before. Kids are being marketed to through brand licensing, through product placement, marketing in schools, through stealth marketing, through viral marketing. There's DVDs, there's video games, there's the internet, there are iPods, there are cell phones. There are so many more ways of reaching children so that there is a brand in front of a child's face every moment of every day.

NICK RUSSELL: What we have is the rise of 360 degree immersive marketing, where they try and get around the child at every aspect and every avenue.

MICHAEL BRODY: Kids are inundated with this. They are buried in this – buried in this media blitz.

MICHAEL RICH: Kids are now multitasking with media.

BARBIE DOLL AD:

Barbie: (on cell phone) Hello. Hey Girl! What's up? No Way!

Ad Narrator: Plug in your iPod or mp3 player.

Barbie: Yeah! New music!

MICHAEL RICH: They are using more than one medium at the same time. So they're surfing the web, and the television's going with MTV, and they've got the iPod with one ear bud in, and they are more vulnerable and are bombarded with over 3,000 commercial messages every day.

BETSY TAYLOR: Marketers know these are little sponges. They're so wide open. They want to get that brand loyalty for life because that's big bucks.

ENOLA AIRD: It's about people wanting to convince our children that life is about buying, life is about getting.

PORSCHE AD:

Salesman: Can I help you?

Boy: Yeah, I'm here to see this.

Salesman: Go ahead.

ENOLA AIRD: So the philosophy becomes cradle to grave: Let's get to them early. Let's get to them often. Let's get to them as many places as we can get them.

PORSCHE AD (cont'd):

Boy: Do you have a business card?

Salesman: Sure.

ENOLA AIRD: Not just to sell them products and services, but to turn them into life-long consumers.

PORSCHE AD (cont'd):

Boy: I'll see you in about 20 years.

THE FLOODGATES OPEN

ADVERTISING INDUSTRY FILM (1942): Though grown-ups represent the greater part of any community's purchasing power, children very definitely are an influence in the purchasing of everyday commodities.

JULIET SCHOR: Children have participated for a very long time in the consumer marketplace, but in the past, children's consumer culture was a cheap little culture.

CBS NEWS (1971): Every afternoon, the kids make a beeline for the Seminole 5 and 10, a terribly misnamed candy store. It should be called the Seminole 1 and 2 because that's the way Alice and Frank Smith make their living – a penny at a time.

JULIET SCHOR: Well, it's penny candy because kids only had pennies.

(Montage of B&W Advertisements)

JULIET SCHOR: Although it's true there was advertising to children back in the 1950s, the 1960s, even in the 70s, the amount of it was very confined in comparison to today.

NARRATOR: Advertising to kids may have been confined during the 70s, but it was during this period that it would come into its own as an industry, triggering a counter-movement to end youth marketing all together; and setting in motion a series of policy decisions that would ultimately determine the industry's future.

JOSH GOLIN: A seminal event was in the late 70s when the Federal Trade Commission advocated a ban on advertising to children eight and under.

NEWS: The Federal Trade Commission staff believes that children are deceived by television advertising, particularly commercials for cereal with sugar in it, and it wants to stop all advertising aimed at young children.

JOSH GOLIN: This ban was based, in part, on concern about sugared cereals and cavities, and also based on research that indicated that children eight and under did not understand the persuasive intent of advertising.

FTC PUBLIC HEARINGS (March 5, 1979):

Boardman: Are you saying that every message directed to the older child – a child between eight and 12 – is inherently deceptive?

Peggy Charren: That's right. I think the child cannot bring enough information to bear not to be deceived and to have an unfair trade practice.

JOSH GOLIN: So what ended up happening was the industries that were going to be affected – the toy industries, the sugar cereal companies – went to Congress.

FRED FURTH (Kellogg Lawyer): In an American democratic capitalistic society, we almost learn, top to bottom, to care for ourselves, and what the last thing we need the next 20 years is a national nanny.

JOSH GOLIN: And Congress ended up taking away a lot of the FTC's authority to regulate marketing to children.

NARRATOR: Far from addressing consumer advocates' concerns about the impact of advertising on kids, in 1980, Congress passed the FTC Improvement Act. The law mandated that the FTC would no longer have any authority to promulgate any rules regarding children's advertising.

ENOLA AIRD: The Congress of the United States, under pressure from advertisers and marketers, actually robbed – took away from the FTC – the right, the authority to regulate advertising and marketing to children.

NARRATOR: And what little remained of government's power to regulate children's advertising would be dealt a final, fatal blow in the early 1980s.

RONALD REAGAN: Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem.

SUSAN LINN: In the 1980s, this country was in a situation of falling in love with the market, thinking that the market was the solution to everything, and of deregulating industry.

RONALD REAGAN: For those of you with television stations, I have an announcement. As you know, I've never liked big government. And I think you'd agree that there's no reason to substitute the judgment of Washington bureaucrats for that of professional broadcasters.

NARRATOR: By 1984, the Reagan administration had completely deregulated children's television. All bets were now off.

JOSH GOLIN: Corporations now realized that Congress was not going to do anything to restrict their power to marketing to children, and they now actually had more power.

ENOLA AIRD: And low and behold, a lot of really smart marketers discovered children as a huge market.

NARRATOR: In the two decades prior to deregulation, kid's 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 today – an 852% increase.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: Deregulation really opened the floodgates for a kind of marketing to children that never existed before the mid-1980s.

(‘He-Man’ program intro)

SUSAN LINN: Suddenly it became okay to create a television program for the sole purpose of selling a toy.

HE-MAN TOY AD:

Boy #1: No one can stop the spike-studded armor of the mighty Spikeor.

Boy #2: *(holding He-Man action figure)* Not even me?

Boy #1: Not even you, He-Man!

NARRATOR: And sure enough, in the year immediately following the Congressional action, the ten best selling toys were all based on kid's television shows. It was the beginning of a new era for childhood marketing.

DIANE LEVIN: A few years after deregulation, when the ‘Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles’ movie came out, there were over a thousand products linked to the movie. There was also the TV show children were seeing every day, and there was the comic book that slightly older children started to look at. It was a saturation of the whole childhood culture.

MICHAEL BRODY: When I was a kid, ‘Hopalong Cassidy’ was on television. It was like one of the first children's programming. It was only after he became so successful that they developed the lunch box. Now they develop the lunch box and the dolls before.

(‘Star Wars’ toy light saber ad)

MICHAEL BRODY: This is why people like George Lucas have said, “I am not a film director. I am a toymaker.”

ABC NEWS: Everything ‘Star Wars.’ Chewbacca is recording ring tones for a cell phone company. ‘Star Wars,’ the marketing force, has married its name to a pile of products – including masks, dolls, light sabers, hats, snacks, cups, more snacks, wind up toys, action figures, cereal and even a best selling book.

NARRATOR: And so, with deregulation, a new world had been opened to marketers – free now to turn the most powerful emotional attachments of kids into unheard-of profits.

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

SUSAN LINN: Their goal is to insinuate their brands into the fabric of children's lives.

GARY RUSKIN: So many children's characters' principle function is really to hook kids on products. They're designed to pull on kids' heartstrings.

BIKE AD: It's your chance to make the Little Mermaid 'part of your world.'

GARY RUSKIN: And then who's holding the strings? Well, it's the marketers who want to sell kids a wide variety of products.

DIANE LEVIN: So you end up having junk food promotions at fast food restaurants, breakfast cereals with images of the main characters from the movies. You have bed sheets so that children literally go to bed thinking about the images. Then they go to school with their backpacks and their lunchboxes with the logos. Then they get to school and their friends have on the t-shirts and the shoes, and they want them.

FATHER WITH DAUGHTERS IN FOOD STORE:

Daughter: How about Scooby-Doo crackers?

Father: Scooby-Doo? Do you like those?

Daughter: Yeah.

Father: Have you ever had them?

Daughter: No.

Father: How do you know you like them?

Daughter: Because I love them so so so much!

SUSAN LINN: SpongeBob SquarePants was Kraft's best selling macaroni & cheese. I personally know a five year old who told her father, in no uncertain terms, that SpongeBob SquarePants Macaroni & Cheese tastes better than any other macaroni & cheese. Now, how do you argue with a 5 year old about that? What do you say? You say, 'no it doesn't,' and then she says, 'yeah it does.' 'But no, really it doesn't.' 'No, it does. I know it does.' 'Well, have you ever had SpongeBob SquarePants Macaroni & Cheese?' 'No, but I know that it tastes better.'

MICHAEL RICH: Growing up is a very strenuous, difficult, and sometimes hard and scary process for children. One of the things that gives them some stability and continuity in that is their attachment to touchstones in their lives. And among those touchstones are characters: Clifford the big red dog, Mickey Mouse. These are constants in their lives. These are things that they have figured out, they feel they understand, and that they feel comfortable with, and indeed, in their own way, love. When you take that, and you

leverage that into saying, 'eat this food,' you are basically leveraging that very powerful emotion that the child has – that very powerful attachment – to make money.

MCDONALD'S AD: To celebrate Walt Disney Pictures and Walden Media's presentation of 'The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,' you can get a pop-up storybook and an out-of-this-world action figure in every McDonald's Happy Meal.

NARRATOR: But marketers have not limited themselves to dropping the names of beloved characters to sell their products. With increasing brazenness, they have also begun to drop the products, themselves, directly into kids' entertainment.

'LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION' FILM CLIP:

Brendan Fraser: Hey, look at that!

Angelic Voices: Wal-Mart!

Bugs Bunny: Is it a mirage or just product placement?

Daffy Duck: Hey, who cares with shopping convenience at such low prices? Water! Fresca! Mountain Dew! Your product name here!

GARY RUSKIN: Product placement is weaving of products into programming without adequate disclosure.

'ZOOM' FILM CLIP:

Wendy's Employee: Welcome to Wendy's. May I take your order, please?

Father: (screaming over children) Classic triple with lettuce and tomato.

Wendy's Employee: Classic?

Father: (still screaming over children) What kind of toys do you have?

GARY RUSKIN: And so it's dishonest advertising. It's deceptive advertising. It sneaks by children's critical faculties and plants its messages in kids' brains when they're paying less attention.

SUSAN LINN: 'American Idol,' which is a top-rated television program for 2 to 11 year olds, is just rife with Coca-Cola product placement.

'AMERICAN IDOL' TV SHOW: 'American Idol' is brought to you by Coca-Cola.

SUSAN LINN: The Gilmore girls eat Pop Tarts for breakfast.

'GILMORE GIRLS' TV SHOW:

Daughter: Are you enjoying your breakfast?

Mother: I don't know if I like Pop Tarts.

Daughter: Did you fall on your head while you were sleeping?

Mother: I don't know. Do I like this? Is this something I like?

SUSAN LINN: Children’s films have product placement in them. ‘Spy Kids’ had McDonald’s as a plot point.

(‘Spy Kids’ movie clip featuring McDonalds food)

SUSAN LINN: And also, product placement is getting more and more prevalent in video games.

(Wal-Mart racing car in ‘Burnout Paradise’)

NARRATOR: And when ads haven’t been serving as a backdrop in video games, they have become the video game.

CBS NEWS: With children now as likely to be on the internet as in the playground, they’re exposed to so much advertising they learn to ignore it. That’s why advertisers love internet games. Not just ads, not just games, they’re advergames. She can score with Skittles, race with Chips Ahoy, or hang out with SpongeBob.

ENOLA AIRD: It’s part of this – by any means necessary – we’ve got to get to the kid. We’ve got to make sure that this kid is indoctrinated as a consumer cadet, so therefore we have to get to them in ways that they maybe don’t even know that we’re getting to them.

NARRATOR: This new world of advertising in entertainment, and entertainment as advertising, no longer seems to recognize any boundaries – especially with the rise of new media technologies.

THE EARLY SHOW: Children with cell phones have become a prime target for marketers selling products. It’s because 1 in 4 American kids between the ages of 8 and 12 has a cell phone. That’s five million children, and that number is expected to double in the next three years.

GARY RUSKIN: Cell phones make children much more vulnerable to advertising. It’s advertising literally right in the face of a child.

DISNEY MOBILE AD: I can get all kinds of themes, ring tones and lots of cool games, like ‘Pirates of the Caribbean.’

SUSAN LINN: Disney and Nickelodeon now have downloadable content for cell phones.

DISNEY MOBILE AD: Watch videos, catch cast interviews, interact with a favorite Wildcat.

SUSAN LINN: Companies are using text messaging in order to reach kids. I mean if your child has a cell phone and that cell phone has internet access, then your kid is being marketed to, you know, in ways that you don't even know. So we have to stop thinking of marketing to children as just commercials. I mean commercials are so twentieth century.

NICKTROPOLIS AD: Introducing Nicktropolis! A huge new world just waiting to be explored – by you!

NARRATOR: With more than 40 million kids online daily and growing, perhaps no tool has become more important to marketers than the internet. And advertisers are making sure to hit kids where they gather, where tens of millions of elementary age kids are coming together to chat, play games, and watch videos – all while being immersed in the brand.

(Webkinz welcome screen)

NARRATOR: At Webkinz, for example, millions of kids a day chat with each other, explore, and shop in a virtual world. A world open only to those who go to a designated store and buy a \$15 stuffed animal imprinted with a secret code that allows kids to join and enter the Webkinz world, where they are encouraged to shop some more. One of the reasons marketers covet these sites is because of their proven ability to gather personal information from kids.

MICHAEL BRODY: The internet allows people to be micro-targeted. If you have the person's birthday, you can say, 'Happy birthday, Billy! Have you seen the new Power Ranger watch?' It's very personal.

NICK RUSSELL: If you set up five different accounts, from five different geographic areas, on different genders, on different ages and different preferences, you will see five different ads. You will see five different worlds. Now, as a child, you don't know that. As a child, you're competing with MBAs. You're competing with some of the smartest people out there.

NARRATOR: In the face of these developments, many critics of youth marketing have called on schools to develop media literacy curricula to help kids navigate commercial culture. The results have sometimes been less than encouraging.

FOX NEWS: 'And now a word from our sponsor.' That's how some schools are making extra money, literally selling themselves to advertisers. Everything from the band shell to the lecture hall can be named for a price at New Berlin Schools.

JOSH GOLIN: There's advertising on school walls, on school buses, and gymnasiums. There's donated scoreboards that have the Coca-Cola or the Pepsi logo on them.

GARY RUSKIN: There are so many ways that commercialism has intruded into our classrooms. There's Coke and Pepsi and Cadbury Schweppes in the schools, which are helping to generate an epidemic of childhood obesity among our kids across the country. There's schoolbook covers. There are sponsored educational materials. There's a company called Field Trip Factory, which takes kids to places like Petco and to Sports Authority and calls that education.

CBS NEWS:

Reporter: The Chicago kindergarteners are on a school field trip, but the animals they are going to see aren't in the zoo.

Store Employee: We want to welcome you to Petco.

Reporter: Across the country, a growing number of schools are taking America's classrooms to America's malls.

GARY RUSKIN: There's a new company called Bus Radio, which is trying to compel a million kids to listen to 8 minutes of advertisements per hour as they ride the school bus.

BUS RADIO PROMO: Bus Radio! BusRadio.com. We'll choose a name at random, and if you're the winner, we'll give a pair of tickets to your bus driver too. You guys can hang out together, maybe share a large Coke. Email us as soon as you get home.

GARY RUSKIN: There's Channel One, which compels about 7 million children to watch ads in schools each school day.

(Channel 1 television screen)

GARY RUSKIN: The purpose of schools, in part, is to promote reason. And the purpose of advertising is to subvert reason, to promote the sale of a product, and for that reason alone, advertising has no proper place in the schools.

DAVID WALSH: How often does a company realize that they are going to get a captive audience, where people literally have to watch their message? The effort to create junior consumers no longer stops at the school door. It is now following kids into school.

NARRATOR: But if it's been following kids into schools, it's also been coming out of our schools – in the form of advanced academic research, producing a new class of child marketing experts armed with some of the most formidable scientific tools.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

ENOLA AIRD: Psychologists and anthropologists and sociologists and behavioral scientists are used by marketers to really shape and cement children's brand preferences. They want to be part of the fabric of children's lives.

DAN ACUFF: Twelve years ago, there were no youth conferences where you looked at more effective ways to market to kids. Now there are probably 15 a year – different conferences on tweens, teenagers, the Latino community, how to reach youth with your product, your program, your packages, your characters, your advertising campaign, how to reach them more effectively, how to get more of their dollars – which is marketing, and you can't blame people for that. But is it balanced with more conversations, more discussions of what's good for kids? How we can move our society forward in a healthier way? No.

GARY RUSKIN: Child psychologists and other psychologists are now absolutely integrated within the marketing field. Their techniques are so widespread that, in fact, it's probably pretty hard to come up with parts of the marketing effort that don't have anything to do with psychology.

ALLEN KANNER: You're a psychologist. You do research. You know the difference between a three year old and a five year old, and you know how to reach a three year old, and you know that you have to play the ad much more slowly and use round figures instead of angles, because children like round figures at that age. And you know that five year olds have a whole different set of concerns, so we can fine-tune the marketing to communicate better with children.

NARRATOR: One means of fine-tuning is the tried and true method of the focus group.

NICK RUSSELL: It's quiet. It's controlled. There's usually a one-way mirror so we can see behavioral cues. It's how they look. It's the look in their eyes. Especially with kids who don't have that sense yet of self-monitoring. You know, all their actions are very descriptive, and once we take what they say, and then feed that into how they look when they say it, and their behavioral cues, we really end up with a strong measurement of how a product effects them.

NARRATOR: Still another means is ethnographic research, which, tuned to the goals of marketers, has become a kind of scientific stalking.

JULIET SCHOR: They go into supermarkets with them and film exactly how they look at a product, pick it up, put it back down, the way they move around the supermarket. They

film them on the playground. They film them in school. They film them eating breakfast. They film them going into their closet and deciding what to wear.

YOUTH MARKETER: What are the things that you need?

JULIET SCHOR: They film them talking to their friends. They organize little friendship circles and film what they're doing. They even follow them into the bathroom. I interviewed a number of people who sat and watched children take baths and showers, watched how they interact with shampoo and soap and health and beauty products as that category is called, in order to go back and write a report for their clients on what to do with the packaging. It's creepy. It's just absolutely creepy the way children are being dissected and put under the microscope by marketers.

NARRATOR: This is new consumer science, and it's yielding a new science of childhood. And perhaps nowhere else have the different elements of this science merge so seamlessly as in the Girls Intelligence Agency.

'60 MINUTES':

Reporter: Not the CIA. It's the Girls Intelligence Agency, which for all the cloak and dagger, is actually a marketing firm.

JULIET SCHOR: The Girls Intelligence Agency claims to have tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of girls across the country that it is in contact with and working with. The signature product of the GIA is something called the Slumber Party in a Box. Kids are asked to sort of push a certain product, or they're more like focus group parties where kids are asked to come and give their opinions on products.

'60 MINUTES' (cont'd):

GIA Secret Agent: What is the hottest item: the sleep mask, the fuzzy phone, or the beauty kits? The fuzzy phone!

JULIET SCHOR: They ask them to be sly. They ask them to get information on their friends without their friends knowing about it. It's teaching children to exploit their friends for the purpose of getting money or free products.

'60 MINUTES' (cont'd):

Reporter: What happened at your home the other day: marketing or was it a party?

GIA Secret Agent: It was kinda both. It was a party for us, but it was marketing for the companies.

Reporter: And is that cool with you?

GIA Secret Agent: Definitely!

JULIET SCHOR: One of the more problematic aspects of its behavior is that it will enlist young children in its marketing efforts without their parents knowing about it.

ROBERT REIHER: There's a lot that's happening around us, and the public is not aware – just like they're not aware of neuro-marketing. That's another whole new scary thing to put a child on a MRI, and watch what is being lit up inside his brain based on the stimulus, and then saying, 'wow, this works, this is good, look what happens.'

JULIET SCHOR: They do blink tests on kids, for example. They develop ads, and then see how frequently a kid blinks or turns their eyes away. And when they see the kid blinking more, they change the ad to make it more mesmerizing. There's stuff they just can't take their eyes off, and it's not an accident. They've gone over and over and over with extensive high-tech kinds of testing devices to find the precise configuration of characters, colors, music, words and so forth that kids can't resist.

ENOLA AIRD: They want to spend time understanding child development, understanding the child's need to belong, a child's need for community, a child's need for independence to encourage children to buy.

LUCY HUGHES (from 'The Corporation'): And somebody asked me: 'Lucy, is that ethical? You're essentially manipulating these children.' Well, is it ethical? I don't know. But our role at Initiative is to move products, and if we know you move products with a certain creative execution, placed in a certain type of media vehicle, then we've done our job. They are tomorrow's consumer – tomorrow's adult consumer – so start talking with them now, build that relationship when they're younger, and you've got them as an adult.

MICHAEL BRODY: I'll say it. These marketers are very similar to pedophiles. Okay? They are child experts. If you're going to be a pedophile, or a child marketer, you have to know about children and what children are going to want.

YOUTH MARKETER (from 'Affluenza'): Kids love advertising. It's a gift. It's something they want. There's something to be said, by the way, about being there first and about branding children and owning them in that way. An antisocial behavior in pursuit of a product is a good thing.

BRAND NEW WORLD

JULIET SCHOR: Companies have moved away from exaggerating the product characteristics...

BLAZE HORSE AD: See! His legs actually move just like a real horse. Blaze is the safest, strongest horse made.

JULIET SCHOR: To a whole new form of advertising, which is symbolic advertising.

(McDonald's advertisement featuring hip-hop music)

JULIET SCHOR: The product is pushed not on the basis of what it can do, or how it tastes, but of its social meaning.

SNEAKERS AD: Run cool. Play cool. Be cool.

JULIET SCHOR: So kids are taught to want candy, or sugared cereals, or soda because it's cool.

(Cheetoh's advertisement featuring hip-hop music)

JULIET SCHOR: It will define them as an individual. What you buy is who you are.

(The Coke Side of Life' advertisement)

VELMA LAPOINT: There's a mantra in American society: "You are what you have. You are what you buy. You are what you own."

'HANNAH MONTANA' TV SHOW:

Girl #1: Where did she find that outfit? Like Ugly-R-Us?

Girl #2: More like Ugly-R-Her.

Girl #3: We are so funny.

Girl #1: And pretty.

Girl #2: I love us.

VELMA LAPOINT: The corollary of that is: "And if you don't have it, then you are less than. You're a nobody. You don't have self-esteem." And this happens even for children.

'UNACCOMPANIED MINORS' FILM CLIP:

Kid #1: Nice Jacket. Abercrombie?

Kid #2: Please – it's Dior. Why? Is yours from A&F?

Kid #3: Our mom bought it for him at K-Mart.

SUSAN LINN: I think the thing that upsets me the most is that it's not just products that are being marketed to children, but values. And the primary value that's being sold to kids over and over and over again is the value that things or stuff or brands will make us happy.

JULIET SCHOR: The costs of participating in the consumer culture for children have escalated dramatically.

MY FIRST SONY AD: *(singing)* I like the bike. I like the pony. But what I love is My First Sony.

JULIET SCHOR: Fifteen years ago, the My First Sony, which would be, you know, a kid's version of a tape recorder, or a music player, would cost far less than the adult version. But today, it's an iPod...

(iPod advertisement)

JULIET SCHOR: In grades one, two, three, four even. Very, very expensive products.

(Fashion show with young girls in designer clothes)

JULIET SCHOR: We're seeing elementary school girls – six, seven year olds – articulating adamant preferences for designer jeans that cost a hundred to a hundred and fifty dollars. That's part of that shift from children's culture being a cheap culture to a very upscale children's culture, in which it's not only branded, but it's designer branded.

'HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2' FILM CLIP: *(singing)* Fetch me my Jimmy Chu flip-flops. Where is my pink Prada tote? I need my Tiffany hair-band. Then I can go for a float.

ENOLA AIRD: It's got to have it, gimme. That's the value system.

'HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2' FILM CLIP (cont'd): *(singing)* I want more.

ENOLA AIRD: Self-indulgence, instant gratification, and materialism.

'HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2' FILM CLIP (cont'd): *(singing)* Everything's got to be perfect for me.

ENOLA AIRD: That's the basic consumer identity.

'SUITE LIFE OF ZACK & CODY' TV SHOW:

Music Teacher: You could try thinking of things that remind you of each note. *(sings)* Do.

Student: That's easy. Dough means money.

ENOLA AIRD: It's shallow. It's about me.

'SUITE LIFE OF ZACK & CODY' TV SHOW (cont'd):

Music Teacher: (sings) Mi.

Student: Yay! Me!

ENOLA AIRD: It's about me now, and it's about me and these things.

'SUITE LIFE OF ZACK & CODY' TV SHOW (cont'd):

Music Teacher: (sings) La.

Student: Law is something you get to break if you're rich.

ENOLA AIRD: That's the attitude. It's all about me.

'BRATZ' FILM CLIP: (singing) You know it's all about me.

DAVID WALSH: It's really a disservice to kids. I think part of what we need to be able to tell kids is that it's fine to have nice things. There's nothing wrong to having nice things. But don't mistake that for happiness and satisfaction.

'KIDS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS' TV SHOW:

Art Linkletter: In about twenty years, what do you want to be?

Kid #1: I want to be a baseball player.

Kid #2: A teacher.

Kid #3: I want to be a policeman.

ALLEN KANNER: When I first started seeing children as a psychotherapist about a quarter of a century ago, I would routinely ask them what they wanted to be when they grow up, and would hear things like a nurse, an astronaut, or some profession that seemed glamorous to them.

'KIDS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS' TV SHOW (cont'd):

Art Linkletter: By the way, what does your father do for a living?

Boy: He designs.

Art Linkletter: He designs what?

Boy: Missiles.

Art Linkletter: And what are you going to do?

Boy: I'm gonna be a postman.

Art Linkletter: And why do you want to be a postman?

Boy: There isn't so much to it, and you can read the postcards.

ALLEN KANNER: Around the late 80s, it started to change, and I started to hear children answer that question with the word 'rich.' 'When I grow up I want to be rich. I want to make a lot of money. I want to have a lot of stuff.'

'HANNAH MONTANA' TV SHOW:

Boy #1: How we doing today, twice-my-size?

Boy #2: Makin' bacon, mini-me.

Boy #1: And we ain't fakin'. Time to do...

Both: A little shakin'.

ALLEN KANNER: The commercialization of childhood is permeating their lives. We're talking about a profound remaking of their psyche.

BETSY TAYLOR: In that world of materialism, kids are not allowed to be kids anymore. They have to grow up fast. We see it in the way they're being asked to dress, the violence they're being asked to navigate. And what's getting squeezed out is childhood.

CRADLE TO GRAVE

'TODAY' TV SHOW: Marketers even have a name for this trend. They call it: 'Kids Getting Older Younger.'

UNIDENTIFIED AD:

Woman: Where's Carla?

Ad Narrator: Meet the go-to girl of the fashion world: you!

MICHAEL RICH: The natural developmental urge is to be older, more mature, faster. No one who is seventeen reads Seventeen magazine. It's the 10 and 12 and 13-year-olds who are reading it to understand what it's like to be seventeen. What is happening is that marketing is taking advantage of that natural urge and selling down to lower and lower age groups.

'TODAY' TV SHOW: Manicure and pedicure parties are a big hit for 5-year-olds. And why wouldn't girls as young as the age of 6 buy cosmetics? Experts say their role models are not teachers, astronauts, or doctors. Instead, it's the teen idols they're attracted to.

NARRATOR: And nothing points to the industry infatuation with age compression more than its invention of the tween.

NBC NEWS:

Reporter: Club Libby Lu caters to tween girls, like Shelby, celebrating her tenth birthday with friends. And afterwards, showing mom what a tween girl wants – and that's just what a CEO wants.

Mary Drolet (Club Libby Lu CEO): There's a lot of little girls out there, and they have a lot of buying power.

NICK RUSSELL: Tween. In be-tween. In between what? I don't know. I don't know what's before tween because the bottom end of tween is constantly getting younger. It used to be eight to twelve. And now it's six to twelve. And it can get four to twelve.

JULIET SCHOR: And this gives you a clue to some of the perverted thinking that's going on in this field. The idea that a six year old is no longer a child but is between childhood and adolescence.

NARRATOR: One of the crucial aspects of this trend is that marketers never communicate their adult messages and values to kids simply as kids but as boys and as girls.

DIANE LEVIN: And girls are being taught they need to be pretty, sexy, and what they buy determines their value, and how they look determines their value.

NARRATOR: It's true that, to some extent, advertisers have always appealed to girls at this level. But there can be little doubt that something radically different has emerged over the past few years.

MY SCENE BARBIE AD:

(Singing) It's My Scene: My Bling Bling Bling.

Barbie: The new My Scene: My Bling Bling Girls are here.

Girl: Nice bling!

Barbie: Here. Wear my ring.

Girl: Sparkly!

JULIET SCHOR: You see now dolls with highly sexualized outfits and themes marketed to six year olds.

(Bratz Forever Diamondz advertisement)

DIANE LEVIN: I go to visit pre-schools, and I'll see four-year-old girls in what I often call 'crotch skirts,' modeled after Bratz dolls.

BRATZ ONLINE AD:

Girl #1: That's so cute. I would seriously wear that.

Girl #2: Be Bratz. Belong.

MICHAEL RICH: While one part of you cognitively may be able to accept belly shirts when you're seven years old, are you emotionally mature enough to handle the outcome when you go out in public and people look at you, you know, like an underage Britney Spears?

NARRATOR: And with boys we see the same pattern. While to some degree, marketers have long targeted young boys with what would seem to be adult messages – messages that equate being a man with aggression and toughness and violence – today's boys are immersed in an all-together different world.

(Montage of violent images)

JULIET SCHOR: With boys what we see is the use of images of violence, power, domination at very young ages.

DAVID WALSH: With videogames, for example, we went from 16-bit to 32-bit to 64-bit to 128-bit technology in about five years. What that means is that we're getting closer and closer to virtual reality.

(Montage of violent video games)

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: The amount of violence, entertainment violence that young children are exposed to is startling. They're getting the message that when you have conflicts, you fight with violence, that you have to fight in order to resolve your differences, that's what you do...

(Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles toy advertisement)

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: And that watching violence is fun.

(Montage of WWE violence)

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: It's entertaining.

(Young kids in WWE audience)

MICHAEL RICH: The Federal Trade Commission report that came out, looking at the marketing of media to children, showed that indeed the media industry was marketing material to children that even their own rating systems said were too young for that material.

ABC NEWS: The studios confirmed to congress today that children as young as 9 years old were tested for their reactions to R-rated violent movies.

ROBERT IGER (Walt Disney Company): Clearly there were times during the period discussed in the FTC report when we allowed competitive zeal to overwhelm sound judgment and appropriate standards...

MICHAEL RICH: So the very people who are making the product are telling you what's appropriate for kids. And there has been a shift in the space of a decade of one full ratings point. So, what was an R-rated movie is now a PG-13. They don't use child development experts in deciding this, and the questions they ask are not: is this ok for kids? It is: would parent's let of a certain age of kids watch this?

'MEET THE FOCKERS' FILM CLIP: I still masturbate to Pam. Look at those boobs! Man! I just want to lather them up with soap and just...

JULIET SCHOR: One thing that happened when the movie studios tightened up on letting kids into R movies was that the sexual content, drug content, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, adult content migrated into the PG-13 movies. So they're a lot more like what R movies used to be.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: And a Hollywood movie that's rated for older viewers, PG-13 or R, has a whole line of toys and products marketed to children 3, 4, and 5 years old.

ITSY BITSY SPIDER-MAN AD: The new Itsy Bitsy Spider-Man.

NARRATOR: Despite growing concerns about the industry's explicit strategy of age compression, its drive to reach kids at younger and younger ages has only accelerated. The result is a massive and growing toddler industry that, almost from the womb, now blankets babies in brands.

SUSAN LINN: It's really hard to find baby paraphernalia that's not plastered with media characters. You can find unbranded baby stuff, but you can find it in high-end toy stores. But if you go to just places where poor or middle class families shop, it's all branded, so the babies start out life with the notion of consumption. And that's not an accident. What they want is cradle to grave brand loyalty. That's what they talk about – share of mind. They talk about owning children for life.

PEPSI AD:

Cindy Crawford: (to baby) I love you.

Ad Narrator: Norman Pheeny. Pepsi drinker for life. (baby winks)

ENOLA AIRD: There's been this recognition apparently that children as young as six months of age can recognize brands, so now if they can recognize brands, we got to make sure that they recognize our brand. The marketer is interested in getting to that child at the very, very beginning to begin to shape that child's worldview, to begin to shape that child's brand preferences, to begin to basically tell the child in a sense what that child needs in order to have a meaningful life. And that's where we say, as mothers: 'that's our job, and it's not theirs.'

REWIRING CHILDHOOD

NARRATOR: Where to turn in such a world? Millions of parents are now finding some solace in what appears to be a counter trend. It's a new media movement that claims to be good for infants. And whether we're talking about developmental DVDs, like Baby Einstein and Brainy Baby, or 24-hour programming for infants and toddlers on TV, the idea is that good media is the best antidote to bad media.

LEAP FROG AD: We don't get to decide how tall they'll end up – or what their shoe size will be in two years – but how big their imaginations get? Well, we do have some say in that.

NARRATOR: The idea is that our kids would be all right if their parents would simply turn their children away from the commercial clutter and turn them on to educational media.

LEAP FROG AD (cont'd): Because kids don't just grow up. They think up.

NARRATOR: But the question is: Is any of this even true?

MICHAEL RICH: There is not one iota of research evidence that shows that they teach children anything, or that the children who experience these things at early ages are any different in terms of their educational capacity or their fund of knowledge later on down the line. It is a huge, hundreds of millions of dollars a year business, and they're selling it to parents' insecurities.

V-TECH AD: You'll never get to college if you don't play your video games!

MICHAEL RICH: They're basically letting parents think that if they don't get these things, their children will be behind.

LEAP FROG AD: What will this home video end up being labeled? Kyle and Max in the car? No. Kyle and Max playing? Make that: Kyle and Max increasing the size of their brains.

MICHAEL RICH: The majority of parents think if they don't put their kids in front of media early and often, that they are going to be behind other kids.

NARRATOR: And even as this industry has been making big educational claims, it has been making even bigger profits. Sales of infant videos and DVDs purporting to be educational are expected to reach 7.8 billion dollars by 2010.

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH: After her daughter was born, Julie Aigner-Clark searched for ways to share her love of music and art with her child. So she borrowed some equipment and began filming children's videos in her basement. Baby Einstein company was born,

and in just 5 years, her business grew to more than 20-million dollars in sales. Julie Aigner-Clark.

SUSAN LINN: This is a billion dollar industry that is a complete and total scam. There's no evidence that a baby watching a DVD is learning anything.

NEWS: Educational videos aimed at babies may not be such a bright idea after all. A new study found that children who watch popular DVDs, like Baby Einstein and Brainy Baby, actually have poorer vocabularies. One researcher said she'd rather have babies watch 'American Idol.'

MICHAEL RICH: The American Academy of Pediatrics has now for seven years recommended that there be no screen media use for children under the age of 2, and this is for some very specific reasons. First of all, there is no solid scientific research evidence that children under the age of 30 months, or two and a half years, can learn anything from an electronic screen. A lot of media early may in fact change the way the brain develops.

ABC NEWS: Three new studies out tonight are the latest to suggest that heavy television watching can hurt children's ability to learn.

FOX NEWS: The more television infants and toddlers watch, the greater the chance they'll have trouble paying attention and concentrating during their very early school years.

CBS NEWS: Researchers say hours spent in front of TV only trains the brain to watch more TV. A child weaned on bright colors and rapidly changing images will find it tough to focus on a teacher or homework.

MICHAEL RICH: During the first two years of life, their brain is rapidly developing. And what we know about optimal brain development during these first two critical years is that face-to-face involvement with other people – parents, siblings, other kids – interaction with other human beings, manipulation of the physical environment, trying to stack the blocks up or get a Cheerio in your mouth. Creative open-ended problem-solving play is far better than the best edutainment software you could ever have.

ROBERT REIHER: What's the most important thing for a 0-2 year old? The single most important thing is the social dynamic – the bond that occurs, and the intimacy that occurs between mother and child. Forget the rest of it. That piece lays the bond of trust and the foundation for all higher learning later. That has to occur. So if you're sacrificing the trust, the bond, the attachment issues for the sake of having a Baby Einstein or computer or videos in the room, you're missing a huge understanding of child development. The space that is necessary to think is being jeopardized. You're immersed. You're outside yourself. You're taken out. When do you have quiet time and unstructured time? When is a child able to be a child and play?

NBC NEWS: Remember playing baseball until it got so dark you couldn't see the ball any longer? How about hiding and pretending you couldn't hear your name being called home to dinner? That was back, of course, when kids – and just about all kids – played outside starting the moment they got home from school. That was before Xbox, of course.

NARRATOR: A recent report from the American Academy of Pediatrics found that commercial media is radically transforming the way children play. The report found that even though free and unstructured play is essential to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children, the amount of time 6 to 8 year olds spend playing creatively has been declining dramatically over the past decade. And for 9 to 12 year olds, over the same period, creative play has declined a staggering 94%.

SUSAN LINN: The thing that is important to remember about creative play is that it's a foundation of learning, it's a foundation of critical thinking, it's a foundation of problem solving, it's the foundation of empathy and the experience of being something else, and it's the way that kids make life meaningful. What's happening is that children are being deprived increasingly of opportunities to exercise their imagination. Parents are being encouraged to hand babies cell phones because of the Sesame Street content or the Nickelodeon content. We now have screens in the back of mini-vans and portable DVD players for toddlers. We're raising a generation of children who are never going to have the experience of having to amuse themselves or having to calm themselves down.

(Advertisement for Playhouse Disney Online)

SUSAN LINN: And so they're always going to need a screen. And that's exactly where the marketing industry wants them.

JOSH GOLIN: When children play with toys that are based on media products, they play less creatively because they're not spurred to make up their world.

DORA THE EXPLORER DOLL AD:

Ad Narrator: She's a fiesta girl.

(Singing) Move your arms up and down. Shake your head.

Kids: How's this, Dora?

JOSH GOLIN: They're not spurred to make up their own story lines. What they do is they just regurgitate what they've already seen using products that are based on the film or on the television show.

SPIDER-MAN PLAY SET AD: Every flip, every stick, every web-slinging trick Spider-Man can do; now you can too – with the Spider-Man stunt system.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: It's not real play. Their own imagination, and their own past experience, isn't evident. It's really just an imitation of what they've seen.

SUPERMAN INFLATE-O SUIT AD: You can be just like Superman – with a Superman Returns Inflate-O Suit. Strap on the Punch N Crush gloves, and you'll hear the sound of every punch you throw – and everything you crush. The world needs a hero. Are you ready for the job? Inflate-O Suit accessory: You put it together. Batteries not included. Punch N Crush gloves sold separately.

SUSAN LINN: The message kids get is that they can't play Harry Potter, unless they have an official Harry Potter wand. Or they can't play some hero, unless they have all of the paraphernalia that goes with it.

JACK SPARROW COSTUME AD: Straight from the movie comes Jack Sparrow's gear. Battle with the Clash and Flash Sword with lights and sound effects. Fire the electronic pistol. Be Jack Sparrow!

SUSAN LINN: And in a way, they are being told their imagination isn't good enough. It's not good enough to pick up a stick and turn it into a wand; you have to have the real wand.

DAN ACUFF: It's the newest, greatest robot toy that does everything for you, and you don't have to play with it anymore. It just plays by itself, and you watch it. Great – and at a cost. I don't even put the thing together anymore. It's no model making, no thinking, no coloring, no painting. It's just all ready for me and ready to go.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: The fundamental message that I need something outside of myself in order to play is really harmful and tragic because it starts to take play out of children's hands so that the kids need more and more and more in order to be able to play and in order to be happy.

BETSY TAYLOR: We're creating a future generation of super consumers. Rather than consuming less, our children will consume even more than the Baby Boom Generation or the Generation Y or X. What does that mean for our future, for our well-being, and for their well-being?

OUR FUTURE

NEWS MONTAGE: Forty times as many young people are now being diagnosed with bipolar disorder than thirteen years ago... Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: almost four and a half million children in this country have been diagnosed with ADHD... Doctors are writing a growing number of prescriptions for anti-depressants for children – as many as 8 million a year... 1 in 3 children born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes... The first time in decades the rate of hypertension in children is rising... This generation of children is the heaviest in American history. An estimated 16% of all children and teenagers are overweight – four times as many since the 1960s.

BETSY TAYLOR: It's kind of like we're saying in our society, 'we don't care about children.' For all the rhetoric about kids, we're treating them as one thing: buying power consumers. And it's, you know, no matter what they buy, we want them to buy – even if it's going to kill them.

MICHAEL BRODY: The sick child as viewer consumer has replaced the healthy child of sports, play, and make-believe.

ENOLA AIRD: People who are really smart and have done a lot of research on this are beginning to say, 'wait a minute. There seems to be some association here between advertising and marketing and all these problems.'

JULIET SCHOR: I designed a study, which looked at children's involvement in consumer culture. And what I found was the more media a child used, both television and other forms of media, the more likely they are to score high on a depression scale and an anxiety scale.

GARY RUSKIN: This is one of the very most important public health problems in the United States if not the most important public health problem in the United States.

NARRATOR: And one of the most disturbing of these negative health trends is the rise of illnesses linked to childhood obesity – the dark side of a kid's consumer culture that promotes junk food and sedentary media use over physical exercise.

ABC NEWS: Life expectancy of kids today will be shorter than that of their parents – the first such decline in modern times.

CBS NEWS: Over the last two decades, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in teenagers.

MICHAEL RICH: One of the concerns that people have with our current pandemic of obesity is that we are teaching kids to eat the wrong kind of things earlier and earlier.

FOX NEWS: The consequences of America's weight problem now extending to child safety seats. A new report says many very young children are too heavy for standard car safety seats. Manufacturers starting to make heftier models to address the problem.

MICHAEL RICH: And we are seeing problems that we used to never see until adulthood now in children as young as six or seven, such as type two diabetes. Diabetes is a terrible disease with lifelong implications. You die young. You die miserable.

MICHAEL BRODY: This is not diabetes that is based on genetics. This is diabetes based on weight. Diabetes, being a chronic illness, affects people's eyes. It affects their circulation. It affects their heart. There is going to be a health care crisis – a concrete health care crisis.

NARRATOR: Despite these concerns, regulators have not only been reluctant to address the problem, but even to acknowledge that there is one.

ABC NEWS:

Timothy Muris (Federal Trade Commission): There are no simple solutions to this problem. Even our dogs and cats are fat, and it's not because they're watching too much advertising.

Reporter: So you're saying advertising has had no impact on the increased obesity problem?

Timothy Muris: I'm saying if you look for a correlation and causation, there is none.

JULIET SCHOR: There's no way we can really make childhood healthy in this country without a government effort. We've done it in other areas. We do it in the area of child safety. We have laws about putting helmets on kids, seatbelt laws, tobacco marketing to kids. But somehow we think it's okay to make children fair game for marketers who just want to profit from them, irrespective of the impacts on their health and well-being.

DAN ACUFF: Not once have I ever heard a corporation say, 'let's put on the chalkboard the pluses, the maybes, the questionable impact, and here's some negatives that could come out of our product or program.' I've never seen it.

DAVID WALSH: If I'm a producer and distributor, I don't think it's fair for me to say that I don't care what the social consequences of what I do are; I'm just making a buck. I mean we wouldn't tolerate that in a lot of other areas.

SUSAN LINN: The marketing industry's spin is that it's all up to parents and that parents should be the sole gatekeepers.

NEWS MONTAGE: What about the parents? Isn't it a parents' responsibility? Isn't it the parents' responsibility to monitor what their kids are eating and watching? Isn't the choice of what to buy and feed kids up to parents ultimately?

SUSAN LINN: Parents can't cope with this alone. They need help. We have a 15 billion dollar industry that is working day and night to undermine parental authority.

ENOLA AIRD: Responsible adults would say that, of course, parents are responsible, but if children are not with their parents 24 hours a day – if they're in school and the school is full of advertising and marketing, if they go to daycare and the daycare center is full of advertising and marketing, if they're on the net, if someone's inviting them over for a slumber party and there's a surreptitious selling or market research going on there – I think it's asking an awful lot of parents to take all the responsibility. It's akin to a owner of a large fleet of trucks announcing that 'our fleet of trucks from now on is going to be barreling down the road, especially where children are, at 150 miles an hour. Parents watch out. It's your job to take care that your children don't get hurt.' No one would argue, in that case, that the owner of the fleet of trucks doesn't bare any responsibility at all.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE: In fact, the FTC and the FCC's role is to protect children when the market place isn't protecting them. And we have a situation now where those agencies are not fulfilling the role that they actually were given when airwaves, for example, were turned over to private corporations. So things are very out of balance.

MICHAEL BRODY: We are the only industrialized country in the world that really doesn't have a policy about this. I have consulted and spoke to people in Ireland, in the Scandinavian countries. They don't permit this type of advertising. But usually, when there is any type of debate about this, the industry brings out the First Amendment rights, the Constitution. I say, they're entitled to the Constitution, but they're also entitled to the shame. Shame on them. This is our future, and they know that this is wrong.

MICHAEL RICH: We need – in a proactive, forward-looking way – as a society to say, 'how is this changing us? How is this changing our environment? How is this changing our society? And do we want this?'

SUSAN LINN: I think that we have to look at this as an issue of rights – the rights of children to grow up, and the freedom for parents to raise them without being undermined by commercial interests. In that sense, it's like the civil rights movement, or the women's movement, or the environmental movement. I think that we're at the beginning of a growing movement and that it takes time.

ENOLA AIRD: This is a lot more than about selling products and services. If we care about nourishing the human spirit – if we care about human relationships – then we've got to care about this issue.

[END]