

What would you do if you knew that just by watching an advertisement you can be led to drug problems, health issues, or even death ? Today's America revolves around technology, entertainment, and other various types of media. Each of them provide advertisements. There are advertisements all over the place, that advertise clothes, cell phones, and even food. The things that are on the advertisements can have an influence on whomever watches them. For example, alcoholic advertisements are seen all over the place. These advertisements target any age group, from the young to the old. With this, alcohol distributors poison the mind of the young and make them believe that drinking can really bring all the pleasures portrayed in the advertisements, like the beach parties, celebrations, and fun at sporting events. Alcoholic advertisements should be banned because they often portray alcohol as an enhancement to the youth, thus tempting them to drink, and putting their lives at risk.

Although the alcohol industry insists that its advertising aims only to increase market share and not to encourage any underage persons to drink, research suggests otherwise. A study on the youth to alcohol advertising found that underage youth are drawn to music, animal and people characters, story and humor in alcohol advertising. The three most popular alcohol ads among youth in the study used animal characters as the leading actors. Alcohol advertisements overwhelmingly connect ads of alcohol with attributes particularly connected to youth and children using those exact concepts.

The advertisements today have many child friendly appeal to them. Most of them include many colors, funny characters, and cartoon characters like frogs, bears, and lizards. These advertisements are well developed because they lure children in and make them pay attention. According to James Wilkerson, "The alcohol industry used cartoon and animal characters to attract young viewers to alcohol in the 1990s, with frogs, lizards and dogs, which were overwhelmingly admired by youth. In 1996, for example, the Budweiser Frogs were more recognizable to children aged 9-11 than the Power Rangers, Tony the Tiger, or Smokey the Bear."(Wilkerson) This quote suggests that it is apparent that children notice these ads and retain the images they have once seen. Children watch cartoons and connect closer to cartoons than anything else because they are a part of them all day so using cartoons has a stronger effect on them.

Therefore, the exposure to the youth at such a young age can make them look at the ads and have thoughts that it is fun to drink and to fool around with alcohol. Its been said over and over again, that alcohol distributors try to remove any appeal that grab the attention of the youth. "Alcohol advertisers have pledged to avoid audiences made up of more than 30 percent underage viewers, such as children's programming; however, many other ads have adolescent appeal," said David Jernigan. Children are young and very vulnerable. They have not yet developed the skills they need to be able to distinguish between right and wrong. Therefore, by using television to show alcohol to children, they will more than likely remember the alcoholic product. Children see the characters are having a good time. As a result, they obtain an idea that drinking will allow them to have a good time too.

Certain products can appeal to people positively if they are advertised correctly. The perfect way to publicize a product is through technology. Furthermore, there is no better way to

promote than when America is plopped down on a couch to watch a major sporting event. When it comes to sports, all ages, male and female, tune in to see what is going on. Around the world everyone watches soccer, tennis, basketball, and golf. Here in America, our main sport of viewing is American football. Every year, the NFL has a championship game known as the Superbowl. In the eyes of alcohol distributors, the Superbowl is a gateway to the masses and a major staple to showing off products to the world. As many as 106.5 million pairs of eyes tune in to watch the big game. A large portion of the superbowl viewers are below the age of 21. (Bauder)

With the 106.5 millions viewers watching the superbowl, the alcohol distributors use the time to promote their advertisements. The Drug-Free Action Alliance surveyed more than 8,500 youth in middle and high schools across the country. They were surveyed to see which commercials they remembered the most during the game. The top two ads were Doritos followed by three different types of alcoholic ads such as Budweiser, Miller Lite, and Bud Lite. The Drug-Free Action Alliance conducts this survey annually and the results have been similar for the past five years. The numbers show that the youth do tune into the game and even watch the commercials for enjoyment over the big event too. In fact, According to a new Nielsen survey, Fifty-one percent of respondents said they enjoyed the ads more than the action on the field, while the other 49 percent preferred the game. More people tune in on Super bowl Sunday to watch the commercials themselves than to see the actual game.

The sex appeal in alcoholic advertisements is also very high. Almost every commercial shows people at beach parties having a good time and relaxing with the opposite genders. The most obvious reason sex appeal works in advertising is that it grabs attention. Both males and females are attracted to this type of advertisement because in our society, sex does sell. We as humans, are naturally connected with anything that has sexual imagery or references towards it. It's that simple, we just get attracted to when we see the opposite gender that's attractive to us. This type of advertisement is especially more dangerous for the young teens who are going through puberty. We know that in puberty hormones get stronger and we become more curious about the opposite sex, so once exposed to any type of sexual appeal, our attention is heightened and we pay closer attention. Alcoholic distributors can take that to their advantage. They show some sexual appeal with a female or male, so once that is seen, the distributor has accomplished two important factors for their advertisement; they have caught the attention of the viewer and exposed their product in a pleasing way.

Using sex appeal to attract viewers provides them with an idea that if you drink, you will have confidence. It attracts the youth by propagating an image of a young man or woman confident in themselves to be able to approach the opposite gender. " 37% of males are influenced by friends or other forms of media, like music, and superstars, to approach and talk to females whom they like."(Williams) By instilling them that alcohol gives power and confidence, just by drinking an alcoholic beverage, they are even more tempted to go out and drink to achieve any of these goals.

The alcohol ads in the media tempt more of the youth to drink. The ads tempt one to drink with all of their regular exposure to their product. Constantly viewing something can almost

subconsciously print it in your mind. During high school teenagers spend countless number of hours in front of some form of media whether cell phones, computers, or anything else that's new out. "High school students will spend about 18,000 hours in front of the television-more time than they will spend in school. During this time they will watch about 2,000 alcohol commercials on television each year." (Williams) With over exposure to the ads, it can lead to more alcoholic consumption.

With the hours of media exposure they are bound to come across thousands of advertisements for alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic ads reach the youth not only through television, but by magazines, sporting events, and even subways. That makes matters worse because a study published in pediatrics and adolescent medicine found that youth who have seen more alcoholic ads on average drunk more than those who have not. That shows us with the more exposure around us with alcoholic ads, the more of a chance youth drink later on in their lives.

The amount of money that is being poured into these ads should hint to people that alcohol company's care and put effort in showing these ads. Let us remember, for advertisement exposure you will need money. According to the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University, "alcohol companies spend nearly \$2 billion very year on advertising in the United States. Between 2001 and 2007, there were more than 2 million television ads and 20,000 magazine ads for alcoholic products." They also pay to show them during major events, most notably the superbowl. Super Bowl advertising time, with prices running at an average of about \$3 million for a 30-second spot. This heavy advertising effort leads to significant youth exposure.

Other than future drinking problems and the temptations to drink, alcoholic exposure can lead to health risks, or to even death. Those who drink heavily in adolescence and early adulthood are more likely to develop a metabolic problems that puts them at greater risk of health problems later in life, whether or not they continue drinking (Jernigan). Drinking can lead to various health risks, injuries, or even death.

Drinking at a young age can have effect ones growth and body development. In both males and females, puberty is a period associated with marked hormonal changes, including increases in the sex hormones, estrogen and testosterone (Lyons). These hormones increase production of other hormones and growth factors. which are vital for normal organ development and body growth development. Drinking alcohol during this period of rapid growth and development, meaning basically before or during puberty, may upset the critical hormonal balance necessary for normal development of organs, muscles, bones, and the brain.

It takes a huge amount of concentration and judgment skills to control a vehicle. All of those skills, used to drive a car, begin and end with the brain. Just the smallest amount of alcohol can disrupt that process. Alcohol decreases teens' ability to pay attention. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among those younger than 25 years old. In 2007, 11% of high school students reported driving a car or other vehicle during the past 30 days when they had been drinking alcohol. In addition, 29% of students reported riding in a car or

other vehicle during the past 30 days driven by someone who had been drinking Alcohol. It is reported that alcohol is a factor in 41% of deaths in car crashes. (AAFP Alcohol Advertising and Youth) The alcohol caused the health of youth to be affected and also caused lives to be lost just by drinking.

Many may argue that the larger influence is from family and friends rather than the advertisements. The advertisements influence one person who influences someone else. This is almost like a chain reaction. Without the advertisements most people would not know about the alcohol. This is known as causation. Alcohol advertisements are a great influence both directly and indirectly.

In conclusion, alcoholic advertisements should be banned. The advertisements provide alcohol as an enhancement and can lead to future drinking problems for the youth. For the upcoming generation, they too look like they will probably fall into these traps. The media and society should step up and help with the elimination of the ads, because maybe it can all be avoided before it unravels.