

An Inquiry Into How People Are Affected by Profuse Amounts of Publicity: A Multidisciplinary Approach

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## **Abstract**

### **An Inquiry into How People Are Affected by Profuse Amounts of Publicity: A Multidisciplinary Approach**

The purpose of this thesis was to examine whether advertising affects people's ability to make rational consumer decisions. Considering that advertising is so pervasive, we may be continuously programming ourselves to desire goods and services. In this thesis, I used a multi-disciplinary approach stemming from priming and suggestion theory. I tested whether participants could be primed to develop more extreme consumer behaviour attitudes and values. I also assessed whether participants who were more suggestible, were also more influenced by advertising. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. The sample consisted of sixty Concordia University students, thirty males and thirty females. The results of the priming study were inconclusive because of mixed findings. In general, exposure to commercial media was correlated with extreme buying behaviour. However, the advertising exposed group did not significantly increase their materialistic values scores after they were exposed to advertising. This may be because the group diversity between the advertising and control group was skewed. At time one, the control group had a significantly greater mean materialistic value score than the advertising pre-exposed group. Using suggestion theory, I found that participants who had a greater ability to fantasize displayed more extreme consumer behaviour. This may be because interacting with advertisements that display fantastic signs and symbols may help people form commodity meaning, especially for those who have a greater ability to fantasize. Therefore, those who can fantasize more vividly may respond more to advertising than people who do not have this ability. Through qualitative analysis, I

described how participants think that advertising influences them as well as people in general. I found a significant third person effect; participants reported that they are less affected by advertisements than people in general. To improve on this study, both advertising and control groups should be equally materialistic from the beginning of the study. Furthermore, better measures of advertising effects should be used. This study serves as a stepping-stone for further research on the topic.

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## Preface

As a psychology student, I am extremely concerned with the use and abuse of psychological knowledge by marketing professionals. As stipulated in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, it is the responsibility of psychologists to “work to mitigate the causes of human suffering, seek to improve the condition of both the individual and society, and help the public in developing informed judgments” (Kramer, 2006). Presently, marketing professionals, trained in psychology, are using their knowledge to create mass consumers.

Psychology research methods are continuously being improved in order to measure brain processes and cognition patterns more accurately. Unfortunately, these methods are also being applied to marketing so that corporations can manipulate people into buy products and services. Consumers are bombarded with advertisements that have been refined by highly skilled psychologists who use the latest psychological testing apparatuses. For example, magnetic resonance imaging machines are being used to develop highly sophisticated advertisements through a practice called neuro-marketing. I initiated this project to demonstrate that the use of psychology in marketing could also be detrimental for the mental well being of those who are exposed to it; especially considering that advertising is extremely pervasive.

While reflecting on my project, I admit that it was quite ambitious. I constructed a research project that analyzed as many aspects of marketing as possible. I used both qualitative and quantitative measures and included as many variables that, I thought, could be relevant. In retrospect, if I were to conduct a similar study with the knowledge I have now, I would refine my project to be more focused.

When I began my thesis, there was a moral panic about how advertising was affecting youth. There were many research projects and other publications about how advertising impacts youth. One example includes the American Psychological Association report about how advertising negatively affects the well being of youth (Kunkel, Wilcox, Cantor, Palmer, Linn, and Dorwick; 2004). Furthermore, many of these studies focused on the impact television advertising. Today advertising has proliferated across many new media that did not exist or were not as popular four years ago. For example, the Internet and social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are becoming increasingly popular with youth. Video streaming websites, like Youtube, are more popular today than they were when I began this project. They are also becoming a new vehicle for advertisers to reach markets.

Through social media Internet sites, advertising has drastically changed. Consumers are no longer passive receivers of advertising messages. By sharing funny ads and displaying product preferences on Facebook, advertising has become much more than just a thirty-second television commercial. It has become more integrated into our daily lives and part of our virtual social networks.

I was conducting this project as the advertising industry was undergoing a major change. Consumers are more media savvy than they were four years ago. They are now able to engage with media and advertising through use of the Internet. My hope is that future researchers build from this project by applying suggestion priming and suggestion theory to new media.

## Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to examine whether advertising affects people's ability to make rational consumer decisions. Considering that advertising is so pervasive, we may be continuously programming ourselves to desire goods and services. In this thesis, I used a multi-disciplinary approach to conduct a qualitative and quantitative research project that evaluated how people are affected when they are immersed in an environment saturated with commercial advertising. The main reason to conduct this research project is to critically examine what possible consequences may result from exposing ourselves to more and more ads.

Advertising is becoming increasingly pervasive. Our sensory periphery is continuously bombarded with commercial appeals. Reciting dollar amounts does not fully explain how advertising has become so dominant in modern society. Nonetheless, it does allude to how much corporations are willing to invest in marketing. Klein (2000) noted that from 1915 to 1999 the amount of money spend by advertisers in the United States increased by 200 billion dollars. Similarly, Berger (2007) reported that in 2005 advertisers in the US spent \$280 billion on advertising. The same year all other countries combined spent \$241 billion on advertising (Berger, 2007). Advertising to youth is also increasing each year. In 1983, \$100 million dollars was spent on advertising to youth in the USA (McNeal, 1999). Now it is estimated that advertisers spend more than \$12 billion per year on advertising to youth (Kunkel, Wilcox, Cantor, Palmer, Linn & Dowrick, 2004). In another example, Spake (2003) estimated that food marketing expenditures aimed at children increased from \$6.9 billion in 1992 to \$15 billion in 2002. There may be slight variation in estimates but spending reports demonstrate that

advertising budgets are higher than ever been before, and continue to increase. In Montreal, the advertising industry has become a major economic force; as a consequence, the citizens and residents have noticed a drastic increase in advertising.

### **YUL-LAB**

Through a project known as the YUL-LAB<sup>1</sup>, advertising has become a dominant industry in Montreal. In 2009, the Association des Agences de Publicité du Québec (AAPQ)<sup>2</sup> in partnership with the Quebec government<sup>3</sup> created the YUL-LAB to give an economic boost to the affiliated advertising agencies. When the program was first launched the Quebec Government (2009) described, on their website that:

“Montréal is about to become an advertising laboratory. Thanks to an initiative called YUL-LAB, major advertisers have been invited to test their campaigns in Québec’s biggest city. Sixty-odd Montréal agency members of the Association of Québec Advertising Agencies are at the origin of the project<sup>4</sup>”.

Through the YUL-LAB initiative Montreal’s mayor, Gérald Tremblay, along with the AAPQ traveled to Chicago, on two occasions, to offer up Montreal’s citizens as experimental subjects to various multi-national corporations like MasterCard and L’Oreal<sup>5</sup>. Now, Montreal’s downtown core is filled with a vast assortment of commercial messages.

Tremblay and the AAPQ believe that the project is beneficial for the citizens because it makes Montreal’s advertising industry competitive on a global level and provides quality employment in marketing. For the launch of the YUL-LAB on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August in 2009 Tremblay announced:

"Montréal is already defined as a city of artists, but it can do even more. Hence the importance, but also the pertinence of Montréal.ad and the YUL-LAB. The advertising industry in Montreal is more alive than ever before. It employs over 10,000 people, it must be emphasized. Quality jobs, jobs for young people.....

First, it allowed Montreal to adopt international recognition in advertising design.....Second, montréal.ad provides a portal to better sell and distribute the supply of services from leading advertising agencies in Quebec. It makes me smile to have witnessed montréal.ad become a hub of advertising<sup>6</sup>”.

The YUL-LAB may have produced more jobs and created better recognition for advertising agencies in Montreal, but what kind of consequences occur when people are subjected to a plethora of publicity? If ads can effectively get people to buy products and services, then it is plausible that exposing people to advertising more frequently may cause them to desire consuming more frequently. There are countless numbers of marketing journals that demonstrate that advertising can have some effect on consumer behaviour. Interestingly, most people believe that they are not persuaded very much by advertising. In fact, many studies have demonstrated that a third person effect exists when people are asked to rate how much they are influenced by advertising as compared to other people (Golan, 2008). The question is how much control do we have of our own consumer behaviour; especially when we are exposed to a great deal of commercial publicity? This question is very important because free market economics (our current economic model) is founded on the notion that we are rational consumers.

### **The Rational Consumer**

The capitalist market is based on the principle that consumer behaviour is guided by rational choice in which they weigh purchase decisions on a planned cost benefit analysis. Leiss, Klein, Jhally, & Botterhill, (2005) indicate that classic liberal theory assumes that the:

“market behaviour of consumers is based upon deliberate and calculated action. Rational consumers faced with many products will only choose those they truly

require to satisfy their wants; rational producers of goods (in the face of competition from other markets) will only produce what consumers want. Thus, the self-interested actions of the buyers and sellers together within the free, competitive market will ensure the most efficient functioning of the system” (p. 9).

In the rational choice perspective, consumers recall all of the information they have about a certain product, they compare the information in a calculated way, then make a decision about which one they prefer (Solomon, Zaichkowsky, & Polegato, 2005).

The idea of the fully rational consumer is not very well supported by the scientific community. Mellers, Schwartz and Cooke (1998) identified many instances where rational choice is violated. In their review of consumer judgement and decision making research, they reported that:

“Research in judgement and decision making has demonstrated increasingly more violations of rational choice theory...Behavioural assumptions are showing up in new sub-disciplines. In addition to behavioural decision theory, we now have behavioural game theory, behavioural finance theory and behavioural accounts law. These areas have identified both real-world and laboratory situations in which people violate fundamental principals of rational choice” (p.449).

Saad (2007) also agrees that rational choice theory is not well substantiated. He wrote:

“The past 30 years have seen the blossoming of BDT (*Behavioural Decision Theory*), a field that has catalogued an impressive number of violations of axioms of rational choice” (p. 32).

According to Saad (2007), violations of rational choice theory include the framing effect and moderators of search time. The framing effect occurs when people base their preferences on how the choice is presented instead of weighing a cost benefit analysis of

the actual choices. Saad (2007) suggested that moderators of searching behaviour affect the amount of time that consumers spend searching for product information before making a decision. The moderators suggested by Saad (2007) were individual-level variables (like personality or demographic traits,) environment-based variables (like store density or price variance for a given commodity), situational variables (like time pressure or mood), and bounded rationality (individuals are bounded by environmental and cognitive constraints).

Many critics of rational choice theory from behavioural decision perspective have regarded the consumer as an active agent in the process of consumption. As active agents, consumers make decisions about which products they want to buy; even though the conditions of the decision process are less than ideal (i.e. consumers have limited time, biased cognitive abilities, and environmental constraints). In this thesis I proposed that not all consumer decision making is active; consumers may also purchase commodities not because they decided to but because they were led to by advertising. Furthermore, I evaluated whether advertising could augment peoples' desire for consumption in general. Can advertisers get people to need to consume more frequently? To explore that possibility, it is necessary to evaluate how needs are created.

### **Does Advertising Cause People to Need Commodities?**

There is evidence which suggests that advertising can create a false sense of what people really need. Marcuse (1964) proposed that individuals are manipulated or indoctrinated into believing that they need something; but these needs are not true needs. He stated that, "Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and

hate, belong to this category of false needs” (p. 5). He defined false needs as those superimposed upon the individual by advertising.

Berger (2007) suggested that needs are not created through advertising; only desires. He claimed that through consumption someone can satisfy their needs but cannot fully satisfy their desires. He stated that:

“Needs are finite but desires are infinite, and thus, as soon as our needs have been taken care of, we become obsessed with what we don’t have. Or, more precisely, one might suggest, with what advertising tells us we should want” (p. 40).

For Berger (2007), advertising industries “manufacture desire and shape it” (p. 40). He proposed that people continuously lust for the acquisition of more things through the belief that they will satisfy a desire. When these surrogate desires are not satisfied through consumption, people will endlessly consume products to achieve fulfillment; an impossible journey.

Galbraith (1998) believes that advertising holds a central function in the process of consumption by creating desire for products. In his words “[*advertising*] bring[s] into being wants that did not previously exist (*italics added*)” (p. 127). However, he does not believe that the powers of advertising are paramount. He admitted that advertising cannot create basic needs. He stated that “A man who his hungry need never be told of his need for food. If he is inspired by his appetite...” (p. 129).

Williams, (2005) also believes that real human needs can never be satisfied through private consumption. For him, real needs consist of roads, hospitals, schools, etc. He suggested that, “[*these needs*] are not even covered by the human ideal: they are even denied by it, because consumption tends to always materialize as an individual activity”



(p. 188; *italics added*). What Williams meant by this is that advertising educates individuals to idealize private consumption, leaving out what is socially needed and cannot be individually consumed. If one can never satisfy their needs through individual consumption, they will always feel emptiness. Williams (2005) wrote:

“If the consumption of individual goods leaves that whole area of human need unsatisfied, the attempt is made, by magic, to associate this consumption with human desires to which it has no real reference. You do not only buy an object: you buy social respect, discrimination, health, beauty, success, power to control your environment. The magic obscures real sources of general satisfaction because their discovery would involve radical change in the whole common way of life” (p. 189).

Literature from the field of psychology suggests that most human needs cannot be created by advertising, however advertising can convert a need to a commodity-sign (the image that attaches to a product (Goldman, 1992) in order to sell a product.

Reeve (2001) defined a need as “any condition of a person that is essential and necessary for life, growth, and well-being” (Reeve, 2001, p. 50). He described two main categories of needs; physiological and psychological (Reeve, 2001).

Physiological needs are necessary for survival. Neglecting physiological needs can cause bodily damage and even death (Reeve, 2001). Physiological needs consist of food, water, and oxygen, among others. For our body to be healthy these needs must be satisfied on a continual basis (Reeve, 2001). When a physiological need is low, we are driven to satisfy it through a negative feedback process (Reeve, 2001). Advertisers cannot create physiological needs. They are innate. What they attempt to do is guide our choices

of commodities which satisfy these needs. For example, advertising will not create the need for food nor water. It will, however, try to persuade us to choose a certain brand.

Advertisers also use physiological needs as a commodity-sign by associating slogans and images representing physiological needs, like sex, with commodities in hopes of meaning transference<sup>7</sup>.

Psychological needs “arise and express themselves as motivation to promote active engagement with the environment, skill development, and healthy development” (Reeve, 2001, p. 84). Reeve suggests that unlike physiological needs, “the energy generated by psychological needs is proactive” (p.84). Individuals seek out psychological need satisfaction by actively engaging with others and the environment.

Psychologists have identified two kinds of psychological needs, those that are organismic (existing in human nature) and those that are acquired (Reeve, 2001). Like physiological needs, advertising is not responsible for creating organismic, psychological needs but like physiological needs, they also use them as commodity-signs. Organismic needs include self-determination, competence and relatedness (Reeve, 2001).

Acquired social needs arise from our unique individual experiences and vary significantly from one person to the next (Reeve, 2001). These needs consist of affiliation, intimacy, and power. Advertisers can manipulate acquired social needs more than organismic or physiological needs. There are many examples of advertisements that assimilate product meanings with acquired social needs. For example, in lifestyle advertising products are associated with symbols that represent social identification and friendship.

Advertising is not solely responsible for creating consumer desires, we need to consume food and water in order to live. However, advertising could be further impeding

consumer rationality because advertising itself is not rational. Commodity meaning is created by highly trained psychological researchers.

### **Advertisements are no Longer Rational**

Before 1925, rational appeals were the most commonly used. Rational appeals persuaded individuals to buy products based on the features of the product. They described the commodities while trying to convince the public that they needed them to improve their lives (Leiss, et. al, 2005). Early advertisements were exaggerated, but mainly focused on commodity utility (Williams, 2005).

Psychologists began working in the advertising industry near the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1920's, marketers began employing methods developed by psychoanalysts (Leiss, et. al., 2005). The founder of the public relations industry, and nephew of Sigmund Freud, Edward Bernays, implemented techniques of "mass psychology" to control public opinion (Ewen, 2001). At the same time, irrational appeals were being placed at the heart of the consumption process and caused a major transition in advertising agencies' approach (Leiss, et. al, 2005). Advertisers began to sell products by emphasizing extensions of one's psychological traits rather than the characteristics of the product (Leiss, et al, 2005).

Modern advertising consists of an amalgamation of symbolic icons, researched and developed to sell in the most effective manner across many different media. Text based ads still exist as classifieds and puffery in newspapers and magazines<sup>8</sup> but are far less abundant. Today, advertising not only sells products but also sells ideas, feelings, emotions, and fantasy through symbol commodity transference<sup>9</sup>. If each advertisement sells us products and services based on non-rational appeals, than consumer behaviour

should also not be rational. If this is true, exposing ourselves to abundant amounts of advertising may be causing us to consume more without realizing why. As demonstrated by the third person effect, people think that they have more control over their consumer behaviour than the average person. The current thesis explored if and how advertising shapes consumer behaviour, desire, and attitudes.

The project consists of three main analyses, I used a priming paradigm to test whether exposure to excessive amounts of advertising can cause extreme consumer behaviour/values (compulsive, impulsive, hedonic and/or materialistic). I hypothesised that; if each ad *primes* us to desire a particular product or service, than by continuously exposing ourselves to advertising we are constantly *priming* our consumption drives; thus leading us to become more excessive consumers.

I used suggestion theory to test whether people who are more suggestible are also influenced more by advertising. Considering that all commercial advertisements *suggest* that we consume a product or service and some of us are more susceptible to the influence of *suggestions* than others (i.e. they are more *suggestible* [Siuta, 1996; Nadon, Laurence, Perry, 1987, among others]), then those who are highly *suggestible* should be more likely to succumb to the *suggested* behaviour of each advertisement (i.e. consume more products and services). In situations of abundant advertising, highly *suggestible* individuals may consume more excessively because they are more likely to be influenced by each *suggestion* to consume.

I also performed a qualitative analysis to find out people's beliefs about how advertising influences themselves and other people. The goal was to analyse how advertising affects people in an open-ended format so participants could communicate

their ideas without being forced to choose from a list of possible answers. Through these three starting points, this thesis evaluated whether exposure to abundant amounts of advertising can cause people to become more excessive consumers.

## Literature Review

### What Happens When People are Exposed to Profuse Amounts of Advertising?

There are a variety of explanations as to how people are affected when they are exposed to high amounts of advertising. Some of the theories propose that people become immune to the effects of advertising. David Lubars from the advertising agency The Omnicom Group, suggests that, “consumers are like roaches – you spray them and spray them [*with ads*] and they get immune to it after a while” (Klein, 2000 [*italics added*]). Leiss, et. al. (2005) wrote that marketers are having difficulty getting people to notice specific advertisements amongst the clutter of ads. They suggest that “audiences are silently expressing a backlash against commercial clutter by zapping advertisements (changing the channel, skipping or fast forwarding ads from satellite providers who give that option) and turning to less commercialized media” (p.353). A 2004 survey done for the American Association of Advertising Agencies revealed that, of their sample (Berger, 2007):

- 69% expressed interest in products that would block advertising
- 66% felt that they are constantly bombarded by advertising
- 61% described the amount of advertising to which they are exposed is out of control
- 60% felt their opinion of advertising is more negative than before
- 54% said they avoid buying products that advertise too much

Other theories suggest that advertising produces adverse effects; therefore it is not recommended for people to be exposed to large quantities of advertising. Studies with children demonstrate that advertising can produce problematic behaviour. For example, exposure to advertising can contribute to the following: more frequent parent-child conflict because the children are requesting more products which parents are not willing or able to buy (Kunkel, Wilcox, Cantor, Palmer, Linn & Dowrick, 2004; Atkin, 1978;

Atkin, 1975; Buijzen & Valkenburg; 2003), the development of unhealthy eating habits (Kunkel, et. al., 2004; Coon & Tucker, 2002), the fostering of positive attitudes toward tobacco and alcohol consumption (Kunkel, et. al., 2004) general life dissatisfaction (Buijzen and Valekenburg, 2003) and augmented materialistic attitudes (Kunkel, et. al., 2004; Adler, Lesser, Meringoff, Robertson, Rossitier, & Ward, 1977; Caron & Ward, 1975; Galst & White, 1976; Goldberg & Gorn, 1974).

To explore whether consumer values could be primed by advertising, I expanded from the latter school of thought in which advertising is thought to produce adverse side effects. Although it is well demonstrated that marketers have created so much advertising that they are having difficulty getting people to notice a specific ad amongst the advertising clutter (Leiss, et. al, 2005), this doesn't explain how advertising impacts overall consumption habits and values. What may be happening is that individual campaigns are becoming less effective but advertising as a whole may have long term effects on our global desire to consume. Advertising cannot be studied in isolation because people are continuously immersed in a sea of commercial communication. Fowles (1996) noted that "an advertisement or commercial does not stand alone but enters into a number of intertextual relationships, which supply further dynamics to the message" (p. 90).

Similarly, advertising effects may operate on overall consumption drives rather than on a specific product to product basis. The goal of market research from, a selling viewpoint, is to help the advertising industry sell specific products and services more efficiently and effectively; i.e. break through the ad clutter and entice a target market to purchase products or services. There are many publications about how to break through

ad clutter to get the attention of a target audience (radio clutter: Riebe and Dawes, 2006; internet clutter: Chang-Hoan and Hongsik, 2004; magazine ads: Pieters, Warlop & Wedel, 2002). What lacks is research that evaluates the overall impact of being immersed in an advertising saturated environment. The amount of research available from a selling perspective vastly outweighs the research available from a critical perspective.

By using similar methods as ‘adverse effects’ researchers, I assessed whether advertising could prime extreme consumer habits and values. In particular, I used a paradigm which was employed to test whether advertising could cause people to be more materialistic. This topic is important because people who have a higher degree of materialistic values are found to suffer more from emotional distress than those who are less materialistic (James, 2008). As James (2008) writes:

“It is clear from...(*studies on materialism*)..., materialism and distress go together: unmaterialistic people are less likely to suffer, highly materialistic, more likely. It will also emerge that materialism is a link in the chain of causation and has both familial and wider societal causes” (p. 43 – 44).

Individuals who are highly materialistic experience a diminished quality of life due to increased psychological needs, fragile self-worth, interpersonal flaws, and tense relationship with family and community (Kasser, 2002); they are also more prone to depression (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). Youth who are materialistic are less happy with what they own and would take a job that was less fun if it paid more money (Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio & Bamossy, 2003).

Although there is an abundance of research that supports the notion that advertising causes people to be more materialistic than they normally would, the evidence is not conclusive. On one side, research suggests that advertising can make



people more materialistic (Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio & Bamossy, 2003; Goldberg & Gorn, 1978; Buijzen & Valkenburg; 2003; Kunkel, Wilcox, Cantor, Palmer, Linn & Dowrick, 2004; Adler, Lesser, Meringoff, Robertson, Rossitier, & Ward, 1977, Schor, 2005). Other researchers dispute these findings (John, 1999; Moore and Moschis, 1982; O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2007). This topic has been heavily debated for decades.

A recent debate began when Abela (2006) criticized O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy (2002) for offering a wide-range defence of marketing; particularly, the claim made by O'Shaughnessy et. al.(2002) that it is unlikely that marketing causes materialism. Abela (2006) stated that there is a great deal of evidence linking marketing to materialism, but agreed that causality is not well established. He suggested that:

“While it is quite possible that a tendency towards materialistic behaviour exists within all human beings – because whether we are given the opportunity we tend to exhibit this behaviour – we cannot ignore the extensive and striking parallels between the growth of consumerism and the growth of modern marketing. As marketing scholars we should continue to be concerned about the likely contribution of our discipline to materialism” (p. 9).

O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy (2007) responded to Abela (2006) by arguing that:

“... it is unlikely that marketing causes materialism.... [it is] more of a *facilitator* than manufacturer of consumerism, that is, a *contributory factor in its rise and no more*. To deny this would be a denial of the power of marketing to persuade... The idea that marketing causes, in a sense of being a necessary or *sufficient* condition for materialism, is a fiction.... (*Italics added*)” (p11).

The statements made by O'Shaughnessy et. al. (2007) about “marketing as a facilitator and *not a manufacturer* of consumerism” and that “advertising is a contributing

factor in its rise *and no more*” are problematic because materialistic values are usually measured by a questionnaire in which one is scored on a degree of materialism (i.e. Materialistic Values, Richins & Dawson, 1992; Materialism Scale, Belk, 1985; Youth Materialism Scale, Goldberg, et. al. 2003). Since materialism is measured by a scale, it is not a dichotomous construct in which one is either materialistic or not; thus any stimulus which heightens one’s materialism score can, in essence, be thought of as creating materialistic values. In line with the observation made by O’Shaughnessy et. al. (2007) that advertising facilitates consumption, I used a priming paradigm to explore how materialistic values could also be facilitated.

### **Priming**

Priming refers to an implicit<sup>10</sup>, automatic<sup>11</sup> mental process, which can facilitate or inhibit access to certain memory categories. Priming causes incidental activation of knowledge structures, such as trait concepts and stereotypes, by the current situational context (Bargh, Chen, and Burrows, 1996). A prime is any stimulus that is presented, to see whether it has some influence on a later mental process or behavior (Aschcraft, 2002).

A target is the stimulus that follows the prime, which is affected by the prime. Primes may either facilitate (making the target easier or faster to process) or inhibit (making the target more difficult or slower to process). In an advertising situation, we can think of each ad as a prime, which facilitates our desire for consumption (target) and increases our likelihood of purchasing a product or service (outcome).

### **Advertising as a Prime**

People perceive advertising through both controlled<sup>12</sup> and automatic processing. For example, if someone is on an urban subway system where advertising clutters their

sensory periphery, they may look at and read specific ads in a controlled manner by directing their mental focus to the ad. If there are too many advertisements, it is beyond our sensory capacity to attend to all ads in a controlled fashion. In this case, many ads will be glanced at in passing resulting in only a brief exposure, some even as little as a millisecond. Just because all ads are not attended to for long periods of time, does not imply that they can't affect behaviour. Automatically processed advertisements can influence us through a process called priming.

### **Advertising Primes Consumption Drives**

Priming procedures are gaining popularity because marketers are discovering that they can be quite effective to sell products. Through a priming paradigm, Coates, Butler, and Berry (2006) demonstrated that a single prior exposure to an unknown brand could lead participants to consider buying the unknown brand. Additionally, Coates, Butler and Berry (2004) found that previous exposure to brand names can increase the likelihood that they enter our purchase consideration set. There are many<sup>13</sup> other marketing studies that analyzed how to prime consumption drives, not one attempted to see if advertising primes materialistic values.

Maher and Hu (2003) designed a study that came close to evaluating whether advertising primes materialistic values. Through a priming paradigm, they were able to manipulate product preference by showing materialistic people 'materialistic advertising'<sup>14</sup>. They were able to demonstrate that consumers compare the materialistic values portrayed in the ad, with that of their own before making a judgment about the product. Products were rated more favorably if the ad matched the subject's materialistic values.

In many cases, priming is an effective way to shape consumer behavior. The question I am asking is whether advertising primes the expression of materialistic values by keeping products continually in our purchase consideration set. Fromm (1976) suggests that, “In spite of competing brands, the overall effect of advertising is to stimulate a craving for consumption” (p. 178). If we are always thinking about products, whether we are aware of it or not, these thoughts should increase our desire for acquiring material possessions. Furthermore, each advertisement may not prime isolated product categories. Through semantic priming, we may be activating a whole array of implicit consumer drives. Semantic memory is the network of associations and concepts that support our knowledge of the world facts, word meanings, grammatical rules of language, propositions, and so on. It is rather like an encyclopedia of third person facts (Ashcraft, 2002). These are relatively easy to retrieve consciously, although everyone knows what it feels like to forget a name or face (Gordon, 2006).

### **Advertising and Materialistic Values**

There is a great deal of evidence which suggests that advertising can cause people to become more materialistic. In the early 1970’s researchers started discovering that youth requested products advertised on TV, even with only one exposure to the television commercial (Caron & Ward, 1975; Galst & White, 1976; Goldberg & Gorn, 1974).

Goldberg and Gorn (1978) demonstrated that they could get a group of pre-school aged children<sup>15</sup> to desire a fictitious product, “Ruckus Raisers”, even in less than ideal situations. They tested two groups, an experimental group who were pre-exposed to the fictitious commercial and a control group who were not exposed to the commercial. In

three out of the four scenarios, children chose less than ideal situations as long as they could play with the Ruckus Raiser toy.

First, the children were asked whether they would rather play with a friend in the sandbox or the Ruckus Raiser toy. The children in the experimental condition chose to play with Ruckus Raisers over a friend in the sandbox. The control group showed the opposite effect. Sixty four percent of the children exposed to the Ruckus Raiser commercial chose to play with a Ruckus Raiser toy and in the control group 70% of the children said that they would rather play with a friend in the sandbox.

Secondly, the children were shown a picture of two boys; one of the boys had a Ruckus Raiser toy and the other did not. The boy with the toy was described to the children as the not so nice boy and the boy without the toy as the nice boy. The children were told that they could bring only one of the two boys to play with them. They could choose to play with either the not so nice boy with the advertised toy or the nice boy without the toy. Children in the pre-exposed advertisement group chose to play with the not so nice boy with a Ruckus Raiser toy and the control group chose the opposite.

Third, children were asked to indicate which they liked better; a ball that their mother liked or Ruckus Raisers. In this case, both control and experimental group chose to play with the ball that their mother liked best over Ruckus Raisers.

Fourth, children were told that a boy did not get a Ruckus Raiser toy but instead went to watch TV. They were asked to indicate if the boy felt sad or happy. Those pre-exposed to the Ruckus Raiser commercials indicated that if a boy was refused a Ruckus Raiser toy but could still watch TV, he would be sad. The control group gave the opposite answer.

This study demonstrates that television commercials have a great deal of influence on pre-school age children. Young participants preferred to play with the Ruckus Raiser toys even if it would have been socially detrimental for them; however a question still remains, were the children more materialistic in general or did was the effect specific to the toy?

Playing with a toy over friends is a scale item used to assess materialistic values in Atkin's (1975) materialistic values scale. The problem is; this only encompasses one element of materialism therefore we cannot conclude that commercial advertisements cause children to be more materialistic in general. Though the Ruckus Raiser commercials did cause children to choose play orientation which parallel certain materialistic values, a better definition of materialism was needed.

In the development of the first materialism questionnaires, materialism was defined through a combination of three personality traits: possessiveness, non-generosity, and envy (Belk, 1985). This scale was criticized by Richins and Dawson (1992) for being unreliable.

In consequence, Richins and Dawson (1992) developed a new scale for measuring beliefs and attitudes about possessions. In the Materialistic Values Scale, materialism is defined not as a personality trait but as a value. Three components in his definition were: possessions define success (success is measured by the quantity and quality of your possessions), acquisition centrality (a lifestyle in which a high level of material consumption functions as a goal and serves as a set of plans) and happiness in acquisition (well being is dependent on acquisition) (Richins and Dawson, 1992).

Measuring materialism as a values scale made it easier for researchers to quantify. Unfortunately, the majority of the research that followed used correlational models and

therefore we cannot infer that advertising causes materialistic values; we can only assess their degree of association. Correlational research models have also shown that advertising and materialistic values are statistically associated.

Goldberg, et. al. (2003) developed a scale to measure youths' (twens 9 – 14) materialistic values<sup>16</sup> (Youth Materialism Scale<sup>17</sup>) and tested it on a sample of 540 parents and 996 tweens (9 – 14). This time they found that the more materialistic children watched more television commercials, indicated that advertising helped them buy products, asked parents to buy products because they saw them on television frequently, responded better to celebrity endorsements, responded more to in-store promotions, and responded better to other marketing promotions<sup>18</sup> (Goldberg, et. al., 2003).

In other studies, materialism was also positively related to the amount of time spent watching television (a highly commercial medium). In one example, Buijzen & Valkenburg (2003) conducted a survey of parents and children to investigate the negative effects of advertising. They evaluated if television exposure was positively related with children requesting products from their parents, materialism, disappointment, life dissatisfaction, and family conflict. In total, they questioned 360 (8-12 year old) parent-child dyads. Their findings revealed that television exposure was positively and directly correlated with children's purchase requests and materialism. Advertising was also indirectly related to parent-child conflict, disappointment when mediated by children's purchase requests.

Not all studies converge on these findings. In one example, Buijzen and Valkenburg (2005) found that television exposure is was positively related to materialism but this relation was mediated by parents' active advertising intervention and concept-

orientation consumer communication. In other words, the more parents talked to their children about advertising, consumer goods and proper negotiation, the less likely television exposure related to materialism.

In a report on twenty five years of research on youth consumer socialization, John (1999) suggested that between ages three and eleven, children crystallize their levels of materialism. She proposed that, materialistic first graders concentrate on simply owning more than others and fifth graders focus more on owning possessions that are better than others. John (1999) insisted that, “correlations between the amount of television viewing and materialism become insignificant in the long run when prior levels of materialism are partialled out... and when families have high levels of communication about consumer matters” (p 202-203). In this case she refers to an article published by Moore and Moschis (1982).

Moore and Moschis (1982) conducted a longitudinal study using a quasi-experimental approach to see what effect television advertising had in creating materialistic values. For their experiment 230 adolescents were tested twice over a period of 14 months. Participants were measured on their consumer role perceptions, consumer activity, materialism, sex-role conception in family decision making, television advertising viewing, family communication about consumption, and peer communication about consumption. They determined that, “Although the product-moment correlations between television advertising viewing and materialism is statistically significant, the correlation becomes insignificant when previous levels are partialled out”. What they found was that, advertising does seem to contribute to the development of materialistic values but not in situations where parents communicate properly with their children about



advertising and consumerism. Unfortunately, Moore and Moschis (1982) did not use a control group (not advertising exposed group), therefore we cannot determine what caused the shift in materialistic values. This problem is not uncommon because it is difficult to obtain an advertising naïve sample from a population who is bombarded with ads every day.

In the present study I used an experimental approach to determine if exposure to advertising causes people to be more materialistic. To evaluate if advertising primes materialistic values I tested three hypotheses:

*H1 - Individuals will have a higher materialistic values score after they are exposed to a series of advertisements than before they are exposed to advertising as compared to a control group (who are not exposed to advertising).*

*H2 – Individuals pre-exposed to advertising will exhibit more materialistic consumer behaviour than a non-advertising exposed group. They will desire a higher yearly salary, they will require more money to live at a basic minimum and they will report wanting to purchase more products and services.*

*H3 – Individuals who are exposed to advertising more frequently (through their media habits) will be more materialistic than individuals who are less exposed to advertising.*

### **Priming of Excessive Consumption Habits**

In line with the hypotheses about priming materialistic values, I also applied similar theories to explain excessive consumption habits: compulsive, impulsive, and hedonic consumption. Though there is no direct evidence which suggests that excessive consumption could be caused by advertising, a study by Querles, Jeffres and Schnuerer

(1980) demonstrated that the total amount of money spent on advertising in each country played a larger role in determining a society's GNP than a country's total affluence. They did this by comparing the total amount of money spent on advertising in 42 nations with their per capita, gross national product (GNP). Though this finding doesn't link advertising directly with consumption, it suggests that the more a country spends on advertising per capita, the more production grows. Further testing is necessary to make a direct link.

To test whether excessive consumption habits could be primed by advertising, the following hypothesis was tested:

*H4 – Individuals who are exposed to advertising more frequently (through their media habits) will be more compulsive and impulsive consumers than individuals who are less exposed to advertising.*

### **Advertising as a Suggestion**

All commercial advertising has a main commonality; they all *suggest* that you buy a product or service. If someone is highly influenced by suggestions, they should also be more affected by these 'suggestions to consume'. Considering that advertising is extremely abundant, highly suggestible people may desire consuming products and services more frequently.

There are many ways to study suggestibility. Suggestibility refers to a personal trait that describes how an individual responds to suggestions (Eyesnck, 1991). It is believed by many researchers that people respond differently to suggestions based on their level of suggestibility (Eyesnck, 1991; Hilgard, 1991).

Suggestibility is often studied through hypnosis and can be synonymous with hypnotic susceptibility or hypnotizability (Hilgard, 1991). Many scholars have postulated that advertising and hypnosis are quite similar. Gould (1991) suggested that advertising

processes may be regarded as analogous to the process of hypnotic suggestibility. He contended that both are responsible for the “creation of suggestive directedness and conversion into suggestible response” (Gould, 1991, p. 342). What he meant is that both advertising and hypnosis use suggestions to guide one’s behaviour with some intended goal (i.e. hypnotic responsiveness or consumption).

Gould (1991) proposed that advertising should be evaluated through a “model of suggestibility” (p. 347) similar to one which is used to evaluate one’s level of hypnotic susceptibility. Through his analysis, he devised a theoretical approach of how to study advertising as a form of suggestion. Though he did not evaluate this approach through any systematic investigation, he only pointed out that both fields are related and demonstrated how they can be comparable.

Gould (1991) suggested that hypnosis involves elements of conformity, role-playing, concentration, absorption, and impulsivity (quoted from Hilgard; 1965). Likewise, he indicated that consumer behaviour involves conformity (from Venkatesan, 1966), hypnoid states (from Pollay, 1986), role-playing and attentive focus (from MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989).

Even scholars from the field of communications have made references about advertising through hypnosis discourse. In an article about product placement, Mark Crispin Miller (1990) described product placement as a “poundingly hypnotic instrument – a mere stimulus, and an ugly one at that” (p. 100). He also used the word “mesmerizing” in a later paragraph to describe product placement. Franz Anton Mesmer is the founder of animal magnetism. His procedures led to the development of the present hypnosis modality (Gravitz 1994). The purpose of Miller’s (1990) article was not intended

to evaluate the similarities between hypnotic suggestions and product placement but his use of terminology suggests that he agrees that advertising and hypnosis produce similar effects.

The closest attempt to directly investigate if advertising and hypnosis produce similar effects is in a study conducted by Kaplan (2007). His research examined the convergent validity of hypnotic suggestions by using them in a field other than hypnosis. He used advertising because he found it “similar enough in the context of persuasion”. He theorized that:

“The main goal of advertising is to persuade the target audience in favor of the ideas, commodities or services featuring in the advertisements. The quality of the advertising message is assessed mainly by the level of persuasion it creates in the consumer, very much as the quality of hypnotic suggestion is measured by the level of acceptance by the patient. In the two cases, we investigate the question whether the suggestion was accepted“ (p. 53).

Kaplan (2007) used the rules developed by Hammond (1990) and Yapko (1995) for assessing the level of suggestive communication in a series of twelve television commercials. Experts in hypnosis applied these rules to evaluate the level of hypnotic suggestive communication in the ads. Then a sample of 173 business school students from Rishon LeZion College rated how effective each commercial was. The students’ scores were compared to the results given by the hypnosis experts. Kaplan demonstrated that high hypnotic-suggestive advertisements were rated as more effective and that low hypnotic-suggestive advertisements worsened one’s attitudes towards a brand. In his concluding statements Kaplan (2007) argued that the “main conclusion arising from this study is that the myth concerning advertising being ‘hypnotic’ is valid, at least partially” (p. 60).

Kaplan's (2007) study did not demonstrate that any relation between advertising and hypnosis existed; it merely confirmed that experts in hypnosis rate highly suggestive advertisements similarly to the way business students' rate advertising effectiveness. Another, more general question could have assessed if the level of hypnotic susceptibility of the participants (who made up the sample) was related to the way they responded to advertising. High hypnotizable individuals may be more responsive to advertising suggestions; researchers have not yet explored this possibility. If Kaplan (2007) would have added this measure, he would have been able to directly evaluate if there is a correlation between hypnotic susceptibility and how one is affected by advertising. In this study I measured hypnotic susceptibility and predicted that:

*H5 – Participants' levels of hypnotic susceptibility will correlate with materialistic values, impulsive and compulsive consumption habits.*

### **Advertising, Imagination and Fantasy**

Possibly the most common similarities between hypnosis and advertising are found in an individual's ability to fantasize, daydream, and imagine for pleasure (Campbell, 1987; Lynn and Rhue, 1988). Campbell (1987) theorized that the tendency to consume is strongest when one "fantasizes in anticipation" of a product. In Campbell's opinion, fantasies, as well as consumption of a fantasized product, provide an individual with pleasure. Respectively, the ability to fantasize vividly and realistically is a component, which predisposes one to be highly hypnotizable<sup>19</sup> (Lynn and Rhue, 1988).

A great deal of advertising discourse integrates magical and fantastic elements of consumerism. Jhally (1989) described that advertisements project a world of magic and fantasy through advertising, which came about since the 1940's. He stated that:

“Advertisements show the fantasized completion of the self, of how the product can transform individual existence. The power of the product can be manifested in many ways, but predominantly it is through the strategy of ‘black magic’, where persons undergo sudden physical transformation or where the commodity can be used to entrance and enrapture other people. The world of objects here enters the everyday world of people and performs in magical ways” (p. 224).

He continues in a later paragraph:

“Advertising truly reflects...an enchanted kingdom of magic and fetishism where goods are autonomous, where they enter into relations with each other and where they appear in ‘fantastic forms’ in their relations with humans” (p. 224).

Other examples include Williamson (1978), who declared that, “all consumer products offer magic, and all advertisements are spells”, and Fowles (1996), who wrote, “*Advertisers may send symbols of magical power and control*, but symbols lie dormant until a consumer lends meaning to them (*italics added to emphasize the words used*)” (p. 99).

Marx did not witness modern advertising, as we know it today, but envisioned that commodities would become more than just materials and labour. He imagined that commodities would become mystical. Marx suggested that:

“A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it is capable of satisfying human wants, or from the point that

those properties are the product of human labour. It is clear as noon-day, that man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than ‘table turning’ ever was” (Marx in Tucker, 1978).

Advertising is the source from which mystical meanings attach to commodities.

However, the transfer of meaning is not accidental, it is very deliberate. Commodities are said to be emptied of meaning, and advertising fills this void – a process or concept that Marx termed commodity fetishism. Jhally (1989) noted that:

“The world of goods in industrial society offers no meaning, its meaning having been ‘emptied’ out of them. The function of advertising is to refill the emptied commodity with meaning. Indeed the meaning of advertising would make no sense if objects already had an established meaning” (p. 221).

Meaning is said to have emptied out of a commodity because it is no longer represented in its true form. Commodities are not recognized by the labour exerted to manufacture them or by the materials used to fabricate them. Instead abstract symbols and slogans are associated with each product, transforming its meaning into a fantasy like representation. When commodities contain no concrete meaning, the advertising industry fills the void. Goldman (1992) believed that advertising is a central element responsible for the formation of commodity meanings. He wrote that advertising is the:

“primary channel through which the commodity form is extended and reproduced.

Advertising amplifies and reinforces the exchange value of existing goods and transforms into commodities those goods and services not considered commodities before. The advertising industry is located at the frontier of expanding the commodity form and thus provides a locus in which its transforming power can be readily observed” (Goldman, 1991, p. 15).

As mentioned above, the commodity meanings that are constructed by the advertising industry are not rational (Jhally, 1989). If a commodity is built to satisfy human needs, what kinds of needs are being satisfied? If the effect of associating symbols with products is that the product *becomes* the symbol than we are not consuming needed items; we are consuming the abstract symbols. As a result, consumers no longer buy what they really need; instead, they purchase a product because of the associated fantasy based images and meanings which do not accurately describe the product. Most advertisements don't inform consumers about utility features of the product; some don't even show the products at all.

Some companies like The Walt Disney Corporation design ads specifically to evoke fantastic and magical contexts. Their slogans read “when you wish upon a star, the most magical place on earth, year of one million dreams, remember the magic, to all that come to this happy place welcome and if you can dream it you can do it<sup>20</sup>”.

Previous literature suggests that fantasy makes us consume more for pleasure than for practicality. Holbrook & Hirschman (1982) distinguished between two main forms of consumption; utilitarian and hedonic. The utilitarian consumer is portrayed as a logical thinker who solves problems by making purchasing decisions. Hedonic consumption is a phenomenological, subjective state with a variety of symbolic meanings which are associated with pleasure. These two views differ.



As described by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) hedonic consumption involves a fantasy about possessing and purchasing a product. These imaginations are believed to increase the chance that a consumer will seek out and acquire a product. Fantasy, feelings, and fun are motivating factors that direct individuals to purchase for pleasure. Utilitarian consumption reflects a product's usefulness and considers consumption as a response to acquire products that are practical. This view would assume that one buys toothpaste because one would need it to brush their teeth. In contrast, the hedonic view would presume that someone buys toothpaste because of the imagined pleasure acquired by purchasing such a product. This image could be of exaggerated sparkling white teeth or even the dream of social satisfaction through fresh breath. Those who possess more elaborate imaginative capacities or drives for hedonic imaginations may be more susceptible to iconic pleasure rather than utility appeals.

To better understand how individual differences impact consumption habits, Campbell (1987) looked at the difference between an individual's satisfaction seeking and pleasure seeking drives. He noted that satisfaction seeking exists to relieve discomfort stemming from biological needs. In contrast, enjoyment seeking is a drive for a pleasurable experience arising the senses. In his opinion, marketers who cater to the needs of satisfaction seekers usually stress the relation of inner discomfort and their brand's ability to relieve the situation better than other brands. For pleasure seekers, marketers aim at stimulating their senses. Campbell (1987) maintained that whereas satisfaction depends on what a product is, a product's pleasurable significance depends on what it can be taken for; sensory illusion/delusion operate to provide pleasure. For Campbell (1987), the means to understanding hedonic buyers lies in understanding how

people use daydreaming to create feelings. He contends that hedonism is characterized by daydreams giving rise to illusions known to be false but felt to be true. He claimed that fulfillment from the use of a product cannot be detached from its image. From the consumer's point of view, images and other symbolic connotation are as much a real part of the product as are the resources that made it.

Though Campbell (1987) didn't provide an empirical basis for his claim, his conjecture implies that fantasy proneness, and the capacity for pleasure through imagination may be a component predetermining one to be more susceptible to hedonic elements of consumption. I predicted that:

*H6 – Participants who are more fantasy prone will consume more for pleasure.*

*H7 – Participants who are more fantasy prone will be more materialistic, impulsive and compulsive consumers.*

### **How are People Affected by Advertising: A Qualitative Perspective**

In this thesis I also used a qualitative approach to assess how people are affected by advertising because qualitative market research is usually gathered by private research companies; therefore it is used to devise more effective advertisements for specific companies instead of taking a critical approach to understanding consumption. Research from private marketing companies is not usually published or shared as is peer-reviewed research<sup>21</sup>. The only hypothesis that was formulated for the qualitative assessments predicted that the third person effect would be present. Specifically, I hypothesized that:

*H8 – Individuals will report that other people are more influenced by advertising than they are.*

Apart from this prediction, no other hypotheses were formulated for the qualitative portion of the research project because the main goal of this was to obtain descriptive information about how people think they and others are influenced by advertising. Since the qualitative components used questionnaires, an open-ended answer format was provided to obtain rich qualitative information about how people are influenced by advertising.

### **Pilot Analysis**

#### **Fantasy and Compulsive Consumption**

To fulfill the requirements for a course at Concordia University in 2003, I conducted a research project evaluating the relation between fantasy proneness, impulsive consumption and compulsive consumption. Though the study contained a small sample (39 participants) and gender inequality (15 males and 24 females) there was evidence that hedonic consumption and fantasy proneness are linked. The IMCI (fantasy proneness questionnaire) and the CIS (consumer impulsiveness scale) hedonic subscale were positively correlated. This study laid the groundwork for a second pilot.

#### **Hedonic Consumption, Fantasy, and Hypnosis**

For my honours thesis in 2004, I assessed the relation between hedonic buying and suggestibility. I sampled 65 Concordia University Students who completed questionnaires assessing mental imagery (IDQ), absorption (DPQ), fantasy proneness (ICMI) and hedonic consumption (CIS & Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values) and their level of hypnotizability (HGSHS: A). Hedonic consumption, fantasy and absorption

were correlated but hypnotizability and hedonic buying were not. Ironically, hypnotizability was also not related to any other variables which are well established correlates of hypnosis. For example, there were no correlations found between hypnotizability, fantasy, absorption and imagery.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

For the present study, I used an experimental design, correlational design and open-ended answer format to test the eight hypotheses and conduct the qualitative research mentioned above. I also formed an experimental group and control group.

### **Experimental Manipulation**

An experimental manipulation was used to test whether advertising increases people's materialistic values score. Before the second part of the experiment, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions<sup>22</sup>; one of them was exposed to a series of magazine advisements and the other was exposed to random number strings.

Participants were told that the purpose of the experiment was to test their memory; one group was given a booklet with 40 magazine advertisements and the other was given a booklet containing 40 random number strings. I used magazine ads as the advertising stimulus because they were easy to obtain and because magazine ads resemble billboard advertisements; therefore the results may also be applicable to outdoor advertising.

The research project was disguised as a memory task for three main reasons. First, it hid the true purpose of the experiment. This is important so participants would not conform to the demand characteristics of the experiment or change their answers to reflect consumption habits that are more socially desirable. Secondly, many of us are bombarded by a multitude of advertisements; we can only devote a limited amount of attention to each ad. Therefore, both conditions were designed to cognitively over-stimulate the participants. Participants were given twelve minutes to remember either the brands, products, images, logos, colors and themes of each of the 40 advertisements, or to

memorize 40 number strings (as well as the qualities of each number string, i.e. the colour of the numbers and the placement of the number string on the page). Third, the goal of the experiment was to examine if advertising could prime consumption drives in general (not desire for just a particular product); therefore I wanted participants to see a multitude of ads, not merely one ad.

### **Measurements**

The variables in the experimental design were measured with a battery of questionnaires. A total of twelve questionnaires were used including eleven well established questionnaires, one demographic information form and one original questionnaire. In addition, participants also wrote down a list of products that they desire purchasing on a single piece of paper to evaluate product desire. The materials section provides more information about the composition and scoring procedures for each questionnaire.

To test hypnotizability I used the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility (HGSHS, Shor & Orne, 1962) because it is a group scale, therefore it allowed me to obtain a larger sample than individual measures of hypnosis like the Stanford Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility (SHSS: Form C; Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1962). It was also used because this project was part of another research project on hypnosis which also used the HGSHS.

To measure materialistic values I used the Materialistic Values questionnaire MV, Richins & Dawson, 1992) because it has better reliability scores than other measures of materialism, like Belk's Materialism Measure (Bearden & Netemyer, 1999).

To measure compulsive consumption, I used two questionnaires: the Compulsive Buying Scale (CBS; Valence, d'Astous, and Fortier, 1998) and the Compulsive

Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool/Clinical Screener for Classifying Compulsive Consumers (CC; Faber & O'Guinn, 1992). The CBS evaluates three components of compulsive buying: high propensity to spend money, purchases activated by psychological tension (reactive aspect), and feelings of guilt after a purchase is made. The CC is a clinical screener for classifying compulsive consumers. The scale measures the degree to which people engage in compulsive consumer behaviour that disrupts normal life functioning and produces negative consequences, such as creating excessive debt.

I used the Differential Personality Questionnaire (DPQ), and Individual Difference Questionnaire (IDQ, Paivio, 1971) to measure fantasy and imagination. The DPQ is traditionally used to measure absorption<sup>23</sup>. In the pilot project described at the beginning, the correlation between fantasy proneness and absorption was  $r = .87, p < .001$ . The DPQ was used because it is much shorter than the ICMI<sup>24</sup>. Furthermore, Gould (1991) suggests that advertising is related to absorption as well. He writes:

“Advertising effects might be seen as comparable, in one sense, to waking state conditions in such experiments. However, it can be argued that while the process of advertising by an individual is indeed done in a waking state, it also involves hypnotic-like-absorption” (p. 343).

I used the IDQ because it measures one's capacities to imagine vividly. People who can experience mental imaginations more vividly are both highly suggestible (Nadon, Laurence, & Perry, 1987) and are more responsive to suggestive advertising images (Burns, Biswas, Babin, 1993) therefore; those who score higher on the IDQ may be more extreme shoppers.

To measure hedonic consumption, I used two questionnaires: the Impulsiveness-Consumer Impulsiveness Scale (CIS; Puri 1996) and the Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values Scale (HUSV; Babin, Darden, and Griffin, 1994). The CIS measures “people’s chronic values toward impulsiveness” (Puri, 1996, p.89). It has two subcomponents, prudence and hedonism. The HUSV also has two subcomponents, utilitarian and hedonic consumption. Utilitarian shopping is classified as an errand or work which is done in a functional way as if it is a task that must be completed (Bearden & Netemeyer, 1999). Hedonic shopping is classified as shopping for fun and pleasure. It reflects the emotional value given to the shopping experience (Bearden & Netemeyer, 1999).

To measure consumer impulsiveness, two scales were used: Impulsiveness: Impulsive Buying Tendency (IBT; Weun, Jones and Beatty, 1997) and Impulsiveness: Buying Impulsiveness Scale (BIS; Rook & Fisher 1995). Both scales measure a consumer’s tendency to buy spontaneously, without a plan.

I constructed an original questionnaire to ask participants open-ended questions about how they thought advertising affected themselves and other people. They were instructed to make a list of factors that would make someone more likely and less likely to be influenced by advertising. Participants were also asked what kind of information their parents gave to them while they were growing up because it is demonstrated that parental education can mediate the effects of advertising on youth (Buijzen et. al. 2005).

The questionnaire also asked participants how much money they would require as a minimum yearly salary to be able to survive and how much money they desire as an ideal salary to not have to worry about money. This question was designed to evaluate what type of lifestyle people long for. In addition, the questionnaire asked participants to



report demographic variables (age, gender, ethnic background, etc.), media habits, amount exposure to advertising preceding the study and financial status to use as control variables in the study.

To measure product desire, participants were given a sheet of paper to write down all the products they want or need to purchase at that moment. These values were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **Breakdown of Research Design**

Four designs were used to test the hypotheses: a 2 X 2 within subjects factorial design, a MANOVA, a correlational design and a multiple regression.

### **Hypotheses 1**

The factorial design was used to test the first hypothesis<sup>25</sup>. Participants completed the Materialistic Values questionnaire; MV, Richins & Dawson, 1992) at two different times: once (time 1) as a baseline measure and again (time 2) after being exposed to advertising (experimental group) or a filler task (control group).

Two multiple regression analyses were used to explain what best predicts materialistic values at time 1 and at time 2. The variables that I measured were exposure to media, exposure to advertising, fantasy involvement (DPQ & IDQ), financial status, compulsive buying, impulsive buying, future income desire and demographic variables. Variables that were correlated with materialistic values were entered into the regression. In addition, Pearson Product correlations were performed between each of the subcomponents of materialism between time 1 and time 2 (possessions define success, acquisition centrality, pursuit of happiness).

## **Hypothesis 2**

A MANOVA and a correlational design were used to test the second hypothesis<sup>26</sup>.

The dependent variables for the MANOVA were: how many items (products and services) participants' desired purchasing (wants and needs), how much participants' would require as a salary to survive at a basic minimum, and what participants' ideal salary would be to not have worry about money. Condition (advertising exposed and control) served as the fixed factor.

## **Hypothesis 3 and 4**

A correlational design was used to test hypotheses three and four<sup>27</sup>. I measured the degree of association between media habits, pre-exposure to advertising, financial status and/or parental guidance, and materialism, compulsive and/or impulsive consumption.

## **Hypotheses 5, 6, & 7**

A correlational design was used to test the fifth, sixth and seventh hypotheses<sup>28</sup>.

For the fifth hypothesis, scores from the HGSHS were compared with the MV, IBT, BIS, CC, CBS and items from the original questionnaire. For the sixth hypothesis, scores on the HUSV and the CIS were compared with scores on the IDQ and DPQ. For the seventh hypothesis, scores on the IDQ and DPQ were compared with scores on the MV, IBT, BIS, CC, and CBS.

## **Hypothesis 8**

I used a t-test to verify whether people rated other people as being more influenced by advertising than themselves.

### **Open-Ended Format**

To score the open-ended format, I used a bottoms up approach. I began by matching all the items that were similar and formed categories. The first two questions were scored by independent raters to make sure inter-rater reliability was obtained. For the three other questions, all items that were reported by participants were listed in the appendix section.

### **Sample**

Sixty students (30 males and 30 females) were recruited from Concordia University to participate in this research project. The participants were recruited from Concordia University via classroom visits, and in public locations around campus. The majority (45 of 60) of the participants were psychology majors.

The participants ranged between 18 and 39 years old. The average age of the participants was 23.37 (SD = 4.13). Male participants ranged from 18 to 39 years old with an average age of 24.43 (SD = 5.10) and females' age ranged from 19 to 31 years old with an average age of 22.3 (SD = 2.51). A demographic breakdown of the sample is provided on Table 1 and Table 2.

### **Materials**

For this experiment I used two booklets (one containing magazine ads and the other containing number strings), a CD of the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, a CD player, 60 copies of the questionnaire package, 60 consent forms, a pencil, and two rooms in the psychology department at Concordia (PY- 051 and PY – 037).

### **Questionnaires**

The Impulsiveness-Consumer Impulsiveness Scale (Puri, 1996) is a two-factor measure composed of a 'prudence' and a 'hedonic' subscale. The prudence subscale has

seven items, and the hedonic subscale has five. All items are represented by an adjective where respondents scored the degree to which each adjective described them on a 7-point scale. Items were then summed within subscales to form two independent values of prudence and hedonism.

The Compulsive Buying Scale (Valence, d'Astous, and Fortier, 1998) is composed of 13 items which were scored on a 5 point scale. Scores were summed to form a composite score of Compulsive Buying.

The Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool/Clinical Screener for Classifying Compulsive Consumers (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992) is composed of seven items scored on a 5-point scale. It was scored on a weighted algorithm. The equation for the algorithm was  $-9.69 + (Q3 \times .33) + (Q2 \times .34) + (Q1 \times .50) + (Q6 \times .47) + (Q5 \times .33) + (Q7 \times .38) + (Q4 \times .31)$ . In this scale a lower score indicates that the participant is more compulsive.

The Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values (Babin, Darden, and Griffin, 1994) evaluates two factors; utilitarian and hedonic consumption. The former is composed of four items and the latter is composed of eleven items. Each item was scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Items were summed in each subscale to form a composite score for both scales. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were instructed to imagine their last shopping trip for thirty seconds. After the thirty seconds were up, the participant answered each question.

The Materialistic Values questionnaire (Richins & Dawson, 1992) consists of 18 statements about the value given to luxury items and one's attitudes towards wealth and affluence. Each item was scored on 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. To avoid a positive response set bias, eight of the eighteen

items are reversely worded. They reflect the opposite dimension of materialistic values but were scored in reverse. An example of a straightforward materialistic values question includes; I admire people who own expensive cars. An example of a negatively phrased materialistic values question includes; I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.

The Impulsiveness: Buying Impulsiveness Scale (Rook & Fisher, 1995) is composed of nine items scored on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Items were summed for an overall score of impulsive buying.

The Impulsiveness: Impulsive Buying Tendency (Weun, Jones, Beatty, 1997) is composed of five items scored on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scores on each item were summed to form an overall index of impulsive consumption.

The Individual Difference Questionnaire (IDQ, Paivio, 1971) contains 21 items which were scored on a number scale between -2 and +2. A value of zero indicated that the statement was neither characteristic nor uncharacteristic. A score of -2 indicated that the statement was uncharacteristic and a score of +2 indicated that the statement was characteristic.

The Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility: Form A (HGSHS: A; Shor & Orne, 1962) was administered by CD in order to standardize the procedure. The HGSHS: A is scored via a response booklet (see C.10). This booklet consists of 48 items. These items were categorized into twelve groups. Each group has four separate questions. The categories reflect each suggestion given during the hypnosis session. For example, the HGSHS:A utilizes four types of suggestions; ideo-motor (translation of an idea into a movement), challenge (response inhibition), cognitive (changing perception, thinking and memory) and post hypnotic suggestions (suggestions given during hypnosis that produce

responses after the hypnosis procedure). Four questions also reflect subjective factors (expectation), objective factors (actual feeling), confidence, and attitudes (how much they would like to respond). Each item was scored on a 5-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “to a great extent”.

The Differential Personality Questionnaire (DPQ; Tellegen, 1978) is comprised of 34 true/false items, which assessed the propensity for hypnotic-like experiences and involvement in imaginative activities. Responses marked as true were summed to form a global absorption value.

The subject information page was made up of 36 questions concerning their media habits, financial situation, ethnicity, and gender.

The original questionnaire, which consisted of ten questions, was included in the package. The questionnaire contained two questions about participants' desired salaries, four open-ended questions about how advertising influences people, one question about what participants' parents told them about advertising when they were growing up and three questions scored on a five-point Likert-type scale which asked them to quantify their qualitative statements. A consent form was also included.

### **Advertising and Random Number Strings**

The advertising material consisted of 40 ads which were cut out of a variety of magazines and placed in a booklet. The original version of this thesis displayed all the 40 ads that I used as testing material. Unfortunately, due to copyright laws, my committee requested that I not publish the ads. A description of each ad is beyond the scope of this thesis<sup>29</sup>, therefore I have provided a list of the products that are being advertised. This list is provided in the appendix. The magazines were donated by various individuals.

Fifteen of the 40 ads were obtained from women's magazines including Elle and Cosmopolitan, 15 were acquired from men's magazines including Men's Health and Gadgets 2009 and 10 were taken from gender neutral magazines including People and MacLeans.

Material for the control group consisted of 40 pages each with a random number string, which was also placed in a booklet. The number strings were designed to be as similar to the advertising material as possible. To achieve this, the number strings were in different colors, sizes and placed on different areas of the page.

### **Procedure**

Participants were tested in two sessions. In the first session, participants were hypnotized with an audio CD of the (HGSHS). The procedure lasted approximately 50 minutes. When the CD was done, participants filled out the IDQ, DPQ, MV and HGSHS form. The entire session lasted about an hour and a half.

About a week after the first session, participants returned for the second session. They were randomly assigned to one of two conditions, experimental and control. Both groups were told that the purpose of the experiment was to memorize the items from a booklet, then recall the items after completing a series of questionnaires. Participants were given ten minutes to memorize the material.

After memorizing either the advertising or control conditions, participants were asked to fill out the MV. When they were done, participants were given back the same booklet and asked to refresh their memories by memorizing the booklet again for another two minutes.

When the two minutes were up, participants were given a pen and paper and asked to write down everything they 'presently desire buying'. These exact instructions

were given, 'please list everything you presently desire buying. List everything you strongly want, or need to purchase, even if you cannot afford the product or service. Take as much time as you need'.

When participants were done, they were asked to place a 'w' or an 'n' beside each item indicating if it is a want or a need. They were then given the final package consisting of the original questionnaire, the CIS, BIS, IBT CC, CBS, and HUSV.



## Results

### Quantitative Assessment

#### Hypothesis 1

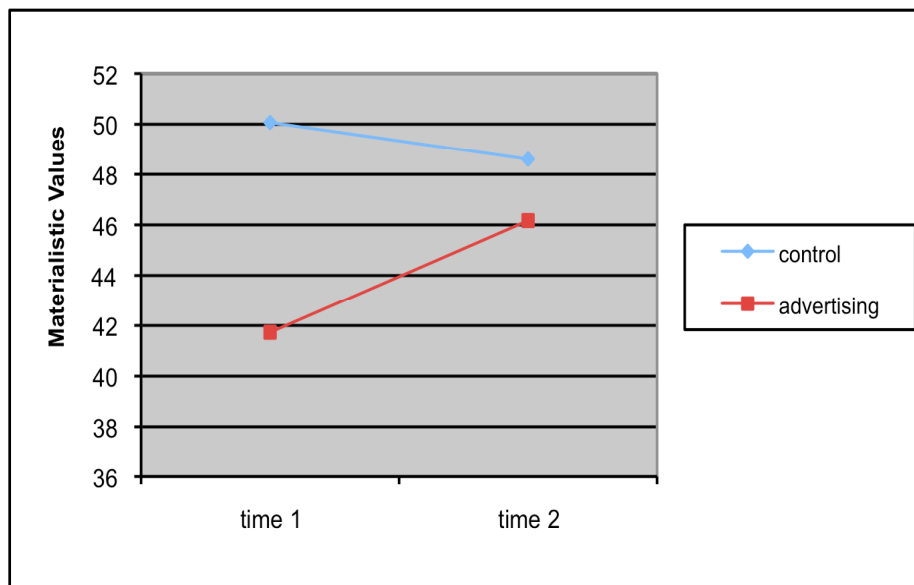
The results from the 2 (advertising and control) x 2 (materialism: time 1 and time 2) within subjects factorial design are displayed in Figure 1. There was a significant interaction between condition and time,  $F(1, 58) = 6.77, p < .05$ . The interaction accounted for  $\eta^2 = .10$  of the variance. As displayed in Table 3 the mean materialistic values score of the group who was exposed to the magazine ads increased from 41.73 [95% CIs = 37.88, 45.59] at time one to 46.17 [95% CIs = 42.53, 49.80] at time 2. The mean materialistic values score for those who were in the control group decreased from 50.07 [95% CIs = 46.21, 53.93] at time 1 to 48.60 [95% CIs = 44.97, 52.23] at time 2. In both of the cases previously mentioned, the increases and decreases in mean values were not statistically significant.

At time 1, a statistical difference was found between the mean materialistic values scores of the advertising exposed group (41.73 [95% CIs = 37.88, 45.59]) and the control group (50.07 [95% CIs = 46.21, 53.93]).

Figure 1  
*Interaction Materialistic Values - Condition (advertising and control) and time (time 1 vs. time 2)*

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Graph A



Graph B

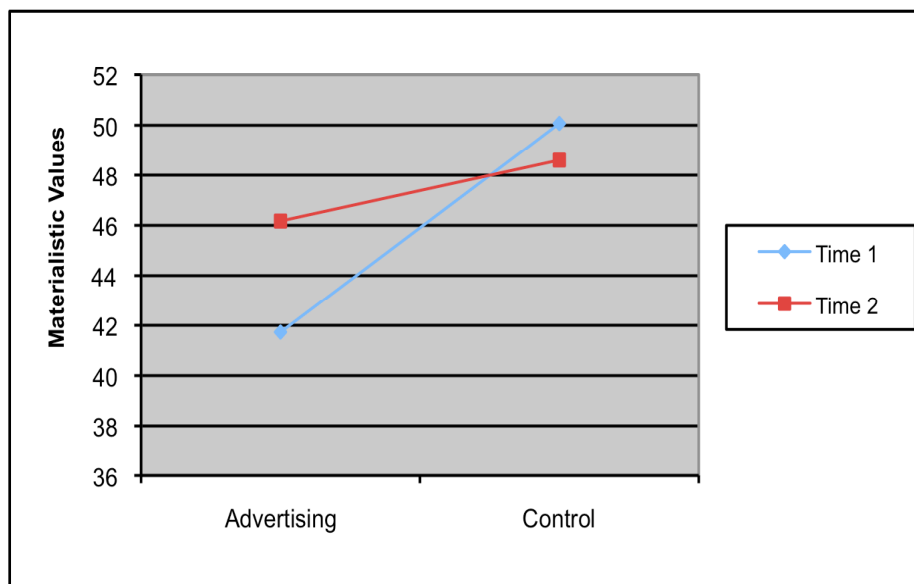


Figure 1 – The interaction between condition (advertising vs. control) and time (time 1 and time 2) on the participants' level of the materialistic values. Please see Table 3 for the means and confidence intervals.

Table 3  
*Cell means for materialism (Time 1 & Time 2) and Condition (Advertising vs. Control)*

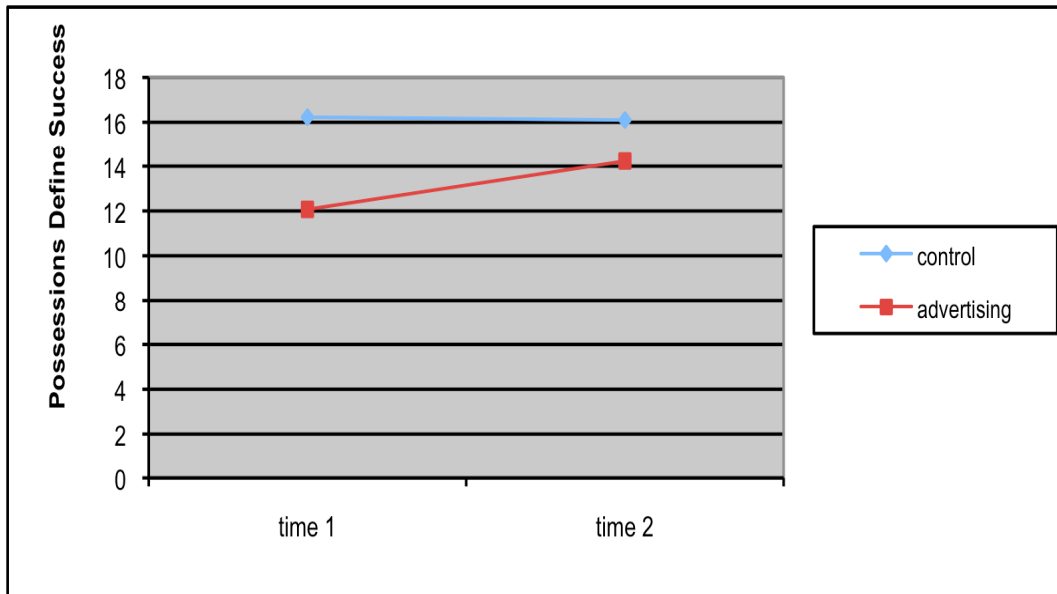
	Materialistic Values		
	Time 1 [95% CI]	Time 2 [95% CI]	Overall [95% CI]
Exposed to Ads	41.73 [37.88, 45.59]	46.17 [42.53, 49.80]	43.95 [40.56, 47.34]
Control Group	50.07 [46.21, 53.93]	48.60 [44.97, 52.23]	49.33 [45.95, 52.72]
Overall	45.90 [43.17, 48.63]	47.38 [44.81, 49.95]	

The three components of the MV (possessions define success, pursuit of happiness, and acquisition centrality) were also analyzed with a 2 (advertising exposed and control group) x 2 (materialistic values time 1 and time 2) within-subject factorial design. In the ‘possessions define success’ component of the MV, a significant interaction was found between condition and time  $F(1, 58) = 5.4, p < .05, \eta^2 = .9$ , as well as a significant main effect of time  $F(1, 58) = 4.22, p < .05, \eta^2 = .8$ . Figure 2 displays a graph of the interaction.

At time 1, there was a statistical difference between the means of the advertising exposed (12.07 [95% CIs = 10.55, 13.58]) and control group (16.23 [95% CIs = 14.72, 17.75]) on the ‘possessions define success’ subcomponent of the MV (see Table 4). There was also a statistical difference between the overall means for the advertising exposed (13.15 [95% CIs = 11.88, 14.44]) and control group (16.16 [95% CIs = 14.87, 17.46]). There were no other statistical interactions or main effects in any of the other components of the MV.

Figure 2  
*Interaction – Materialistic Values: Possessions Define Success (Time 1 vs. Time 2) & Condition (advertising vs. control)*

Graph A



Graph B

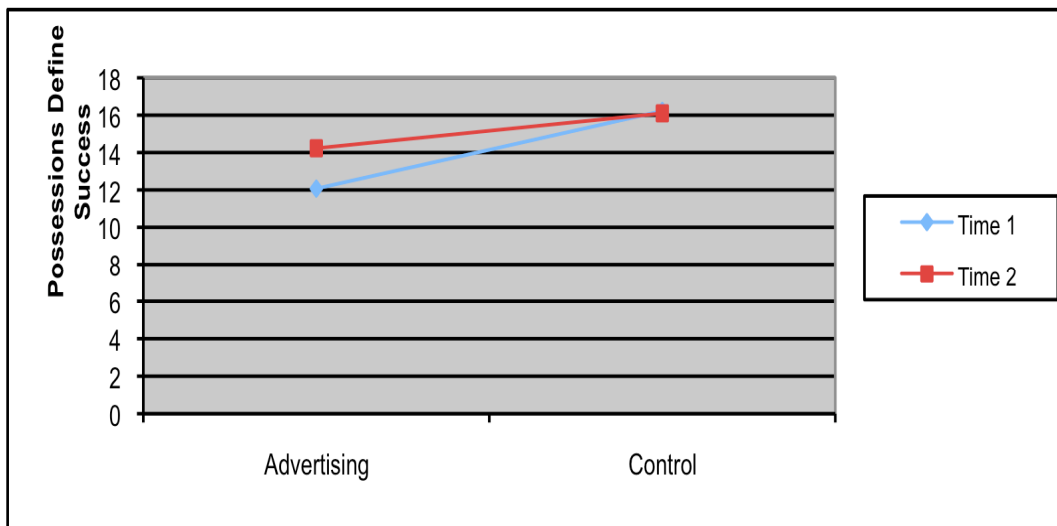


Figure 2 – The interaction between condition (advertising vs. control) and time (time 1 and time 2) on the participants' level of the materialistic values subscale, possessions define success. Please see Table 4 for the means and confidence intervals.

Table 4  
*Cell means for MVS: Possessions Define Success (Time 1 & Time 2) and Condition (Advertising vs. Control)*

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	<u>MVS: Possessions Define Success</u>		
	Time 1 [95% CI]	Time 2 [95% CI]	<u>Overall [95% CI]</u>
Exposed to Ads	12.07 [10.55, 13.58]	14.23 [12.81, 15.66]	13.15 [11.88, 14.44]
Control Group	16.23 [14.72, 17.75]	16.10 [14.67, 17.53]	16.16 [14.87, 17.46]
Overall	14.15 [13.08, 15.22]	15.17 [14.16, 16.18]	

### **Hypothesis 2**

A MANOVA was performed by entering five dependent variables (participants desired yearly salary that will allow them not to worry about money, a projection of their minimum yearly salary to live at a basic minimum, the total number of items participants desire purchasing, the total number of items reported as needed and the total number of items reported as wanted) and one fixed factor (condition: advertising exposed and control). The MANOVA was not significant  $F(1, 58) = .492, p = .78$ . In three conditions, the advertising group obtained a higher mean than the control group but the mean differences were not statistically significant (see Table 5).

Pearson Product correlations were calculated using the five dependent variables from the MANOVA as well as advertising exposure, media habits, financial situation, and demographic information (see Table 6).

Three variables were correlated with the question; how much money would you need per year to be able to survive at a basic minimum. These were the number of minutes participants spent surfing the internet in the 24 hours preceding the study ( $r = -.30, p < .05$ ), the number of hours that participants usually spend watching movies per week ( $r = .36, p < .00$ ), and the number of hours participants usually spend surfing the internet per week ( $r = -.27, p < .05$ ). Furthermore, participants ideal yearly salary that they reported needing in order to live comfortably and not worry about money was correlated with their belief that people are generally influenced by advertising ( $r = -.27, p < .05$ ).

The total number of items that participants reported desiring to buy was correlated with participants beliefs that they are influenced by advertising ( $r = .40, p < .01$ ), the number of minutes participants spent listening to music in the 24 hours preceding the study ( $r = .28, p < .05$ ) and the number of hours participants usually spend watching TV per week ( $r = -.28, p < .05$ ). The total number of desired items that participants listed as a 'want' was correlated with their belief that they are influenced by advertising ( $r = .37, p < .05$ ), and the number of hours they usually spend watching TV per week ( $r = -.26, p < .05$ ). The total number of desired items that participants listed as a 'need' was correlated with the amount of hours participants usually spend reading newspapers per week ( $r = .28, p < .05$ ) and the amount of debt that participants have accumulated ( $r = .30, p < .05$ ).

Table 5  
 MANOVAS – Condition (advertising exposed and control) as the Fixed Factor

Dependent Variable	Condition	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Total number of items reported as need or want to purchase	Control	9.767	.981	7.803	11.730
	Advertising exposed	10.800	.981	8.837	12.763
Total number of items reported listed as want	Control	7.300	.925	5.449	9.151
	Advertising exposed	8.000	.925	6.149	9.851
Total number of items listed as need	Control	2.467	.365	1.736	3.198
	Advertising exposed	2.667	.365	1.936	3.398
Amount of money to be able to survive at a basic minimum (yearly salary)	Control	\$20786.667	\$2437.490	\$15907.500	\$25665.833
	Advertising exposed	\$19733.333	\$2437.490	\$14854.167	\$24612.500
Ideal yearly salary to live comfortably and not worry about money	Control	\$107000.000	\$48422.373	\$10072.090	\$203927.910
	Advertising exposed	\$118792.500	\$48422.373	\$21864.590	\$215720.410

Table 6  
*Pearson Product Correlations between Materialistic Behaviour and Media Habits and Advertising Exposure*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<i><u>Amount of money needed per year to survive at a basic minimum</u></i>			
Amount of minutes surfing the internet (preceding the study)	.30(-)	.09	.03
Amount of hours watching movies per week	.36	.13	.00
Amount of hours surfing the internet (per week)	.27(-)	.07	.03
<i><u>Amount of ideal yearly salary to live comfortably and not worry about money</u></i>			
Belief that people are generally influenced by advertising	.27(-)	.07	.04
<i><u>Total number of desired items reported</u></i>			
Are you influenced by advertising?	.40	.16	.01
Amount of minutes listening to music preceding the study	.28	.08	.03
Amount of hours watching TV per week	.28(-)	.08	.03
<i><u>Total number of desired items listed as wants</u></i>			
Are you influenced by advertising?	.37	.14	.04
Amount of hours watching TV per week	.26(-)	.07	.04
<i><u>Total number of items listed as needs</u></i>			
Amount of hours reading newspapers per week	.28	.08	.03
Amount of debt accumulated	.30	.09	.02



### Hypothesis 3

Pearson Product correlations were performed in order to find out which variables correlated with materialistic values at time one and time two. The following variables were entered into the analysis: materialistic values at time one and two, demographic information, financial status, media habits, hedonic shopping values, utilitarian shopping values, compulsive and impulsive consumption habits. The correlations for materialistic values at time one and time two are displayed on Table 7).

At time one and two the MV scores were correlated ( $r = .63, p < .000$ ). In addition, the MVs were correlated with the CBS at time one ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ) and at time two ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ). Furthermore, materialism was correlated with the reactive subscale of the CBS, also at time one ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ) and two ( $r = .44, p < .001$ ).

At time one the MV was correlated with condition<sup>30</sup> (advertising and control;  $r = -.37, p < .01$ ), peoples belief that they are influenced by advertising ( $r = .39, p < .01$ ), the CC ( $r = -.33^{31}, p < .01$ ), the IBT ( $r = .29, p < .05$ ), and the BIS ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ). At time two, the MV was correlated with the participants desired ideal salary in order to live comfortably ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ), the HUSV: Hedonic Subscale ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ) and the HUSV: Utilitarian Subscale ( $r = -.28, p < .05$ ).

Table 7  
*Pearson Product Correlations for Materialistic Value Time 1 and Time 2*

<i>Time 1</i>			
Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Materialistic Values Total Time 1</b>			
Materialistic Values Time 2	.63	.40	.000
Condition	.37(-)	.14	.003
Are you influenced by advertising?	.39	.15	.002
Diagnostic Tool: Compulsive Con.*	.34(-)	.12	.01
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.04</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.10</b>	<b>.02</b>
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.29	.08	.02
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.27	.07	.04
<i>Time 2</i>			
Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Materialistic Values Total Time 2</b>			
Materialistic Values Time 1	.63	.40	.000
Ideal Salary to Live Comfortably	.36	.13	.006
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale</b>	<b>.36</b>	<b>.13</b>	<b>.004</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.19</b>	<b>.000</b>
HUSV: Hedonic Subscale	.35	.12	.005
HUSV: Utilitarian Subscale	.28(-)	.08	.03

\*The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

Two multiple regression analyses were performed with the MV at time one and at time two. All the items that were correlated with the MV at time one were entered into the first regression and the items that were correlated with the MV at time two were entered into the second regression. The multiple regression for materialistic values at time one is statistically significant ( $R = .56, p < .01$ ). Of the seven variables, condition (advertising and control) accounted for the majority of the variance (partial  $r = -.35$  and part  $r = -.31$ ). No other variable accounted for a statistically significant portion of variance. For a list of zero order, part and partial correlations, please see Table 8.

The multiple correlation for the MV at time two was also statistically significant ( $R = .55, p < .001$ ). The participants' projected ideal salary to live comfortably without worrying about money was the only variable to contribute to a significant portion of the variance (partial  $r = -.36$  and part  $r = -.32$ ). For a list of all partial correlations, see Table 8.

Table 8  
*Multiple Regression – Materialistic Values Time 1 & 2*

<b>Time 1</b>				
	Sig	Zero-order*	Partial*	Part*
<b>Condition</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.37(-)</b>	<b>.35(-)</b>	<b>.31(-)</b>
Compulsive Consumption: Diagnostic Tool*	.13	.34(-)	.20(-)	.18(-)
Are you influenced by advertising?	.21	.39	.17	.15
Compulsive Buying Scale	.97	.27	.01(-)	.01(-)
Compulsive Buying Scale: (Reactive)	.40	.31	.12	.10
Impulsiveness: Impulsive Buying Tendency	.45	.29	.11	.09
Impulsiveness: Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.36	.27	.13(-)	.11 (-)
<b>Time 2</b>				
<i>Multiple Regression – Materialistic Values time 2</i>				
	Sig	Zero-order*	Partial*	Part*
<b>Ideal yearly salary (to live comfortably not worry about money)</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.36</b>	<b>.36</b>	<b>.32</b>
Compulsive Buying Scale	.10	.36	.23	.19
Compulsive Buying Scale: Tendency to Spend	.57	.20	.08(-)	.07(-)
Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values: Hedonic	.21	.35	.17	.14
Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values: Utilitarian	.80	.28(-)	.04(-)	.03(-)

\* Correlations

\*\* The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

To further explore the MV, Person Product correlations were conducted for each component of the MV. The correlations for all the subcomponents of materialistic values at time one and time two are displayed on Table 9.

Table 9  
*Pearson Product Correlations for Materialistic Values Subscales*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<i>Possessions Define Success – Time 1</i>			
<b>Are you influenced by advertising?</b>	<b>.46</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.00</b>
<b>Did your parents talk to you about advertising?</b>	<b>.34(-)</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>.09**</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying: A Diagnostic Tool</b>	<b>.30(-)*</b>	<b>.09</b>	<b>.02</b>
<i>Possessions Define Success - Time 2</i>			
<b>Are you influenced by advertising?</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.06**</b>
<b>Did your parents talk to you about advertising?</b>	<b>.23(-)</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.07**</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.00</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying: A Diagnostic Tool</b>	<b>.22(-)*</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.09**</b>
Compulsive Buying Scale	.33	.11	.01
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.27	.07	.04
HUSV: Hedonic Subscale	.33	.11	.01
<i>Acquisition Centrality - Time 1</i>			
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.04</b>
<b>HUSV: Utilitarian Subscale</b>	<b>.27(-)</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.04</b>
<b>Ideal yearly salary without worrying about money</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.08**</b>
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.32	.10	.01
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.27	.07	.03
Compulsive Buying: A Diagnostic Tool	.33(-)	.11	.01
<i>Acquisition Centrality – Time 2</i>			
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.05</b>
<b>HUSV: Utilitarian Subscale</b>	<b>.34(-)</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>Ideal yearly salary without worrying about money</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.14</b>	<b>.01</b>
Minutes looking at magazines before the study	.26(-)	.07	.05
Amount of time playing video games per week	.27	.07	.04
Lives with parents	.31	.10	.02
Number of items listed as need	.26	.07	.05
Do you think other people are influenced by advertising?	.28(-)	.08	.03

\*The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

\*\* Almost statically significant

Table 9  
*Pearson Product Correlations for Materialistic Values Subscales - Continued*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<i>Pursuit of Happiness - Time 1</i>			
<b>Buying Impulsiveness Scale</b>	<b>.29</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.03</b>
<b>Impulsive Buying Tendency</b>	<b>.34</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale</b>	<b>.34</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt</b>	<b>.28</b>	<b>.08</b>	<b>.03</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.33</b>	<b>.11</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>HUSV: Hedonic Subscale</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.05</b>	<b>.07</b>
<i>Pursuit of Happiness – Time 2</i>			
<b>Buying Impulsiveness Scale</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.07</b>	<b>.05</b>
<b>Impulsive Buying Tendency</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>HUSV: Hedonic Subscale</b>	<b>.39</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.01</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.00</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>.06</b>	<b>.054**</b>
<b>Compulsive Buying Scale (Reactive)</b>	<b>.47</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.00</b>
Ideal yearly salary without worrying about money	.27	.07	.04
DPQ	.29	.08	.02

\*\* Almost statically significant

### Hypothesis 4

Pearson Product correlations were conducted between the consumer scales and the participants' media habits, financial situation and demographic information. The correlations are displayed on Table 10 and 11.

Table 10

*Pearson Product Correlations between Media Habits and Consumption Habits*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<u><i>Amount of Minutes Spent Watching TV in the 24 Hours preceding the study</i></u>			
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.26(-)	.07	.04
<u><i>Amount of Minutes Spent Reading Magazines in the 24 Hours preceding the study</i></u>			
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.37	.13	.00
Compulsive Buying Scale	.29	.08	.02
Compulsive Buying Scale: Tendency to Spend	.33	.11	.01
Total amount of debt	.34	.12	.01
<u><i>Amount of Minutes Spent Watching Movies in the 24 Hours Preceding the Study</i></u>			
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.26(-)	.07	.04
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.32	.10	.01
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.27	.07	.04
<u><i>Amount of Minutes Spent Listening to Music in the 24 Hours preceding the Study</i></u>			
HUSV: Hedonic Subscale	.32	.10	.01
Total number of desired items	.28	.08	.03
<u><i>Amount of Minutes Spent Surfing the Internet in the 24 Hours preceding the Study</i></u>			
Amount of money required to survive at a basic minimum	.31	.10	.02
HUSV: Hedonic Subscale	.27	.07	.04
<u><i>Amount of Hours Spent Watching TV per Week</i></u>			
HUSV: Hedonic Subscale	.27(-)	.07	.03

\*The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

Table 10  
*Pearson Product Correlations between Media Habits and Consumption Habits -  
 Continued*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<i>Amount of Hours Spent Watching Movies per Week</i>			
Amount of money required to survive at a basic minimum	.36	.10	.22
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.30(-)	.09	.02
Compulsive Buying Scale	.31	.10	.02
Compulsive Buying Scale: Reactive	.34	.12	.01
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.46	.21	.00
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.38	.14	.00
<i>Amount of Hours Spent Watching Movies or TV on the Internet per Week</i>			
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.27(-)	.07	.04
<i>Amount of Hours Spent Reading Newspapers per Week</i>			
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Prudence Subscale	.40(-)	.16	.00
Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt	.30	.09	.02
<i>Amount of Hours Spent Listening to Music per Week</i>			
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Hedonic Subscale	.27	.07	.04
Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt	.28	.08	.03
<i>Amount of Hours Spent Surfing the Internet per Week</i>			
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Hedonic Subscale	.27	.07	.04
Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt	.28	.08	.03
<i>Total Amount of Hours Spent with Media per Week</i>			
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Hedonic Subscale	.32	.10	.01
Compulsive Buying Scale: Post Purchase Guilt	.28	.08	.03

\*The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

Table 11  
*Pearson Product Correlations for Consumption Habits, Demographics, Personal & Financial Information*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<i>Yearly Income</i>			
Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool*	.28(-)	.08	.04
Compulsive Buying Scale	.28	.08	.03
Compulsive Buying Scale: Reactive	.35	.12	.01
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Hedonic Subscale	.28	.08	.03
Impulsive Buying Tendency	.26	.07	.05
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.27	.07	.04
<i>Gender**</i>			
Compulsive Buying Scale	.26(-)	.07	.05
Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: Hedonic Subscale	.38(-)	.14	.00
Buying Impulsiveness Scale	.26(-)	.07	

\*The compulsive consumer questionnaire is scored in reverse where the lowest score represents a higher degree of compulsive consumption.

\*\*Males were coded with a one and females were coded with a 0.

### **Hypothesis 5**

Pearson product correlations were calculated between hypnotizability, materialism, compulsive and impulsive consumption as well as participants' desired yearly salary that will allow participants not to worry about money, a projection of participants' minimum yearly salary needed to survive, the total number of items that participants desire purchasing, the total number of items reported as a 'need' and the total number of items reported as a 'want'. Three significant correlations were found (please see Table 12) between the HGSHS and: the total amount of desired items that participants want and need to buy ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ), the total number of desired items that participants want to purchase ( $r = .29, p < .05$ ) and the total amount of debt that participants have accumulated ( $r = -.28, p < .05$ ).



Table 12  
*Pearson Product Correlations between Hypnotizability and Consumption Habits*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility</b>			
Total desired items reported	.27	.07	.04
Total number of items reported as wanted	.29	.08	.02
Amount of debt	.28(-)	.08	.03

### Hypothesis 6

Pearson product correlations were calculated between the HUSV, CIS, the IDQ, MV (pursuit of happiness subscale) and the DPQ (please see Table 13). The DPQ was correlated with hedonic shopping values ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ) and the MV pursuit of happiness subscale at time 2 ( $r = .28, p < .05$ ). The MV pursuit of happiness subscale of the MV was not correlated with the DPQ at time 2 ( $r = .12, p = .35$ ). The IDQ was not correlated with any hedonic consumption variable.

Table 13  
*Pearson Product Correlations between Fantasy Proneness and Hedonic Buying*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Differential Personality Questionnaire</b>			
Hedonic Shopping Values	.27	.07	.04
MV: Pursuit of happiness (time2)	.28	.08	.02
MV: Pursuit of happiness (time 1)	.12	.01	.35**

\*\* Not statistically significant

### Hypothesis 7

Pearson product correlations were calculated between the IDQ, DPQ, MV, CCDT, CBS, IBT, IBS as well as participants' desired yearly salary that will allow them not to worry about money, a projection of their minimum yearly salary to live at a basic

minimum, the total number of items they wish to purchase, the total number of items reported as needed and the total number of items reported as wanted (see Table 14). The DPQ was correlated with the CBS, ( $r = .29, p < .05$ ), the CBS (reactive subscale;  $r = .26, p < .05$ ), the CBS (post purchase guilt subscale;  $r = .35, p < .01$ ) and the total number of desired items reported ( $r = .28, p < .05$ ).

The IDQ was correlated with participants report of how influenced are by advertising ( $r = .27, p < .05$ ).

Table 14  
*Pearson Product Correlations between Fantasy Proneness and Consumption Habits*

Correlations	r	r <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Differential Personality Questionnaire</b>			
Compulsive Buying Scale (CBS)	.29	.08	.03
CBS: reactive	.26	.07	.04
CBS: post purchase guilt	.35	.12	.01
Total number of desired items reported	.28	.08	.03
<b>Individual Differential Questionnaire</b>			
Are you influenced by advertising	.27	.07	.04

### **Multiple Regression Analysis on the DPQ**

A multiple regression analysis was performed on the DPQ by entering the CBS, the total number of desired items reported, HUSV: hedonic subscale and MV pursuit of happiness at time two. The multiple regression was statistically significant ( $R = .41, p < .05$ ). None of the variables entered into the regression accounted for a statistically significant portion of the variance in the DPQ (please see Table 15).

Table 15  
*Multiple Regression – Differential Personality Questionnaire*

	Sig	Zero-order*	Partial*	Part*
Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Values: Hedonic	.77	.27	.04	.04
Materialism: Pursuit of Happiness Time 2	.21	.29	.17	.16
Compulsive Buying Scale	.30	.29	.14	.23
Total Number of Desired Items Reported	.92	.28	.23	.21

### **Hypothesis 8**

To find out whether participants rated other people as being more influenced by advertising, I performed a t-test. Based on a scale of 1 to 5, participants rated themselves ( $M = 2.8$ ,  $SD = .76$ ), CIs at 95% [2.61, 2.99] significantly less influenced by advertising than people in general ( $M = 4.2$ ,  $SD = .72$ ), CIs at 95% [3.98, 4.35].

### **Post-Hoc Findings**

While conducting post-hoc analyses, I discovered that the question, ‘are you influenced by advertising’ was related with many of the consumer variables including: their belief that people in general are influenced by ads ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .05$ ), the CC ( $r = -.35$ ,  $p < .05$ ), the CBS ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .05$ ), the CBS: Reactive Subcomponent ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .05$ ), the CIS: Hedonic Subscale ( $r = .28$ ,  $p < .05$ ), the IBT ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the BIS ( $r = .27$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

### **Open-Ended Format**

Seven open-ended questions are summarized. For each of the questions, the participants were able to answer in paragraph or point form. Each response was scored by forming categories by grouping similar ideas together. To form the categories, I began by making a list of all the ideas given by the participants. Every unique item was added to the list. If a participant's answer contained more than one idea, each idea was listed. When an item was mentioned more than once, it was added to the category (i.e. a score of one was given for every repeated item). For example, when a participant mentioned that someone's having a small amount of disposable income is a factor that makes them less influenced by advertising; this was added as a new category. Another participant mentioned that having a low income makes them less influenced by advertising; because of the strong similarity between the two responses, they were added together forming a category, low income makes people less influenced by advertising with a frequency of two times that the item was mentioned.

By listing all the unique items for each question, I discovered that there was a large number of items on the list. Larger categories were made to better describe how participants responded to the questions. These larger categories were formed by grouping unique items that shared commonalities. For example, when I was grouping the list of desired items that participants wanted to purchase, the following items were listed by a participant: pants, shirt, and shoes. A larger category was formed, clothes, and the three unique items were placed under that category.

More than one score was given to certain responses if they belonged to more than one category. For example, "I'm *bombarded by images everyday*, it is hard not to be

influenced into actually buying some of those materials”, was categorized twice; once as ‘intent to purchase’ and also as ‘ads are everywhere’.

Each of the participant’s responses was analyzed by calculating how many times the category was mentioned. Each of the categories was also defined according to which unique items contributed to the category. Descriptive statistics and quantitative evaluations of their open-ended answers are also provided.

### **How Do You Think Advertising Influences You?**

Participants reported 118 unique ways that advertising influenced them. Participants gave between one and seven ideas per response ( $M = 1.97$  and  $SD = 1.19$ ; see Table 16). Fifteen categories were constructed by grouping items that were similar. A graph of the total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 3. Two independent observers scored the categories; the Cronbach Alpha reliability value was .87.

Table 16

*Descriptive Statistics – How Participants Responded to the Question: Please Explain How You Think Advertising Influences You*

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How do you think advertising influences you?

N	60
Range	6
Minimum	1
Maximum	7
Sum	118
Mean	1.97
Std. Error	.14
Std. Deviation	1.19

Figure 3  
*How Participants Responded to the Question: Please Explain How You Think Advertising Influences You*

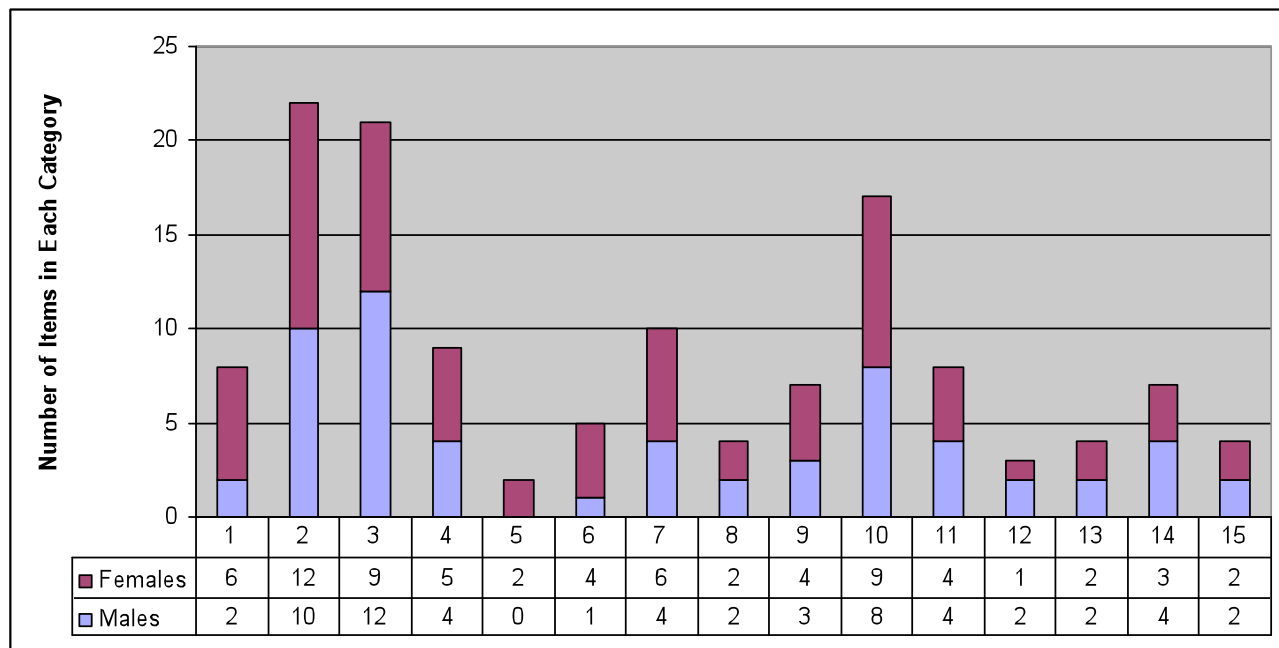


Figure 3 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding how participants think they are influenced by advertising. Please use the following legend for each category name: (1) - Ads make me purchase products, (2) - Ads makes me desire products, (3) - Ads give me information about products, brands and trends, (4) - Ads remind me about products, (5) - Ads get me to go shopping, (6) - Ads hurt my self image, (7) - Aesthetic qualities of the ads influence me, (8) - Ads influence my lifestyle beliefs, (9) - Ads build brand trust, (10) - It does not affect me (very much), (11) - It must identify with me, (12) - Ads are everywhere, (13) - Ads use/evoke emotional experiences, (14) – Reification, (15) – Other

### Category Descriptions

**Ads Make Me Purchase Products.** Participants in the ‘ads make me purchase products’ category indicated that advertising makes them buy products or services.

Examples were:

*“Advertising influences my spending behaviour: what I want to own, for what price and what the perceived value would be”.*

*“I’m bombarded by advertisements everyday, it’s hard not to be influenced into actually buying some of those materials”.*

*“Sometimes ads are about good deals on things that I need but for the most part they influence me to purchase things that I want and are in the end quite useless”.*

**Ads Make Me Desire Products.** Participants in the ‘ads make me desire products’ category suggested that advertising influences them by creating a craving for products. Their statements in this category differed from the first category because here, there was no mention of purchasing products, only desiring them. Examples were:

*“You see nice things and it makes you want them”.*

*“Seeing certain things in an advertisement makes me think that I need the item, when in reality I just want the item”.*

*“If it wasn’t for advertising I would probably desire to buy fewer things”.*

**Ads Give Me Information about Products, Brands and Trends.** Participants in the ‘ads give me information about products, brands and trends’ category, indicated that ads provide information about what is available for them to buy. Examples were:

*“Advertising makes me aware of the products that are at my disposal to purchase, therefore giving me the opportunity to purchase that element”.*

*“I think that advertising has close to no effect on me besides from informing me on what is available on the market”.*

“Advertising help me to know if there is a new product on the market”

**Ads Remind Me about Products.** Participants in the ‘ads remind me about products’ category suggested that advertising keeps them continuously thinking about products. Some examples were:

“It keeps the brands and images in my head”.

“I am sometimes reminded of the things I had earlier wished to purchase”.

“It puts ideas in your head. It does to everyone, cause it’s constantly bombarding us. Basically it reminds you of what exists that would be nice to own”.

**Ads Get Me to Go Shopping.** Participants in the ‘ads get me to go shopping’ category indicated that advertising makes them want to go shopping. Examples from this group were:

“If I see something I like, I will go to the store and look at it, sometimes I buy it, sometimes I don’t. But, since I’m already in the store and I see a good deal I might get it, if I need it”.

“I find posters very interesting sometimes, they can influence me in going in somewhere or buying from a certain place”.

**Ads Hurt My Self-Image/Esteem.** In the ‘ads hurt my self-image/esteem’ category, participants specified that ads make them feel bad about their self-esteem, self-image and/or any negative feelings about their life. Examples from this category were:

“Advertising gives us a message about what life should be like, makes us feel bad because we do not have a certain lifestyle”.

“Very little. Maybe more so self-esteem wise when it comes to the models & beauty”.



“I think when I read magazines directed towards women, *I feel that the images of those women in the ads make me feel that they have something I don't*”.

**Aesthetic Qualities of the Ads Influence Me.** Participants in the ‘aesthetic qualities of the ads influence me’ category described being moved by the ads themselves.

Examples from this category were:

“Recalling that *certain feature of the ad (song, colour)* may lead me to think of that brand before other brand”.

“Songs get into my head really easily too”.

“Depends, sometimes *layouts in a magazine* influence me”.

**Ads Influence My Lifestyle Beliefs.** Participants in the ‘ads influence my lifestyle beliefs’ category stipulated that advertising gives them cues as to how the world works and how they should behave in social environments. From advertising they get their beliefs and value systems. Examples from this category were:

“(advertising) affects your use of *language and worldview* (brackets added)”.

“Perhaps it *idealizes certain lifestyles and also creates a ‘norm’ of what the people judge you on*”.

“Advertising tries to *tell me what is better, or, more important in life*”.

**Ads Build Brand Trust.** In the ‘ads build brand trust’ category, participants indicated that advertising gets them to trust certain familiar brand over another. Examples were:

“I tend to pay attention to ads for items I think I need or plan on buying anyways, but *when it comes to actually purchasing it I tend to pick up the brands I have heard or seen the most, since I feel it is more legitimate than others* (especially if I know little about the item + the good brands)”.

“*Recognition of a brand in the future increases the likelihood of choosing that brand when purchasing the item*”.

“Only in the way that *I am more likely to go with a brand I recognize than a ‘no name’*”.

**Advertising Does Not Affect Me (Very Much).** Participants in the ‘advertising does not affect me (very much)’ category were not convinced that advertising has any (or much) affect over their consumer behaviour. Examples from this category were:

“*Advertising rarely influences me because I approach them with a mindset that questions if I need this product or not rather than the pleasure that I would get from it. I am quite evaluative of ads and tend to question their motives.*”

“*The ads itself are not effective, it is based more on the capabilities of the product.*”

“I don’t let myself be influenced by major brands. I tend to go by necessity, since I’m at minimum wage.”

**Ads Use/Evoke Emotional Experiences.** Participants in the ‘ads use/evoke emotional experiences’ category indicated that advertising makes them feel emotion, or uses emotional appeals in order to sell products. Examples included:

“Good advertising, those advertisements that *appeal to the emotions*, tend to *cause me to sympathize* with a company brand and their goal or cause.”

“*Humour in advertising is essential*”

**Ads Must Identify with Me in Order to Be Effective.** In the ‘ads must identify with me in order to be effective’ category, participants explained that ads must identify with some aspect of their lifestyle, value-systems, beliefs or state of being in order to be effective. Examples were:

“Advertising only influences me, I think *when they are advertising products that are an interest to me*, not others. For example, I play video games and love computer technology so those advertisements would appeal to me.”

“*If I am hungry and I see a good hamburger commercial I am going to want to go to that fast food joint*”.

**Reification.** In the ‘reification’<sup>32</sup> category, participants recounted how image meanings (or experience) in advertisements transfer to the products, thus giving the product the associated meaning. Examples of reification were:

“I am also influenced when they try to *sell me an ‘experience’ through advertising*. An example would be beer and partying.”

“I think advertising influences me by creating *‘unconscious’ associations between concepts, like beauty, and the product being sold*”.

“That the *association with the brand is cooler than another’s*.”

**Ads Are Everywhere.** In the ‘ads are everywhere’ category, participants discussed how advertising is all pervasive therefore must have some effect. Examples included:

“I’m *bombarded by images everyday*, it is hard not to be influenced into actually buying some of those materials.”

“*It’s omnipresent*. Even if you are not directly influenced, others around you are. Trends are born and the pressure not to be left behind can be unavoidable at times.”

**Other.** The last category is ‘other’, here I placed all the ideas that didn’t fit into the other categories. Some examples were.

“I’m mostly influenced by political advertising. The whole commercial is spent making the opposition look bad. It will affect me, come election day.”

### **How Do You Think People are Generally Influenced by Advertising?**

Participants reported a total of 93 unique items. Participants gave between one and three items per response ( $M = 1.55$ ,  $SD = .59$ ; see Table 17). Sixteen categories were formed to describe all of the items. Thirteen of the 16 items were identical to those in the previous question. Four new categories were formed: ads make people keep up with the Joneses, ads are everywhere - people are becoming desensitized, ads make people

impulsive/careless with money, and people are conformists. A graph of the total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 4 . An inter-rater reliability test was performed between two independent observers. The Cronbach Alpha level between the two observers was .85.

Table 17

*Descriptive Statistics – How Participants Responded to the Question: Please Explain How You Think People are Generally Influenced by Advertising*

---

How do you think advertising influences people in general?

N	60
Range	2
Minimum	1
Maximum	3
Sum	93
Mean	1.55
Std. Error	.08
Std. Deviation	.59

Figure 4

*How Participants Responded to the Question: Please Explain How You Think People are Generally Influenced by Advertising*

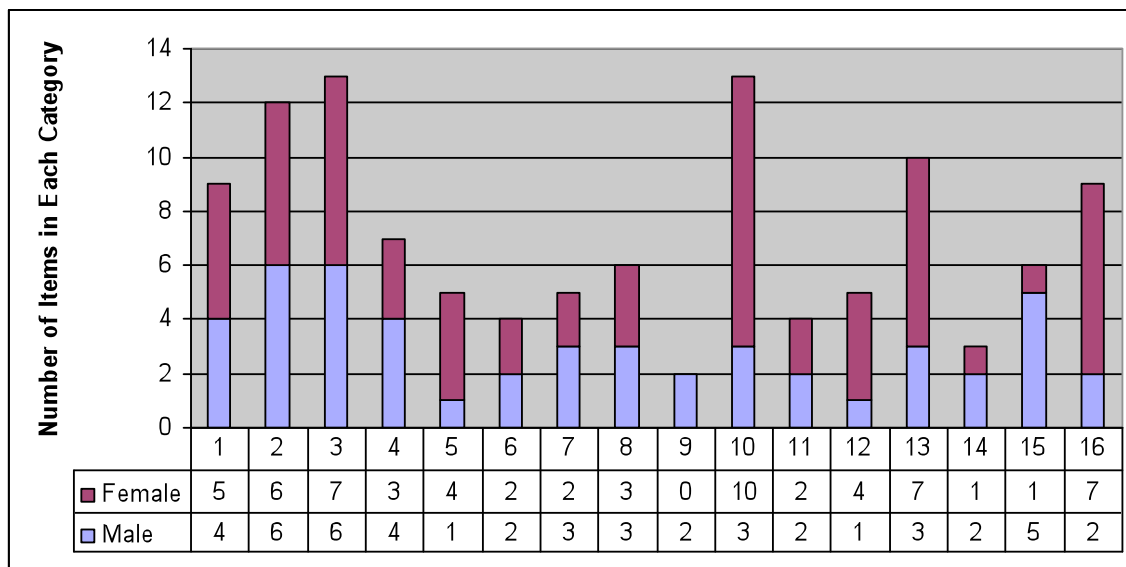


Figure 4 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding how participants think people in general are influenced by advertising. Please use the following legend for each category name: (1) - Ads make people purchase products, (2) - Ads makes people desire products, (3) - Ads give people information about products, brands and trends, (4) - Ads remind people about products, (5) - Ads hurt people's self image, (6) - Aesthetic qualities of the ads influence others, (7) - Ads influence people's lifestyle beliefs, (8) - Ads build brand trust, (9) - It does not affect people (very much), (10) – Reification, (11) - Keeping up with Joneses, (12) - Ads make people impulsive/careless with money, (13) - Ads are everywhere, (14) - Ads are everywhere - people are becoming desensitized, (15) - People are conformists, (16) - Other

### **Category Descriptions**

**Ads Make Me Keep Up With the Joneses.** In the ‘ads make me keep up with the Joneses’ category; participants suggested that advertising makes them think that everyone has more and better possessions than themselves, therefore, they must buy the advertised product to be like everyone else. Examples from this category were:

“People don’t question, they follow. Also, a lot of us want to keep up with the Joneses.”

“Even though I realize the purpose of the ad, it’s hard to ignore the masses.”

**Ads Make People Impulsive/Careless With Their Money.** Participants in the ‘ads make people impulsive/careless with their money’ category indicated that advertising makes people spend money beyond their means and get into debt. A few examples included:

“I think that advertising has a lot to do with people getting large debts, advertising tells us to live in the now, and not to worry about money, for when we grow older we will be rich! It is the American Dream.”

“People are influenced to buy things that are beyond their means because it makes them appear to have more money.”

**Ads Are Everywhere Therefore People Are Becoming Desensitized.** In the ‘ads are everywhere, therefore people are becoming desensitized’ category, participants suggested that because advertising is so abundant, they become desensitized to the effects of advertising. Some examples included:

“No matter where you go, what you do, there are billboards and bright appealing flashy colors thrown in our faces all the time. After a while you are bound to become desensitized a little bit.”

“People are seeing advertising more and more that they are becoming desensitized to it.”

**People Are Conformists.** Participants in the ‘people are conformists’ category mentioned how people cannot think for themselves, thus advertising controls their behaviour. Some examples were:

“We have *advertisers playing us like puppets.*”

“The *majority of people are conformists* and tend to be sensitive to messages that describe them as “special as everyone else”. It may sound counter-intuitive but we live in an individualistic society; so we want to be as different as we want to belong. So we conform to becoming selfish individualists, feeling special but ultimately just imitating others. However, humans can also process information in a more systematic way and realize that they don’t ‘*need*’ to conform. It depends in parts on belief systems. It is just my opinion and everyone can process superficially and systematically just some more than others.”

### **What Factors Make Someone More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising?**

Participants reported a total of 222 items that make someone more likely to be influenced by advertising. Participants reported between one and eight items per answer (M = 3.7, SD = 1.6, see Table 18). One hundred and six of the items were attributed to the way the advertisement was constructed, 98 of the items were ascribed to personal circumstances, and 18 of the items were associated to the quality or desirability of the actual product (see Figure 5).

Table 18

How Participants Responded to the Question: Please List All the Factors That Make Someone More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising

---

List the factors that make someone more likely to be influenced by advertising?

N	60
Range	7
Minimum	1
Maximum	8
Sum	222
Mean	3.7
Std. Error	.21
Std. Deviation	1.6

Figure 5  
*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: Total*

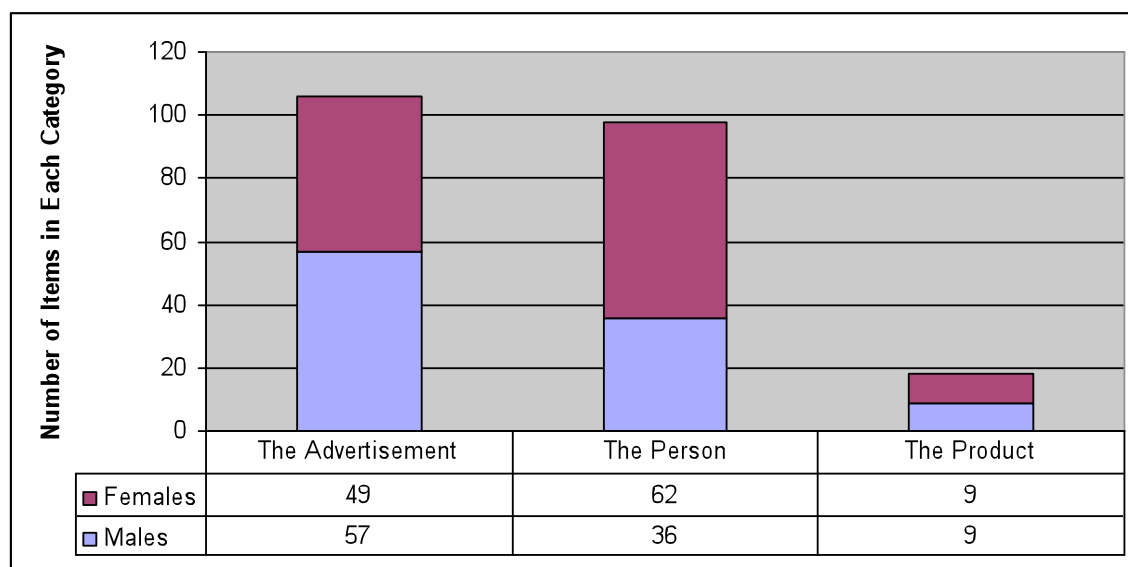


Figure 5 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the all the factors that would make someone more influenced by advertising

Of the 106 items that described how the qualities of an advertisement influences people, participants reported a total of 46 unique items (see Table 19). Six categories were formed to describe all the items<sup>33</sup>. These categories were: the message of the advertisement, the physical qualities of the advertisement, the placement of the ad, exposure / repetitive exposure to the advertisement, if the audience was properly targeted and other. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 6.



Figure 6  
*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Advertisement*

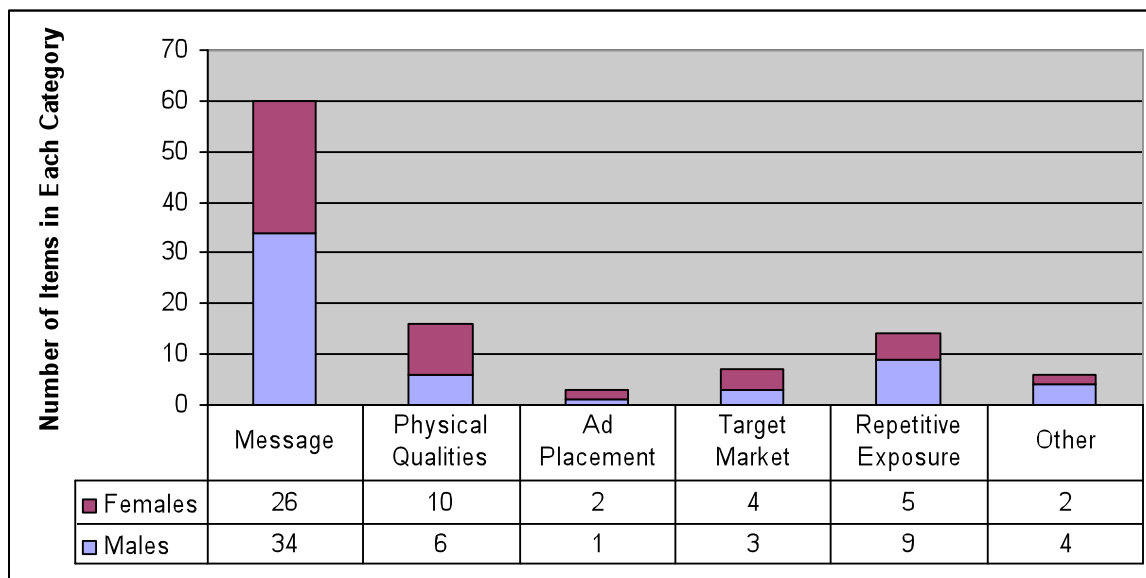


Figure 6 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the actual advertisement that would make someone more influenced by advertising.

Of the 98 items that described how the personal characteristics and circumstances make people more influenced by advertising, participants reported a total of 45 unique items that (see Table 20). Six categories encapsulated each of these unique items. The categories were age, income, internal states/traits, knowledge, peers/family, and other. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 7.

Figure 7  
*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Person*

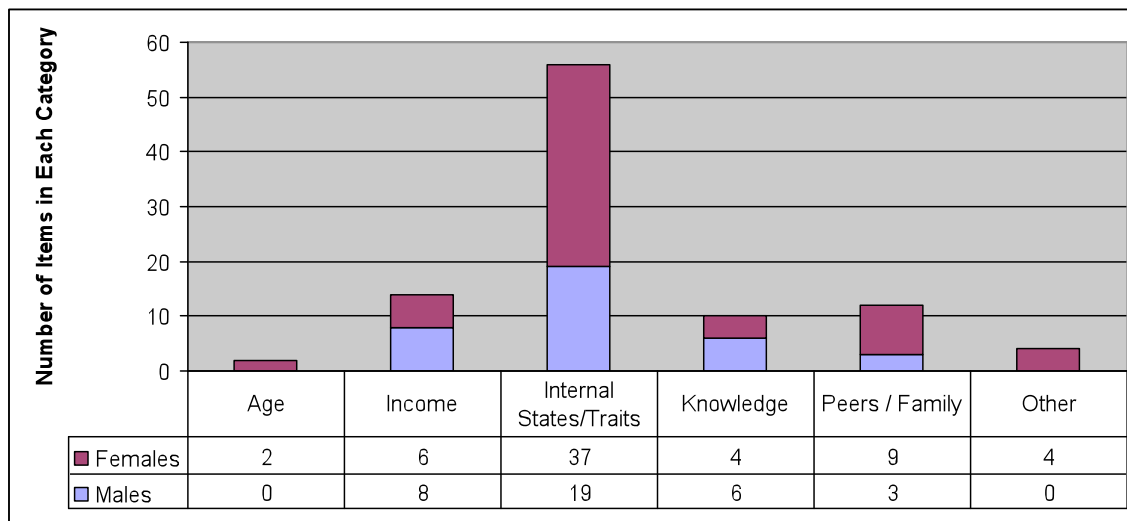


Figure 7 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the person that would make someone more influenced by advertising.

Of the 18 items that explained how the attributes of a product can lead to a more effective advertising campaign, participants reported a total of ten unique items (please see Table 21). Six categories are formed to classify each unique item. These categories were cost, physical qualities, luxury (of the item), usefulness, purchase valence and other. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 8.

Figure 8  
*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Product*

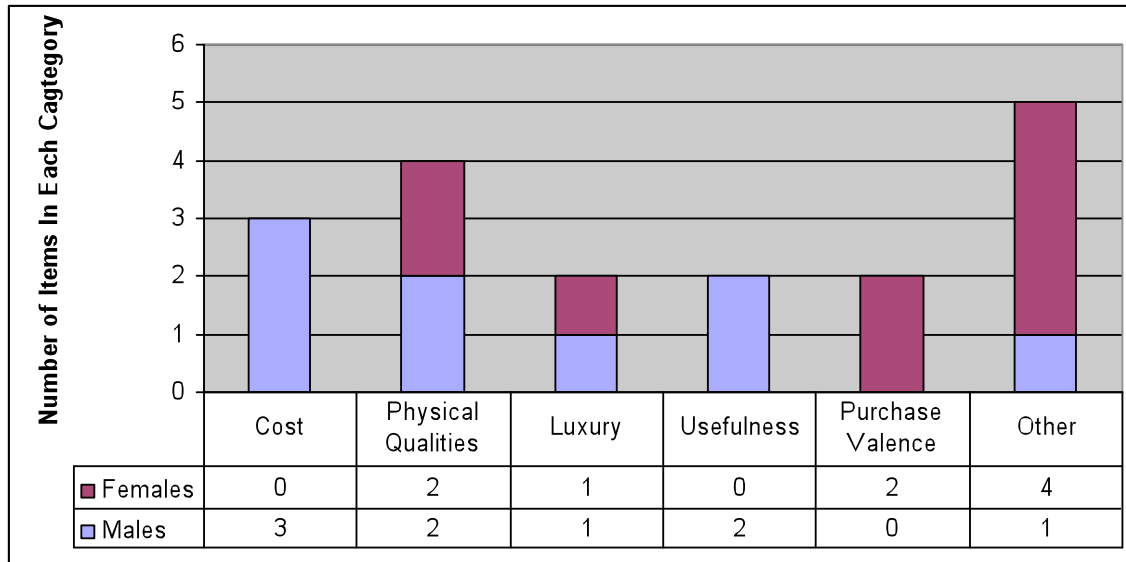


Figure 8 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the product that would make someone more influenced by advertising.

### **What Factors Make Someone Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising?**

Participants reported a total of 189 items that makes someone less likely to be influenced by advertising. Participants reported between one and seven items per question ( $M = 3.13$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ; see Table 22). Fifty five of the items were attributed to the way the advertisement was constructed, 118 of the items were ascribed to personal circumstances, and 16 of the items were associated to the quality or desirability of the actual product (see Figure 9).

Table 22

Descriptive Statistics – How Participants Responded to the Question: Please List All the Factors That Make Someone Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising

---

List the factors that make someone less likely to be influenced by advertising?

N	60
Range	6
Minimum	1
Maximum	7
Sum	188
Mean	3.13
Std. Error	.18
Std. Deviation	1.39

Figure 9

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: Total*

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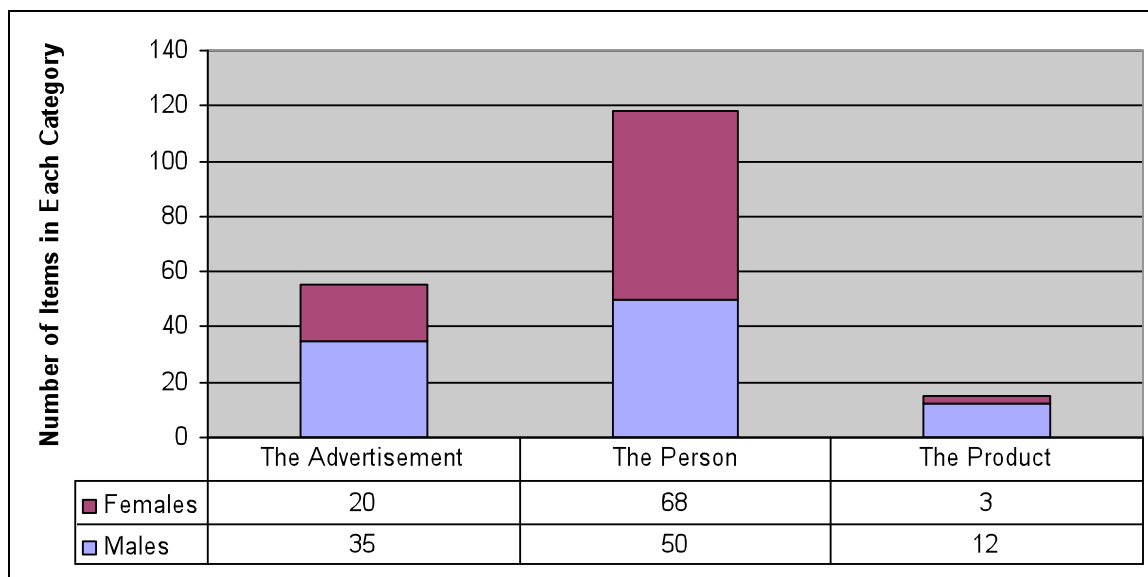


Figure 9 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the all the factors that would make someone less influenced by advertising.

Of the 55 items that described how the qualities of an advertisement influences people, participants reported a total of 24 unique items (see Table 23). Five categories were formed to describe all the items. These categories were: the message, the physical qualities of the advertisement, bad placement of the advertisement, the ad was delivered to the wrong target market, and either too little or too much exposure to the advertisement. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 10.

Figure 10

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Advertisement*

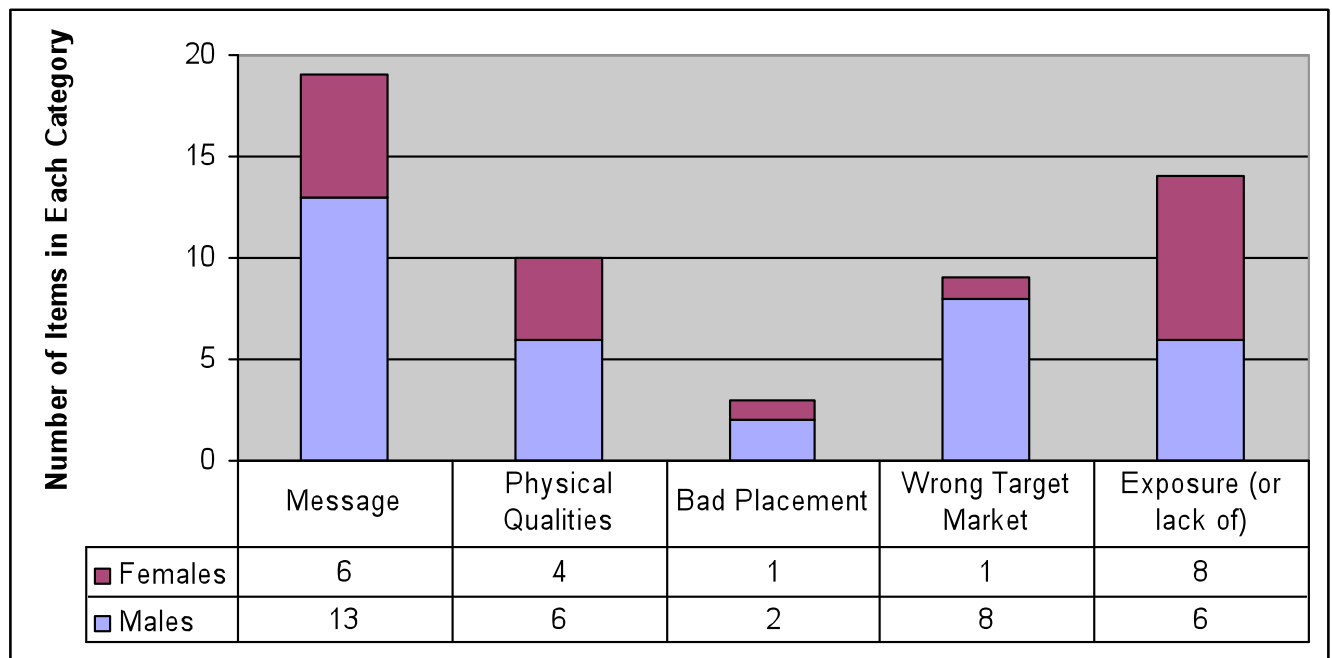


Figure 10 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the actual advertisements that would make someone less influenced by advertising.

Of the 118 items that described how personal characteristics and circumstances make people more influenced by advertising, participants reported a total of 65 unique items that (see Table 24). Six categories encapsulated each of these unique items. The categories were age, income, internal states/traits, knowledge, peers/family, and other. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 11.

Figure 11

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Person*

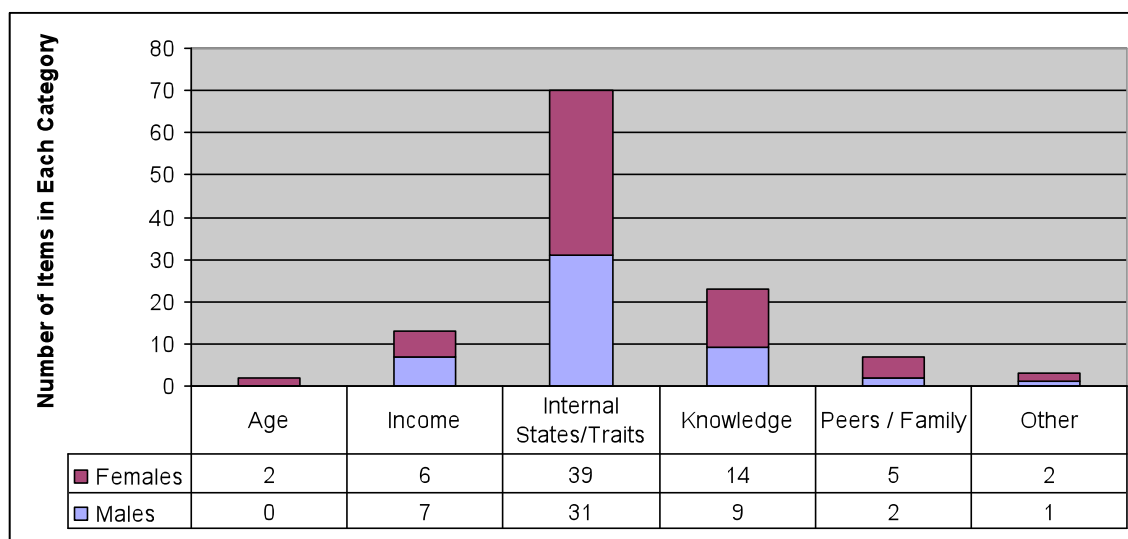


Figure 11 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the person that would make someone less influenced by advertising.

Of the 16 items that explained how the attributes of a product can lead to a more effective advertising campaign, participants reported a total of eight unique items (see Table 25). Each unique item formed a category. These categories were over priced products, impractical products, the product is difficult to obtain, the product is bad, the product is not necessary, the product has a bad reputation, the previous product experience was negative, and the product is ugly. A graph of total number of items reported in each category is displayed on Figure 12.

Figure 12

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Product*

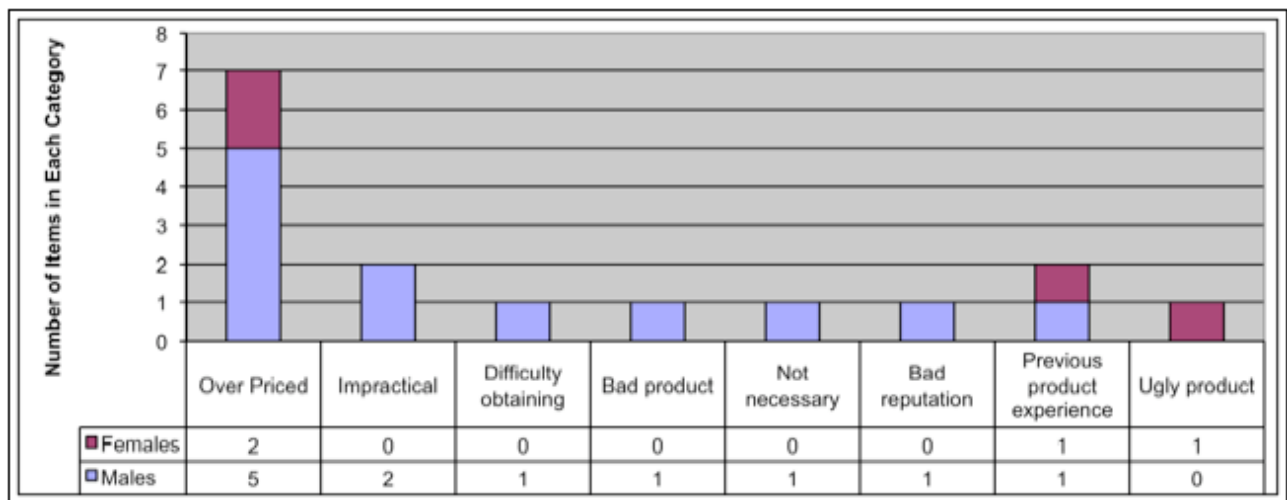


Figure 12 – This graph displays the number of times an item was mentioned under each category regarding the factors related to the product that would make someone less influenced by advertising.

### **What Did Your Parents Tell You About Advertising While You Were Growing Up?**

Participants reported 44 ways in which parents communicated with them about advertising (see Figure 13). Participants reported between zero and two items per answer

( $M = .43$ ,  $SD = .56$ ; see Table 26). Of the 44 items that were reported, twenty six original categories were formed. The most common advice that participants received from their parents were: don't believe everything you see (reported 9 times), it is too good to be true (reported 4 times) and advertising encourages individuals to buy products (reported 2 times). All other items were reported only once or twice.

Figure 13

*How Participants Responded to the Question: What Did Your Parents Tell You About Advertising While You Were Growing Up*

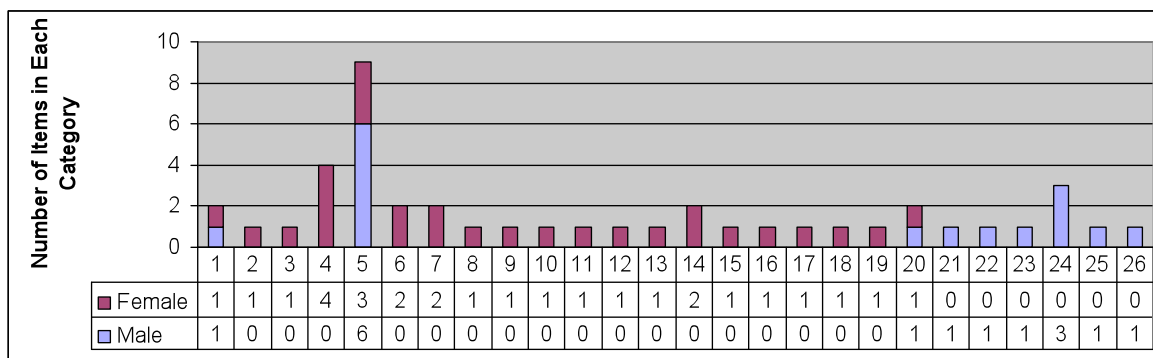


Figure 13 – This graph displays the number of items in each category regarding what their parents told them about advertising as they were growing up. Please use the following legend for each category: (1) - Don't be easily influenced, (2) - Advertising pairs wants with needs, (3) - Not to be materialistic, (4) - Too good to be true, (5) - Don't believe everything you see, (6) - Don't be tricked / fooled by large companies, (7) - Its fake, (8) - Its funny / stupid, (9) - It is a way for companies to get you to buy products, (10) - Coupons / pricing entice you to buy products, (11) - Refuse sales pitches, (12) - Marketing techniques, (13) - Separate wants from needs, (14) - Ads try to attract attention, (15) – Can't have every you see on TV, (16) - Expensive jewellery is sickening due to poverty in the world, (17) – Ads associate products with pleasure and desirable images, (18) - Ads encourage speeding and dangerous driving, (19) - Ignore advertisements, (20) - Not to be impulsive, (21) - Companies only care about money, (22) - Companies suck you in, (23) - Don't waste money /save it, (24) - Advertising encourages individuals to buy products, (25) - Advertisers lie, (26) - Will try to sell you anything.



Table 26

*Descriptive Statistics – How Participants Responded to the Question: What Did Your Parents Tell You About Advertising While You Were Growing Up*

---

What did your parents tell you about advertising as you were growing up?

N	60
Range	2
Minimum	0
Maximum	2
Sum	44
Mean	.43
Std. Error	.07
Std. Deviation	.56

### **What Do People Want to Buy?**

Participants reported a total number of 519 items which they strongly wanted or needed to buy, even if they could not afford the product or service. There were 381 items listed as a ‘want’ and 138 items listed as a ‘need’ (see Figure 14 for a graph of the number of items in each category listed as a want and need). As demonstrated previously, there were no statistically significant mean differences between the control group and advertising exposed group for the total number of items reported, amount of needs reported and the amount of wants reported (see Table 8 ). A qualitative comparison of the items also demonstrates that the two groups are not much different (please see Figure 15).

Figure 14

*Total Number of Items that Participants Desire Purchasing*

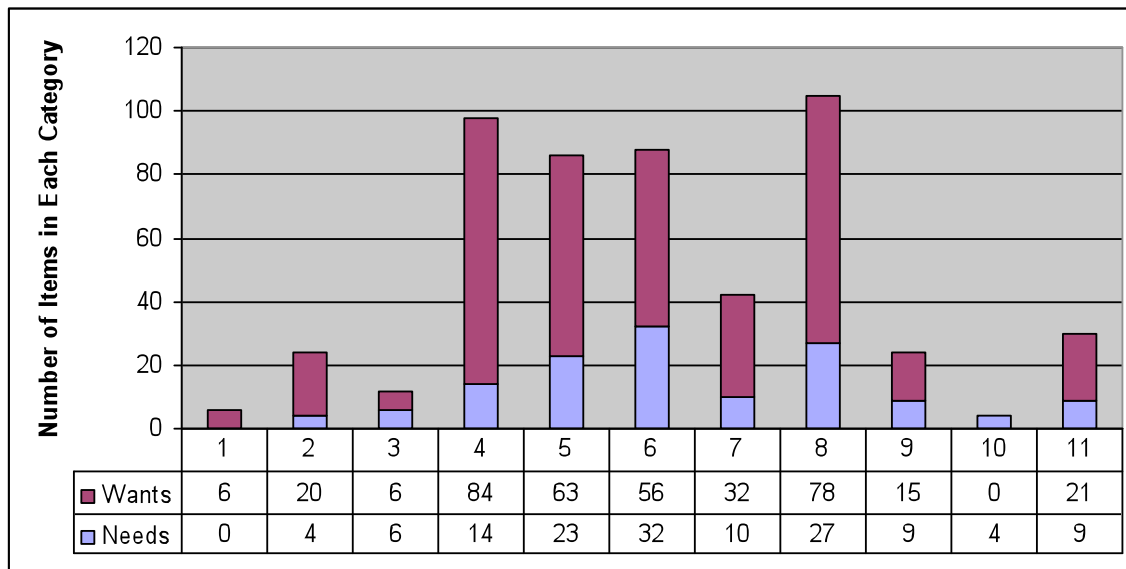
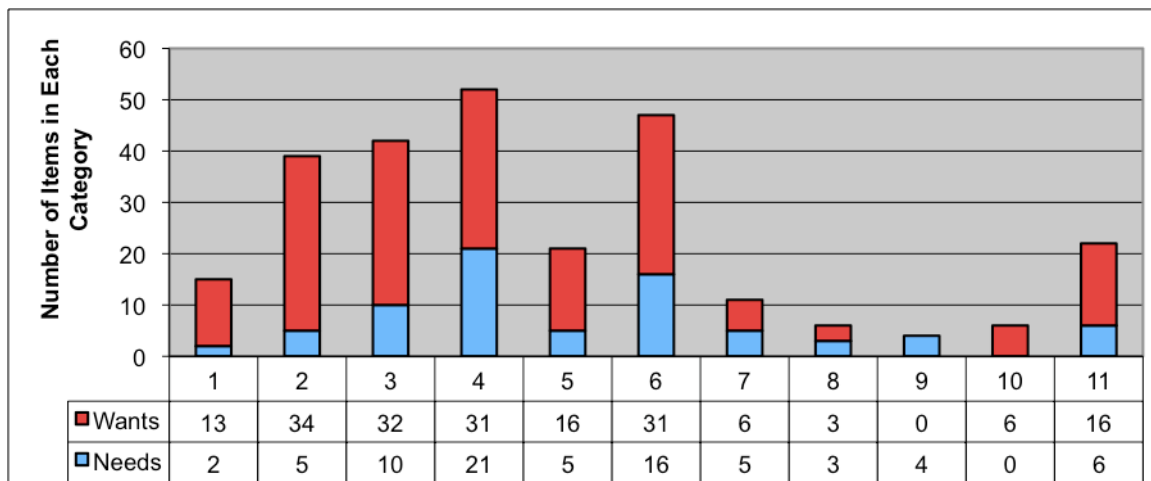


Figure 14 – This graph displays the number of items in each category regarding the total number of items that participants desire buying. Please use the following legend for each category: (1) - Pets, (2) - Trip / Vacation, (3) - Food, (4) - Electronics / Computer, (5) - Sports / Leisure, (6) - Home / Accessories, (7) - Transportation, (8) - Clothing / Accessories, (9) - Cosmetics, (10) - School / Education, (11) - Other

Figure 15

*Total Number of Items that Participants Desire: Comparison Between the Advertising Group and Control Group*

## Advertising Group



## Control Group

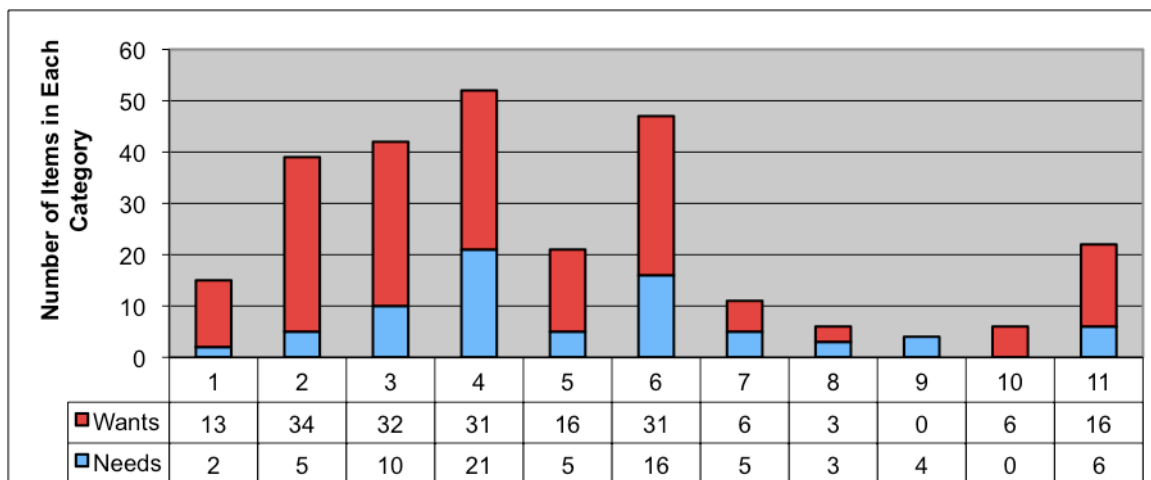


Figure 15 - This graph displays the number of itmes in each category regarding what items participants want to purchase even if they cannot afford the product or service. Please use the following legend for each category: (1) – Trip / Vacation, (2) – Electronics / Computers, (3) – Sports / Leisure, (4) – Home / Accessories, (5) – Transportation, (6) – Clothes / Accessories, (7) – Cosmetics, (8) – Food, (9) – School / Education, (10) – Pets, (11) – Other

To breakdown what participants listed as a 'need', ten categories were formed to classify the 138 items (see Figure 16 for a graph of the categories). The top three needed items were home and home accessories (32 items in the category), clothing and clothing accessories (27 items in the category) and sports and leisure (23 items in the category). Ten categories were also formed to classify the 381 items listed as a 'want' (please see Figure 17 for a graph of the categories). The top three items were computer and electronics (84 items in the category), clothing and clothing accessories (78 items in the category) and sports and leisure (63 items in the category). All the unique items listed as a want are displayed on Table 27 and all the unique items listed as a need are displayed on Table 28.

Figure 16  
*Total Number of Items that Participants Need to Purchase Even if They Cannot Afford the Product or Service*

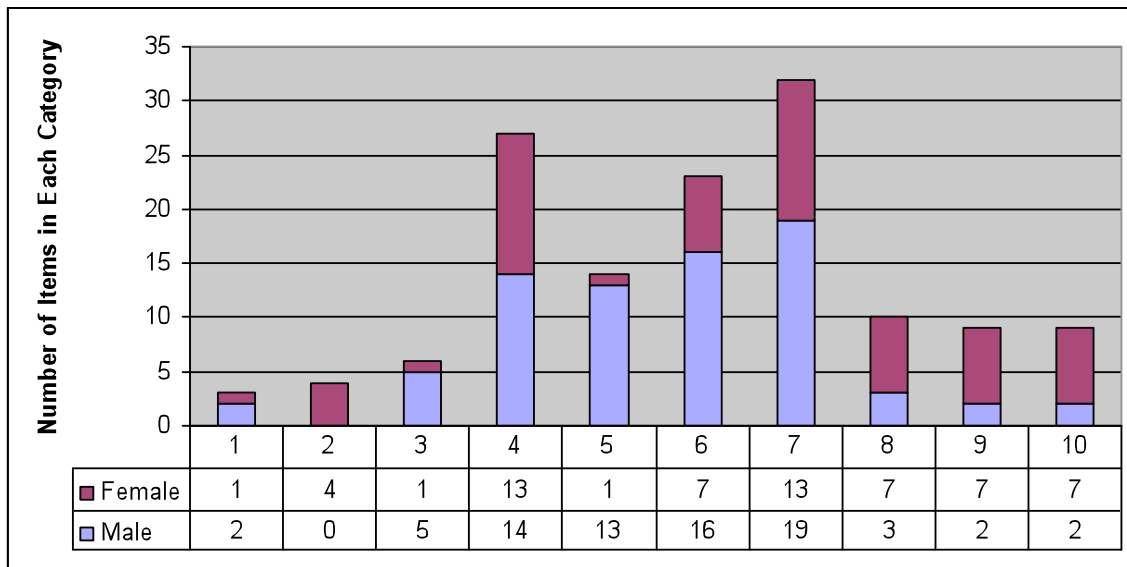


Figure 16 – This graph displays the number of itmes in each category regarding what items participants need to purchase even if they cannot afford the product or service. Please use the following legend for each category: (1) – Trip / Vacation, (2) – School / Education, (3) – Food, (4) – Clothing / Accessories, (5) – Electronics / Computer, (6) – Sports / Leisure, (7) – Home / Accessories, (8) – Transportation, (9) – Cosmetics, (10) – Other

Figure 17

*Total Number of Items that Participants Want to Purchase Even if They Cannot Afford the Product or Service*

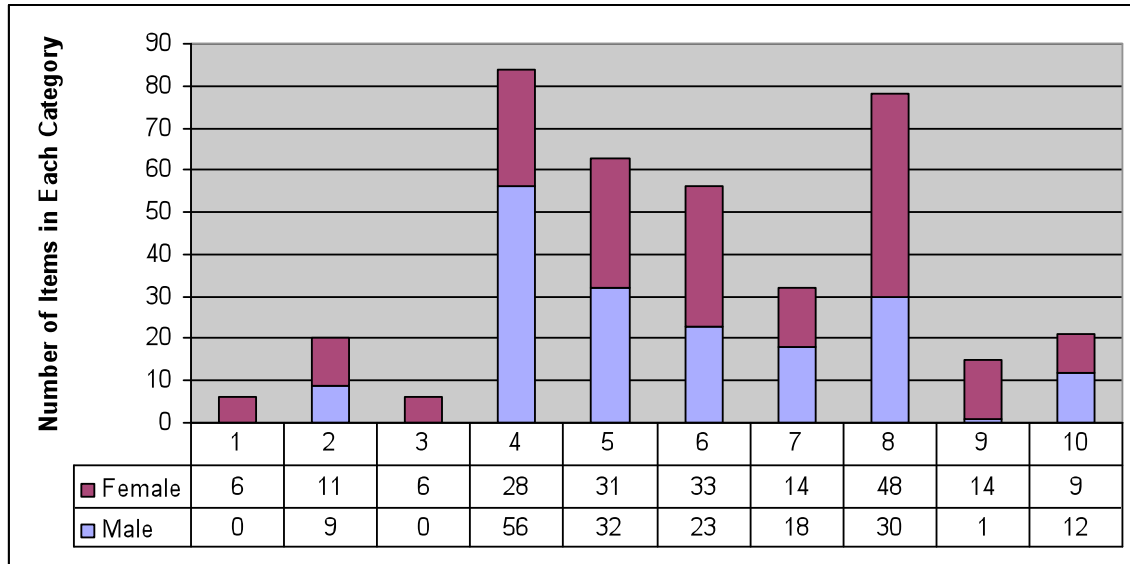


Figure 17 - This graph displays the number of itmes in each category regarding what items participants want to purchase even if they cannot afford the product or service. Please use the following legend for each category: (1) – Pets, (2) – Trip / Vacation, (3) – Food, (4) – Electronics / Computer, (5) – Sports / Leisure, (6) – Home / Accessories, (7) – Transportation, (8) – Clothing / Accessories, (9) – Cosmetics, (10) – Other

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this thesis was to determine if people are in control of their consumer behaviour in an environment saturated with advertising. I set out to determine whether consumer values could be primed and if people who are more suggestible are also more susceptible to the influence of advertising. Furthermore, I performed exploratory research by asking participants open-ended questions about how advertising influences themselves and other people. To begin this section, I interpreted the results for each of the hypotheses.

### **Quantitative Assessment**

#### **Hypothesis 1**

For hypothesis one, I predicted that individuals would have a higher materialistic values score after they memorized a series of advertisements and that a control group (participants who were exposed to random number strings) would remain the same from time one to time two. The results showed that the advertising group's mean materialistic values score increased after they memorized the ads and that the control group's scores decreased after memorizing the random strings of numbers; however these increases and decreases were not statistically significant at a 95% confidence interval.

At time one, the participants in the control group had a statistically higher mean materialistic values score than the advertising group. At time two, both mean materialistic values scores converged and became similar;. Though the control group still had a larger mean materialistic values score, it was no longer statistically different than the advertising group. These fluctuations in the mean materialistic values scores may have been the result of the two scores regressing towards the mean. Therefore, hypothesis one

is not supported. However, it is interesting to note that the advertising group did increase and the control group did decrease.

Since participants were not equally materialistic at time one, the data becomes difficult to interpret. The participants were randomly assigned to either the advertising group or the control group in order to keep the group placement variable constant. This is common and even a recommended way to separate treatment and control groups (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). To avoid this problem in the future, groups can be assigned by level of materialistic values. For example, a 2 (materialistic values time one and time 2), x 2 (advertising group and control group), x 2 (low in materialistic values and high in materialistic values) factorial design could be employed to eliminate the possibility of starting with unequally materialistic groups.

While analysing the subscales of the MV questionnaire, I discovered that the same pattern emerged as what was seen in the total materialistic values scale. The advertising group's mean materialistic values score increased from time one to time two and the control group's mean materialistic values score decreased. Once again however, the increase and decrease were not statistically significant at a 95% confidence interval. Therefore, once again, it looks like the mean materialistic values scales were the result of a regression towards the mean phenomena.

In both the MV total and the 'possessions define success' subcomponent of the MV there was a significant interaction. This again demonstrates that at time one there was a significant difference in materialistic values scores between the advertising and control groups.



## **Hypothesis 2**

For the second hypothesis, I conducted a MANOVA using one fixed factor, condition (advertising and control) and five dependent variables: the amount of items reported when participants were asked to list everything that they desire buying, the number of wants that participants listed the number of needs that participants listed, the reported yearly salary that participants needed to live at a basic minimum and the amount of money participants reported as their ideal yearly salary to live comfortably and not worry about money.

The MANOVA was not statistically significant, nor did any of the variables differ significantly at a 95% confidence interval between the advertising and control conditions. Even though the differences were not statistically significant, it is still interesting to note that in every case except for the question regarding the minimum amount of yearly salary, participants in the advertising condition had a higher mean value than the control group. Unfortunately, there was too much variability with these measures which made it difficult to detect significant differences. Results from the MANOVA do not support the second hypothesis that those who were in the advertising group (as opposed to the control group), would exhibit more materialistic tendencies. Since the advertising exposed group scored higher mean values on four of the five outcome variables, this should be re-explored with more refined measures of product desire.

Future research on this topic should attempt to reduce variability providing participants with a check list of goods and services from which they could select the products that they desire buying instead of allowing participants to freely write down whatever comes to the top of their heads. By reducing the variability, more powerful

statistical measures would be produced. This recommendation is for those who are more interested in quantitative assessments. The drawback of providing participants with a checklist is that the researcher would lose the ability to obtain as much rich qualitative data.

I also used a correlational method to detect if media habits and/or advertising exposure, demographic and personal variables correlated with the materialistic behaviour and/or product desire (the five dependent variables from the MANOVA). Results from the correlation matrix were quite complex. The amount of money that participants needed per year to survive at a basic minimum was negatively correlated with internet exposure but positively related with the amount of hours spent watching movies per week. The total number of desired items reported was positively correlated with the number of minutes participants spent listening to music preceding the study but negatively with the amount of time they usually spend watching TV per week. The total number of desired items listed as a want was negatively correlated with the number of hours participants usually spend watching TV per week. The total number of desired items listed as a need was positively correlated with the amount of hours participants usually spend reading newspapers per week and the amount of debt that they have accumulated.

In general, the correlations did not help discover any meaningful patterns with the five variables from the MANOVA; however, there was a minor trend worth mentioning, which is that television exposure was negatively correlated with three different materialistic behaviour variables. This finding contradicts a great deal of the previous literature on television exposure and materialistic values mentioned in the literature review.

### **Hypothesis 3**

For the third hypothesis, I evaluated whether advertising/media exposure correlated with materialistic values. I had to make two separate assessments because the materialistic values scales (time one and time two) only shared 40% of their variance.

The results of the two multiple regression tests were quite different. At time one, the only variable to account for a significant portion of the variance was the condition (advertising and control). This suggests that group assignment explains why participants were more materialistic at time one. Random assignment procedures were not effective in controlling for group assignment. At time two, the only variable to statistically explain materialistic values was the participants' report of their ideal yearly annual salary to live comfortably without worrying about money. This demonstrates that at time two, people who were more materialistic reported that they needed more money to live at a basic minimum without having to worry about money.

Both scales (MV at time one and time two) were correlated with the CBS. Though they did not contribute to a statistically significant amount of unique variance in the multiple regression, the correlation suggests that those who were more materialistic were also more compulsive shoppers.

To further explore the three subcomponents of the MV questionnaire, I looked to see which variables were correlated with each subcomponent: possessions define success, acquisition centrality, and pursuit of happiness. In each case, common variables were related to each subcomponent at both time one and time two.

Participants who define success through their possessions thought they were influenced by advertising, were more compulsive consumers (reactive component of the

CBS and the total CC), and had parents who didn't talk to them about advertising very much as they were growing up. Participants who required a higher degree of material consumption (acquisition centrality subcomponent) were less likely to shop for utilitarian purposes, were more compulsive consumers (on the reactive subcomponent) and reported a higher amount of money necessary to live comfortably without worrying about money. Participants who placed a higher degree of their wellbeing on material consumption (pursuit of happiness subcomponent) were more impulsive, compulsive and hedonic consumers.

#### **Hypothesis 4**

I also used a correlational method to detect whether media habits and/or advertising exposure, demographic and personal variables correlated with extreme consumer behaviour (compulsive, impulsive and hedonic consumption). Again, the correlation matrix was not very straightforward to interpret because many of the results conflicted. Generally speaking, the more time a participant spent with media, the more compulsive, impulsive and hedonic their consumption habits were. The total amount of time spent with all media in hours per week was correlated with the hedonic subscale of the CIS as well as the post purchase guilt subscale of the CBS. However, the total amount of time spent with all media in minutes 24 hours preceding the study was not correlated with any of the variables.

By looking at specific media habits, an interesting observation was noted; the amount of time participants usually spend watching movies per week was positively correlated with most of the consumer variables including: both of the compulsive consumption scales, and both of the impulsive buying scales.

Certain patterns emerged while analyzing each of the consumer scales.

Compulsive buying (especially the post purchase guilt subscale) was positively correlated with the amount of hours per week participants usually spend: watching internet movies (the CC), reading the newspaper (post purchase guilt subscale of the CBS), listening to music (post purchase guilt subscale of the CBS), and surfing the internet per week (post purchase guilt subscale of the CBS).

Compulsive consumption (especially the CC) was also correlated with the number of minutes in the preceding 24 hours before the study, a participant spent: watching television (CC), reading magazines (CC, tendency to spend subscale of the CBS and CBS total), and watching movies (CC, CBS).

Impulsive consumption (especially the hedonic subscale of the CIS) was correlated with the amount of hours per week that participants usually spend: reading the newspaper (negative relation [prudence subscale of the CIS]), listening to music (hedonic subscale of the CIS), surfing the internet (hedonic subscale of the CIS). Impulsive consumption (especially the CC) was also correlated with the number of minutes in the preceding 24 hours before the study that a participant spent: watching movies (IBT and BIS).

The hedonic subscale of the HUSV was positively correlated with the amount of time a participant spent in the 24 hours preceding the study: listening to music and surfing the internet. Ironically, the hedonic subscale of the HUSV was negatively correlated with watching television. Furthermore, the analysis found that those who watch more television per week were less hedonic consumers and desired (wanted and needed) purchasing less products and services. Time spent with the internet (both weekly

and in the preceding 24 hours before the study) correlated negatively with the amount of money participants need at a basic minimum in order to survive.

Since the majority of the correlations between the amount of time spent with media and compulsive, impulsive and hedonic consumption were positive; the fourth hypothesis is partially supported. The amount of time that participants spend watching movies contributed to the most extreme consumer behavior.

### **Hypothesis 5**

Hypnotizability was not related to any of the excessive consumption habits/values questionnaires. It was only positively related with the number of items that participants desired (especially the ones marked as a want), and negatively with the amount of debt that participants had. Based on these results, hypothesis five is not supported; participants' hypnotizability levels are not associated with more excessive consumer behaviour. Therefore, it is unlikely that peoples' level of hypnotizable can influence the way they respond to advertising.

To future researchers, I recommend that instead of performing a correlational analysis like I did in this project, a factorial design which separates participants by their level of hypnotizability should be utilized. For example, low hypnotizable participants should be compared with high hypnotizable participants. Furthermore, I also recommend that hypnotizability should be measured with the Stanford Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility.

### **Hypothesis 6**

Hypothesis six was supported, the ability to be absorbed into fantasy (DPQ) was correlated with two measures of hedonic consumption: hedonic shopping values and the

pursuit of happiness subscale of the materialistic values questionnaire at time two. The latter correlation would need to be retested because at time one, the correlation was non-existent. However, as in the pilot analysis, hedonic consumption is more prevalent in people with larger capacities for imagination and fantasy.

### **Hypothesis 7**

In partial support for hypothesis seven, the DPQ was correlated with compulsive buying (total, post purchase guilt and reactive subscales) and the total number of desired items that participants would like to purchase. Imagery was only related to participants reports about how much they think advertising influences them. Of the two fantasy related variables (absorption and imagery), absorption was correlated with more excessive consumption measures than imagery. If any future researcher wants to explore how fantasy proneness and consumption are related, I recommend that the DPQ be the main focus. Imagery was not related to any excessive consumer variables in the pilot projects nor this project.

### **Hypothesis 8**

In line with previous findings, participants judged that other people were more affected by advertising much more than they were. This finding suggests that the third person effect is robust and could be replicated with different samples.

### **Summary of the Findings**

Based on the analyses of the eight hypotheses, I conclude that exposure to advertising and media was generally related to excessive consumer behaviour. While assessing whether materialistic values could be created by advertising, I found that the advertising group did increase their level of materialistic values only after being exposed

to ads but this increase was not statistically significant. Because the groups were disproportionately materialistic at time one, the results were difficult to interpret.

When evaluating what causes materialistic behaviour, the advertising exposed group had a higher mean value on all but one of the variables entered into the MANOVA; unfortunately, the differences were not statistically significant. These results do not conclusively support or reject any of the hypotheses because a general trend was shown; materialistic behaviour was higher for the advertising pre-exposed group at time two in all but one condition of the MANOVA. Since each of the results were not statistically significant, these differences can not be attributed to being exposed to advertising, therefore the hypotheses cannot be supported. However because of this trend I cannot exclusively throw out the hypotheses either. More research on this topic must be conducted to determine if advertising can cause people to become more excessive consumers.

What I did find was, like the pilot study, the DPQ was related with hedonic consumption and other compulsive consumer variables. This supports the notion that those who can engage in deep fantasy consume for pleasure. Solomon (2005) et. al. noted that:

“Many products and services are successful because they appeal to consumers’ tendencies to fantasize. These marketing strategies allow us to extend our vision of ourselves by placing us in unfamiliar, exciting situations or by permitting us to ‘try on’ interesting provocative roles”.

Consumers who were more prone to fantasy were more hedonistic consumers, more materialistic for pleasure and more compulsive consumers. In this study, I cannot



conclude that advertising caused fantasy prone individuals to become excessive and hedonic consumers because I used a correlational analysis; however the trend is interesting and should be explored through an experimental procedure in any future research project.

Another notable finding was that, excessive consumer variables were negatively related with television exposure. In addition, materialistic values were not related to television exposure whatsoever. This is contrary to the majority of the previous research on the effects of television exposure. Television is usually positively related with materialistic values and product desire (Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio & Bamossy, 2003; Goldberg & Gorn, 1978; Buijzen & Valkenburg; 2003; Kunkel, Wilcox, Cantor, Palmer, Linn & Dowrick, 2004; Adler, Lesser, Meringoff, Robertson, Rossitier, & Ward, 1977, Schor, 2004).

By analysing excessive consumption in relation to demographic, personal and financial variables I found that yearly income and gender helped explain excessive consumption habits and values. People who had a higher yearly annual income were more impulsive and compulsive consumers. Furthermore, females were also more compulsive and impulsive consumers than males.

Post-Hoc findings revealed that people are good predictors as to how much advertising influences them. People who thought that advertising influenced them were more compulsive, impulsive and hedonic shoppers.

## **Open-Ended Questions**

### **How Are People Affected By Advertising?**

While answering the question “how does advertising affect you?” participants responses clustered into fifteen categories. The top three categories were: advertising makes me desire products, gives me information about products, brands, and trends and it does not affect me (very much).

Similarly, in answering how advertising affects other people, sixteen categories were formed. The top three categories were: advertising makes people in general desire products, gives people in general information about products, brands and trends and it used a process of reification (image meanings and/or experience in advertisements transfer to the products, thus giving the product the associated meaning).

The major differences between the two questions were the categories themselves. Of the nineteen total categories that were formed, twelve of the categories overlapped for both questions. In answering the question, how does advertising effect you, two unique categories were reported: ads get me to go shopping and ads must identify with me in order to influence me. In answering the question, how does advertising affect people in general, four unique categories were reported: ads make people keep up with the Joneses, ads are everywhere therefore people are becoming desensitized to them, ads make people impulsive/careless with money, and people are conformists.

These unique categories were similar to the finding that people rated others as being more influenced by advertising than themselves. Participants did not describe themselves as conformists, careless with money, or that it makes them compare themselves to others.

### **What Makes People More/Less Influenced By Advertising**

In analysing what makes people more or less affected by advertising I compared the participants' responses to both of the questions. Participants indicated that the actual advertisement was responsible for making people more influenced by advertising. In contrast, participants responded that it was personal characteristics that make people less influenced by advertising.

When analysing each of the categories, I found that the participants responded similarly to both of the questions. They indicated that the message portrayed in each advertisement and the internal states/personality characteristics were responsible for making people more influenced by advertising and can also make them less influenced by advertising.

### **What do Participants Desire**

Participants desire a whole array of products. The most common product that participants desired purchasing was clothing apparel/accessories. The most needed items were home/accessories, clothing apparel/accessories, and sports and leisure. The most commonly wanted items were electronics and computer related products, clothing apparel and clothing accessories, and sports and leisure.

There was almost no difference between the product categories of the advertising and control group. Both had similar product desires. One notable difference was between what products men and women reported needing. Women reported more education, transportation and cosmetic needs than men. Men reported more computer/electronic, and food needs than women.

While analysing the needs that were reported by each group, food was only reported five times as compared to electronics which was reported fourteen times and sports and leisure which was reported twenty three times. As mentioned in the introduction, food is a physiological need; it is necessary for us to consume food in order for us to survive. Participants did not report needing food as often as they did items which are not necessary for survival, like electronics and leisure activities. This may be because most of the people in the sample are able to meet their basic needs. Participants reported a large amount of items that were not survival needs. To survive, people need to acquire food, water, clothing and shelter (Leiss, et. al., 2005). In some cases, participants reported needing to buy cigarettes, a commodity that impedes survival. An interesting follow up to this study would be to do a cross cultural comparison by evaluating countries in which food is more scarce with the current sample.

In line with Berger's (2007) observation, the people in the sample may not be concentrating on what they have, only with what they do not have. It is very probable that most of the participants either ate or will eat within a close proximity to the study. Berger (2007) contended that:

“In consumer cultures, all too often people don't think about what they have but only concern themselves with what they don't have. And that is, in part, because advertising constantly reminds them of what they don't have” (p. 40).

There was no major discrepancy between the items reported from the group that was exposed to advertising as opposed to the control group. I suspect that this is because participant desires for certain items were probably created before participating in this study. Furthermore, participants are exposed to exuberant amounts of advertising; this

makes it difficult to evaluate how advertising contributes to the creation of these desires.

Galbraith (1958) contended that:

“the urgency of wants does not diminish appreciably as more of them are satisfied. . . . . When man has satisfied his physical needs, then psychologically grounded desires take over. These can never be satisfied, or, in any case, no progress can be proved” (p. 117).

As people are exposed to advertising and/or products, they continue to desire other products, even if they consume a large amount everyday. The process of ‘desire creation’ was hard to measure because desires change and shift as they become satisfied. Participants in the study probably had existing commodity desires for products that they are continuously exposed to through advertising and in everyday life.

### **Implications**

To discuss the implications of this project, I examined the two prevailing theories: suggestion and priming. Following this, I will summarize how these findings contribute to the analysis of how much control we have over our consumer habits, desires and behaviour.

#### **Priming**

The hypothesis that advertising primes consumer drives is inconclusive. On one hand, I found that the more media and advertising people were exposed to the more excessive consumption habits and values they displayed. These findings indirectly support the notion that watching more commercial media primes consumer drives and facilitates excessive consumption; however more research would have to be conducted through an experimental approach to determine if there is a cause and effect relationship.

Since the analysis was correlational, it is also possible that participants who are excessive consumers consume commercial media excessively.

Through experimental procedures, I found that the group exposed to advertising was more materialistic at time two than at time one. Furthermore, the group exposed to advertising also demonstrated more materialistic behaviour; they desired more products, and desired a higher ideal yearly salary. Unfortunately, in both cases there was too much variability to draw out any meaningful findings.

In the qualitative section, there is evidence that people believe that advertising primes consumer drives. For both questions, how does advertising influence you and how does advertising influence other people, some participants reported that advertising reminds them of products. Furthermore, participants reported that advertising gets them to continuously think about consuming products and reminds them about products that they once wanted to acquire but forgot about. Both of these types of responses resemble a priming discourse.

### **Suggestibility**

The hypothesis that people who are highly suggestible would be more influenced by advertising was also partially supported. People who are able to absorb themselves into fantasy were found to consume for pleasure. Absorption was related with both hedonic consumption and the pleasure subcomponent of materialistic values. Campbell's (1987) claim has some credence; hedonic buyers seem to use daydreaming to create feelings of pleasure. The only problem is that, since the analyses were correlational, cause and effect cannot be determined. Once again, these variables would have to be

reassessed through an experimental model. Hypnotizability and imagery did not help explain why people consume excessively.

### **Are we in Control of our Consumer Behaviour, Values and Habits?**

In this thesis, I found evidence that priming effects could be possible on overall consumption habits and values; however the evidence is not conclusive. Furthermore, I found that fantasy prone people may be more influenced by advertising than people with limited imagination capacities. This project is merely a stepping stone to assess whether advertising further impedes consumer rationality. Much more research would have to be conducted and the following limitations would have to be corrected.

### **Limitations**

The first limitation of this study was that in the experimental condition, the control group had a higher level of materialistic values than the advertising group. Both groups would have to be equal in order to make a proper assessment.

The second limitation was that the majority of the statistical measures were analysed by correlations instead of experimental procedures. Correlations are useful if we want to measure the degree of association between variables; however we cannot infer cause and effect with correlations. To explore these topics further, I recommend the researcher use an experimental approach. Furthermore, there were a large amount of correlations that were reported. I caution any reader while interpreting these correlations because by performing a large amount of correlational analyses, I increased the probability of obtaining a type one error. Of every one hundred correlations performed with 95% confidence, five percent of them will be statistically significant when there is no real association.

On that note, other research projects should be more focused on a specific measure and not include as many analyses as I did in this study. Not only will this improve the statistical validity but it will make the results easier to interpret. There was a large amount of information in my analyses to make sense of.

A third limitation was that it is almost impossible to obtain a sample of individuals who do not witness advertising very frequently. Because of this, participants are biased upon entry. In consequence, measurements of product desire may not only reflect the stimuli presented in the study but also the copious amounts of ads they saw before entering the study.

A fourth limitation is that I used magazine advertisements to study advertisements effects. This is only one form of advertising, therefore the results may only be able to be generalized to magazine ads and not other forms of advertising.

### **Future Research**

In order to understand how people are influenced by excessive amounts of advertising, I will be taking a socio-economic approach instead of an effects based psychological approach. Through a socio-economic approach, I will be looking at how advertising is contributing to the commodification of the commons by creating economic dependence on private funds for public events. Stemming from Williams (2005) theory that advertising is the “official art of the modern capitalist society” (Williams, 2005, p 184) I will look at how public art has become commandeered by private companies through advertising. According to Williams (2005):

“...(*advertising*) is what we put up in ‘our’ streets and use to fill up to half or ‘our’ newspapers and magazines: it commands the services of perhaps the largest



organized body of writers, and artists, with their attendant managers and advertisers, in the whole society” (p. 184 – 185).

I will also study how advertising has led to the commodification of the citizens in Montreal through the YUL-LAB. The research being conducted through the YUL-LAB is used to develop more effective advertising campaigns and sell more products. Since the market research firms involved with the AAPQ are private, they are not obliged to share their findings with the general public; even though the project is paid for (in part) and tested on the residents of Montreal (without their informed consent).

Many public events, institutions, initiatives and media forms are sponsored by private funding in return for the right to advertise. This system allows corporations to exert a great deal of influence over those that are being sponsored. When corporations begin to control public events, they make the rules. At the festivals in Montreal, sponsors not only advertise but also control the commodity sales.

I will also evaluate how many of our public institutions are increasingly relying on corporate sponsorship and in consequence displaying more advertising. The Montreal subway system, the STM, is increasing its dependence on corporate sponsorship each year. In 2002, the STM acquired \$8 482 000 from private sponsorships and allowed them to advertise. In 2008, the STM are now making \$14 199 000 from private sponsorships. The STM are now dependant on close to 14 million dollars from private interests for their yearly budgets. If this money would become unavailable, our transportation system would be in trouble. There are other ways to obtain financing for public initiatives; these avenues should be explored.

Advertising and consumer culture is a large topic, in this I set out to determine what kind of effects are produced when people are exposed to an excessive amount of advertising. Though consumer rationality has been successfully refuted by behaviour decision theorists for decades (Saad, 2007), I proposed that consumer rationality would be further impeded by advertising because since advertising is so pervasive, we may continuously prime our consumer drives and values to continuously desire consuming. Furthermore, I proposed that people who are more suggestible would be more influenced by advertising. There was support for both priming and suggestion theories of advertising effects; however more research is needed to determine how priming and suggestion theory work in advertising. In this project, I provided recommendations for future research into these topics.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.montreal.ad/our\\_offer](http://www.montreal.ad/our_offer)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aapq.ca/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.montreal.ad/our\\_offer](http://www.montreal.ad/our_offer)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.mri.gouv.qc.ca/en/\\_scripts/Actualites/ViewNewQcNews.asp?ID=850&lang=en](http://www.mri.gouv.qc.ca/en/_scripts/Actualites/ViewNewQcNews.asp?ID=850&lang=en)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.repex.qc.ca/tiki-read\\_article.php?articleId=1718](http://www.repex.qc.ca/tiki-read_article.php?articleId=1718); [http://www.aapq.ca/en/media/pdf/ANG-Communique\\_confirmation\\_Equipe\\_RetourChicago.pdf](http://www.aapq.ca/en/media/pdf/ANG-Communique_confirmation_Equipe_RetourChicago.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> The speech was in French. Here is the verbatim: “Montréal se définit déjà comme une ville de créateurs, mais qu’elle peut faire encore davantage. D’où l’importance, mais surtout la pertinence de Montréal.ad et de son laboratoire YUL-Lab. L’industrie de la publicité à Montréal est plus vivante et en vue que jamais. Elle emploie plus de 10 000 personnes, il faut le souligner. Des emplois de qualité, des emplois pour les jeunes. . . . Premièrement, il permet à Montréal de se doter d’un positionnement international en matière de création publicitaire. . . . Deuxièmement, le portail de Montréal.ad permet de mieux vendre et diffuser l’offre de services des principales agences de publicité du Québec. Cela me fait sourire puisque de facto Montréal.ad devient, en quelque sorte, une grappe de la publicité ([http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/pls/portal/docs/page/bur\\_du\\_maire\\_fr/media/documents/aout09/lancement\\_de\\_montreal\\_ad\\_et\\_de\\_yul\\_lab\\_250809.pdf](http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/pls/portal/docs/page/bur_du_maire_fr/media/documents/aout09/lancement_de_montreal_ad_et_de_yul_lab_250809.pdf)).”

<sup>7</sup> The process is known as Reification (Goldman, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> Ads disguised as news or editorials but paid for by corporations

<sup>9</sup> The process is known as Reification (Goldman, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Implicit memory refers to a type of memory for previously acquired information that influences behavior or thought without itself entering consciousness (Grey, 1999). Implicit memories can be generated by a learning theory known as classical conditioning, through priming, and make up procedural memories of knowing how to do things like motor skills, habits, and certain rules learned without our awareness.

<sup>11</sup> Automatic processing occurs with little or no necessary involvement of a conscious or limited-attention mechanism (Ashcraft, 2002). It mostly happens without people noticing. Automatic processing occurs without intention, without conscious decision (the mental process is not open to conscious awareness or introspection), consumes few if any conscious resources (Posner and Snyder, 1975) and operates very rapidly, usually within one second (Shiffrin and Schneider, 1977).

<sup>12</sup> Ashcraft (2002) defined controlled attention by a “deliberate, voluntary allocation of mental effort or concentration (p. 133)”. This is a process of selective attention in which we choose to attend to a source of information while ignoring or excluding others. When multiple sources of information are present, we may divide our attentive capabilities through dual task processing or by ignoring or filtering unwanted and distracting messages. A great metaphor given by Ashcraft (2002) would be what one goes through at a cocktail party. Attention would be controlled for those which you are attending to, like when you are talking to someone specific. You could still maintain a conversation even though many other things are happening around you. The other things would be processed automatically, like the music and/or background conversation. Once in a while, a new stimulus enters your sensory periphery. If it peaks interest (voluntarily or involuntarily) it may cause you to readjust your mental focus and now pay attention to this novel event.

<sup>13</sup> Prior research projects have evaluated priming and: consumer choice (Butler, et. al., 2001; Coates, et. al., 2004; Coates et. al., 2006), textual advertisements (Finlay, Marmurek, & Morton, 2005; Yi, 1993, Yi, 1990), context for print ads (Yi, 1990) medium (Dahlen, 2005), gender typed ads for impression formation (Johar, Moreau, Schwarz, 2003), context visual information (Schmitt, 1994), ethnicity and advertising response (Forehand & Deshpande, 2001), repetition effects (Nordheim, 2002), brand name memory (Kirshnan, 1996), brand choice (Karremans, Claus, 2006) web pages and brand choice (Mandel, 2002), advertising slogans and evaluations of brand extensions (Boush, 1993), context for ad attitude and brand evaluations (Shen, & Chen, 2007), and spontaneous inference (Kirmani, Lee, Yoon, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> Maher and Hu (2003) “Materialistic Advertising. Materialism has been attached to products, advertising and media (p. 23)”.

<sup>15</sup> The children in the sample were three to five years old.

<sup>16</sup> To formulate their scale, two adult scales of materialism (Belk’s; 1985; Richins & Dawson, 1992) were deconstructed and items that Goldberg. et. al. (2003) felt would be relevant with a youth sample. From these two adult materialism scales, nineteen items were preserved. They tested the items with a group of 123 middle class youths in the USA. Out of the nineteen items, the list was cut to ten items because they were more reliable. For the 10-item scale, the coefficient alpha score was .79 and the test-retest reliability score was .85 (Bearden, 1999). The ten item scale accounted for one single factor. To validate the scale, they tested it with another tween sample.

<sup>17</sup> The items that made up the scale are as follows:

- 1 – I’d rather spend time buying things than doing almost anything else.
- 2 – I would be happier if I had more money to buy more things for myself.
- 3 – I have fun thinking of all the things I own.
- 4 – I really enjoy shopping.
- 5 – I like to buy things my friends have.
- 6 – When you grow up, the more money you have, the happier you are.
- 7 – I’d rather not share my snacks with others if it means I’ll have less for myself.
- 8 – I would love to be able to buy things that cost lots of money.
- 9 – I really like the kids that have very special games or clothes.
- 10 – The only kind of job I want when I grow up is one that gives me lots of money.

<sup>18</sup> Those high in materialistic values were also: boys, children from lower income families, children who shopped more frequently, children who did not have savings accounts, had more materialistic parents, exerted more influence on their parents purchase decisions, expected more money for Christmas and birthdays, liked school less, had poorer grades (Goldberg, et. al., 2003).

<sup>19</sup> There is also a theoretical link between imagination and hypnotizability. For example, Barber and Glass (1962) found that hypnotizability positive correlated with proneness to “imaginative activities, daydreaming and fantasy”. Similarly, Sheehan (1979) reviewed a series of studies and found that vividness of mental imagery positively correlated with hypnotic suggestibility. These and many similar results led Wilson and Barber (1982) to identify the fantasy prone personality. Fantasy prone individuals are characterized by the ability to fantasize vividly and realistically (Barber & Wilson, 1982). Moreover, these individuals also have a “talent for vivid sensory experiences”; that is they differ markedly from the comparison group in their reports of intense and profound sensory experiences, especially vivid experiences of touching, smelling, and hallucinating. Lynn and Rhue (1988) reported that 80% of their fantasy prone subjects rated as very good hypnotic subjects. It was also noted that motivational factors such as negative attitudes, beliefs, and motivation to participate fully in the events of hypnosis may account for the other 20% of the fantasy prone subjects who failed to meet the criteria for high hypnotic responsiveness.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.disboards.com/archive/index.php/t-1244211.html>

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<sup>21</sup> Private research companies are not obliged to disclose any of their findings (Linn, 2004). In most cases, they guard these secrets like an old family recipe. This causes a problem for the academics because without information about what the ad was designed to do; they can only infer. Academics use semiotic analyses to uncover the meaning of an advertisement when the true meaning is known by the people who designed it. Valkenburg & Cantor (2001) sum up the problem in an article about the development of a child into a consumer, "Most research on children's consumer behaviour has been conducted by market researchers. Although these researchers have gathered a wealth of knowledge about children's consumer behaviour, their methods and findings are for economic reasons, often not accessible to academic world" (p. 69).

<sup>22</sup> In order to keep gender balance, 15 males and 15 females (total 30) were placed into each of the two conditions.

<sup>23</sup> Tellegen and Atkinson (1974) defined absorption as "a disposition for having episodes of single 'total' attention that fully engages one's representational (i.e., perceptual, imaginative, and ideational) resources". Cardena and Spiegel (1991) indicated that absorption is characterized by focal undivided attention to an external or internal event. Attention can be engaged by a relatively simple stimulus or a complex stimulus.

<sup>24</sup> Inventory of Childhood Memories (IMCI, Lynn & Rhue, 1985). This scale contains 52 true/false items, which will evaluate fantasy activity, hypnotic like experience, imaginative involvement, and imagery.

<sup>25</sup> Individuals will have a higher materialistic values score after they are exposed to a series of advertisement than before they are exposed to advertising as compared to a control group (who are not exposed to advertising).

<sup>26</sup> Individuals pre-exposed to advertising will exhibit more materialistic consumer behaviour than a non-advertising exposed group. They will desire more money as a yearly salary, they will require more money to live at a basic minimum and they will report wanting to purchase more products and services.

<sup>27</sup> Hypotheses 3 and 4 : (3) Individuals who are exposed to advertising more frequently (through their media habits) will be more materialistic than individuals who are less exposed to advertising. (4) Individuals who are exposed to advertising more frequently (through their media habits) will be more compulsive and impulsive consumers than individuals who are less exposed to advertising.

<sup>28</sup> Hypothesis 5, 6 and 7: (5) participants' level of hypnotic susceptibility will correlate with materialistic values, impulsive and compulsive consumption, (6) participants with larger imaginative capacities consume more for pleasure, (7) participants with larger imagination capacities will be more materialistic, impulsive and compulsive consumers.

<sup>29</sup> For example, fully describing every detail of one advertisement would be an elaborate process; one in which an entire thesis could be based. In order to decipher advertisements Miller (1996) suggests that there are twenty three different factors that should be considered.

<sup>30</sup> The advertising exposed group were coded with the number 1 and the control group with a 0, therefore, the negative correlation indicates that participants in the control group were more materialistic at time one.

<sup>31</sup> The scale is scored in reverse. The lower the score, the more compulsive the consumer is.

<sup>32</sup> Reification is described by Goldman (2003). Horkheimer and Adorno wrote that 'all reification is forgetting,' a process in which people forget the part their own activity has played in producing the social world. The characteristics of acting subjects are attributed to objects, while relations between subjects appear as the relation between objects. Reified social relations assume 'the fantastic form of a relation between things' ..... The language in reification is prosaic in perfume advertisements that assign human, social qualities to packaged fragrance products (p.31)..... This is one meaning of reification: qualities of



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acting subjects are attributed to objects, while relations between subjects appear as a function of relations between objects (p. 50).

<sup>33</sup> There was no reliability test taken because the categorization process was quite straightforward. Instead I provide the complete category breakdown including each unique item.

Table 1  
*Demographic Information – Age, Financial Status, and Ethnic Background*

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**Age and Financial Status**

	N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	60	18	39	23.37	4.12
Yearly Income	52	\$0	\$95,000	\$16,249	\$14,658
Savings	58	\$0	\$95,000	\$5,119	\$11,706
Debt	60	\$0	\$95,000	\$5,791	\$12,595

**Ethnic Background**

	Frequency	Percent
Canada	43	71.7
India	1	1.7
USA	3	5.0
Lebanese	2	3.3
Chinese	1	1.7
Pakistan	1	1.7
Iran	1	1.7
Russian	1	1.7
Kuwait	1	1.7
Romania	1	1.7
Egypt	2	3.3
Ukraine	1	1.7
Sri Lanka	1	1.7
Guatemala	1	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Represents the number of participants who answered that question.

Table 2  
*Demographic Information – Personal Situation*

---

**Lives with parents**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
No	29	48.3
Yes	31	51.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Is married or has a common law partner**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
No	54	90
Yes	6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Pays own rent**

Valid	Frequency	Percent
No	36	60.0
Yes	24	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 19

*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Advertisement*

---

Message of the Advertisement

Message	Creative
Emotional	Catch Phrase
Simplicity	Captivating
Happy people/fun	Cool
Authentic people	Projected lifestyle
Personnel lifestyle	Catchy
Thought provoking	Projecting product experience
Appealing to the individual	Appeal to group characteristics
Appeals to hobbies and preferences	Fear
Product will enhance life	Humour
If someone they admire uses the product	Sexual Message
Attractiveness/Sexiness of models	Wealth
Messages of fun	Trendy
Simplification of message	Open mindedness
Messages that are intelligent	Perfect lifestyle
Creates an illusion of need/desire	
Shows a personal default (in viewer) + means to repair it	

Physical Qualities of the Advertisement

Color	Sound
Smell	Fonts
Attention Grabbing	Layout
Size	

Other

Budget	Timing
Credible	Brand logo

Placement

Exposure / Repetitive Exposure

Properly Targeted Audience

Table 20

*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Person*

---

AgeIncomePersonal State/Trait

Not analytical	Impressionable
Gullible	Naïve
Suggestible	Lack of self confidence
Lack of self worth	Gain respect from others
Brag about what they own	Easily influenced
Impulsive	Concerned with the opinion of theirs
Feels unattractive	Low happiness / satisfaction
Traditional preferences over novelty	Materialistic Tendencies
Low levels of self awareness/meta cognition	Short attention span
Need for power	Only systematic thinkers
Lack of strong belief in system values	Boredom
Trust advertisements	
Desire to associate with a brand that supports certain values	

Knowledge

Knowledge of technology	Ignorance
Lack of exposure to other realities	Poor education
Lack of knowledge of how advertising works	

Other

Occupation	
Advertiser / Graphic designer	Live in the suburbs
Lack of success with the opposite sex	Gender

Peers / Family

Keeping up with the Joneses	Belonging to a certain group
People around you are easily influenced	Friends who are materialistic
Friends	Family who are materialistic
Peer Pressure	Rich friends
Social network	

Table 21

*Factors That Make People More Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Product*

---

Purchase intent

Physical qualities about the product

Usefulness of product

Cost

Luxury item

Other

People need more stuff  
Product is trendy  
Product necessity

Materialistic culture  
Product familiarity

Table 23

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Advertisement*

---

Message

Show cost	More realistic situation
Beautiful people	Naked people
Dull life image	Portraying people with products
Incoherent message	Silly / humoristic
Disgusting images	Not Credible
Negative message	

Physical Qualities of the Advertisement

Thoughtful	Dull
Not creative	Poor presentation
Loud	Poor designed
Ugly images	Looks fake

Wrong Target Market

Not calculated well  
Bad timing

Exposure

Lack of exposure  
Over abundance of imagery

Bad Placement

Table 24

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Person*

---

Age

Being older

Income

Low income

Having others that depend on your salary

Well managed budget

Internal States/Traits

Careful with money

Strong sense of identity

Having self control

Intrinsically driven to happiness

High cognition

Stubborn

Not impulsive

Sinicism of modern culture

Religious people

Individualistic lifestyle

Sees the big picture

Happy

Not concerned with luxury

Rational thinker

Logical

Low Hypnotizable / suggestible

Independent

Having good spending habits

Being minimalist

Frugal

Conscientious

Disciplined

Not materialistic

Being opinionated

Not easily fooled

Non conformist

Self confident

Don't use electronics

Doesn't take things for granted

Thoughtful

Sceptical

Analytical thinker

Self aware

Strong beliefs

Having long term spending goals

Intelligent

Knowledge

Knowledge of product

Being aware of how advertising works

Education

No knowledge of technology

Knowledge of Brands profit margins

Understanding poverty

Understanding the value of money

Realization that material possessions do not lead to happiness

Knowledge of the production process of products

Good awareness of products

Aware of needs / wants

Critical thinking

Field expertise

Knowledge of the world

Understanding foreign affairs



Table 24

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising:: The Person*  
(continued)

---

Peers/Family

Not having rich friends  
Non materialistic friends  
Being satisfied with you partner

Low social network  
Being in a stable relationship  
Family upbringing

Other

Does not relate to pop culture  
Location

Table 25

*Factors That Make People Less Likely to be Influenced by Advertising: The Product*

---

The Product

Ugly product

Over priced

Impractical product

Difficulty obtaining product

Bad product

Product not necessary

Bad reputation

Previous experience with product

Table 27  
*Items that Participants Want to Purchase*

---

### **Females**

#### Electronics and Computer

Xbox	Cell phone
iPod	iPhone
The office DVD	SLR camera
Headphones	Computer
Computer speakers	Earphones
Laptop	Playstation games
Digital camera	TV
Karaoke machine	Wii
Graphic tablet	Rockband video game
CD player	PS3

#### Sports and Leisure

Musical instruments	Airbrush / canvas
Massage	Cookbook
Books	Portfolio for art
Yoga studio pass	Tickets to a dance performance
Paint	Tickets to Marilyn Manson
Books	Gym membership
Roller blades	Hockey Tickets
Halloween costume	Trampoline
Guitar	Drum Set
Skis	Snowboard

#### Home and Accessories

Plants and lowers	House
Painter	Computer chair
Coffee maker	Couch
Furniture	Kitchen appliances
Ikea chairs	Apartment
Home in the mountains	House with 1 garden + farm
Library	Pool
Sofa	Chandelier
Rug	Lamp
Appliances	House renovated
Mattress	Hot Tub

Table 27  
*Items that Participants Want to Purchase - Continued*

---

## **Female**

### Transportation

Car	Motorcycle
Gas + Door for my car (repair)	Scooter
Airplane to visit family	Boat
Upgrade for car	

### Clothing and Accessories

Clothes	Footwear
Nap sac	Glasses
Watch	Sunglasses
Jewellery	Umbrella
Earrings	Jacket
Pants	Hat
Coat	Footwear

### Cosmetics

Haircut	Manicure
Face cream	Hair products
Eye shadow	Nail file
Lipstick	Makeup

### Food

Take out	Private Chef
Hamburger	

### Pets

Fish Filter	Dog
Cat	Rabbit
African grey bird	

### Trip/Vacation

Wedding on a beach

Table 27  
*Items that Participants Want to Purchase - Continued*

---

Other

Elf character	Print pictures
Better life	The world to protect it
The economy to protect it	Pumpkins to carve
Prosperity to my family	Presents

**Males**

Computer and Electronics

Laptop	Digital camera
Recording program	TV
PS3	Computer equipment
Home theatre system	Satellite
Cell Phone	I Phone
DVD set	Video game
CDs	Security camera
Krindle or other E-reader	Amplifier
Digital Camcorder	Phone
Speakers	Audio recording device
Stereo system	Gaming joystick
Better processor	More RAM for computer
Windows 7	Headphones
Music	CDs (Music)
Remote controlled Aircraft	Movie (Inglorious Bastards)
Cable (TV)	

Transportation

Bicycle	Motorcycle
Car	Yacht
Private plane	

Cosmetics

Laser hair removal

Table 27  
*Items that Participants Want to Purchase - Continued*

---

Clothing and Accessories

Shoes	Football jersey
Clothes	New undershirts
Sun glasses	New suit
Leather strapped watch	Hat
American Eagle clothes	Fancy silver necklace
Jewellery	Clothing accessories
Watch	Non prescription glasses

Home and Home Accessories

Dining room table	Pool
Freezer with ice cube maker	Condo / house
Pasta bowls	Land
Lodging	Robot vacuum
BBQ	Kitchen Set Appliances
Coffee Machine	Tasteful apartment
Hot tub	Condensed Microwave
Greenhouse	Tea pot

Trip and Vacation

Sports and Leisure

Books / novels	Canvas + paint
Gym membership	Throwing knives
Pass to Picnic Electronik	Camping equipment
Tickets to Bal en Blanc	Musical equipment
Sports equipment	Paint shop
Pilot License	Photography equipment
Karate pass	Snowboard stuff
Books	Skates
Ski Stuff	Massage
Sports tickets	

Other

A nice skeleton	Conservatory
Lock picks	Missile Launcher from Iron Man Movie
F-18 Fighter Jet	Trip into Space
4.0 GPA	NFL team
Time	NHL team
Not to work	

Table 28  
*Items that Participants Need to Purchase*

---

## **Females**

### Electronics and Computer

Printer

### Home and Accessories

Desk

Book shelf

White stripes poster

Pay rent

Dresser

Vacuum cleaner

Drafting table

Kitchen appliances

House

Better living conditions

Bed + mattress

### Sports and Leisure

Books

Gym membership

Exercise equipment

Halloween costume

Paint brushes

Musical instruments

Canvas

### Transportation

Bike helmet and lock

Gas

Bus pass

Car

Scooter

### Cosmetics

Haircut

Conditioner

Shampoo

### Clothes and Accessories

Clothes

Footwear

Purse

Glasses

Watch strap

Table 28  
*Items that Participants Need to Purchase - Continued*

---

School and Education

Pay for school Classes	Tuition
---------------------------	---------

Food

Trip and Travel

Other

Wonder hangers Christmas presents Laser eye surgery	Cigarettes Bills
---	---------------------

**Males**

Electronic and Computer

Microcontroller program (electrical design) Computer screen USB Cable	Phone Computer Computer hard drive
---	--

Sports and Leisure

Sleeping bag Guitar Many books Sports Equipment Gym membership Books	Music Theory Singing mic Microkorg XL Synthesiser Keyboard Time off to prepare tai chi Drum Key
---	---

Home and Accessories

Stain for front door Electrician to fix light on balcony Apartment Bookshelf Large Freezer Space heater Dishwasher	Fixtures for front door Screen for back door Large meditation fountain House Curtains Room decor
--	---



Table 28  
*Items that Participants Need to Purchase - Continued*

---

Transportation

Car	Gas
Mini Cooper	

Cosmetics

Hair cut  
Bar of soap

Clothes and Accessories

Shoes	Clothes
Business Suite	Sunglasses

Food

Trip and Travel

<u>Other</u>	
H1N1 Vaccine	Christmas Gifts

Impulsiveness-Consumer Impulsiveness Scale: CIS (Puri, 1996)

---

Read each of the following adjectives carefully and indicate how well they would describe you. Circle the numbers on the scale next to the adjective. Numbers near 1 indicate that the adjective would usually describe you, numbers near 4 indicate that it would sometimes describe you, and numbers near 7 would indicate that it would seldom describe you. Please answer every statement. Even if you are not completely sure of your answer.

	<i>usually would</i>		<i>sometimes would</i>			<i>seldom would</i>	
	<i>describe me</i>		<i>describe me</i>			<i>describe me</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. impulsive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. careless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. self-controlled	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. extravagant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. farsighted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. responsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. restrained	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. easily tempered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. rational	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. methodical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. enjoy spending	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. a planner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The Compulsive Buying Scale (Valence, d'Astous, and Fortier, 1998)

---

Read each statement carefully and describe how much you agree or disagree with it. For each statement choose a number matching the answer that *best* describes you. Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers. Please use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

When I have money, I cannot help but spend part or the whole of it.

1 2 3 4 5

I am often impulsive in my buying behaviour.

1 2 3 4 5

For me, shopping is a way of facing the stress of my daily life and of relaxing.

1 2 3 4 5

I sometimes feel that something inside pushed me to go shopping.

1 2 3 4 5

There are times when I have a strong urge to buy (clothing, books, etc.).

1 2 3 4 5

At times I have felt somewhat guilty after buying a product, because it seemed unreasonable.

1 2 3 4 5

There are some things I buy that I do not show to anybody for fear of being perceived as irrational in my buying behaviour (“a foolish expense”).

1 2 3 4 5

I often have an unexplainable urge, a sudden and spontaneous desire, to go and buy something in a store.

1 2 3 4 5

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

As soon as I enter the shopping center, I have an irresistible urge to go into a shop and buy something.

1 2 3 4 5

I am one of those people who often respond to direct mail offers (e.g., books, records).

1 2 3 4 5

I have often bought a product that I did not need, while knowing that I have very little money left.

1 2 3 4 5

I am a spendthrift.

1 2 3 4 5

I have sometimes thought “If I had to do it all over again, I would...” and felt sorry for something I have done or said.

1 2 3 4 5

Compulsive Consumption: A Diagnostic Tool/Clinical Screener for Classifying Compulsive Consumers (Faber and O'Guinn, 1992)

---

Read each statement carefully and describe how frequent these events take place or how much you agree or disagree with it. For each statement circle a number matching the answer that *best* describes you. Please answer every statement. Even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers. Please use the following scale:

1. Bought things even though I couldn't afford them.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

2. Felt others would be horrified if they knew my spending habits.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

3. If I have any money left at the end of the pay period, I just have to spend it.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
strongly agree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly disagree

4. Made only the minimum payments on my credit card.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

5. Bought myself something in order to make myself feel better.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

6. Wrote a cheque when I knew I didn't have enough money in the bank to cover it.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

7. Felt anxious or nervous on days I didn't go shopping.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
very often	often	sometimes	almost never	never

Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Scale (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994)

---

Please think of a recent shopping trip. Take about 30 seconds and try to imagine the event as vividly and realistically as you can before continuing to read the next paragraph.

Based on the shopping experience you just recalled, please circle a number matching the answer that *best* describes this experience. Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers.

Please use the following scale:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

This shopping trip was truly a joy.

1 2 3 4 5

I continued to shop, not because I had to, but because I wanted to.

1 2 3 4 5

I accomplished just what I wanted to on this shopping trip.

1 2 3 4 5

This shopping trip truly felt like an escape.

1 2 3 4 5

Compared to other things I could have done, the time spent shopping was truly enjoyable.

1 2 3 4 5

I couldn't buy what I really needed.

1 2 3 4 5

I enjoyed being emerged in exciting new products.

1 2 3 4 5

I enjoyed this shopping trip for it's own sake, not just for the items I may have purchased.

1 2 3 4 5

While shopping, I found just the item(s) I was looking for.

1 2 3 4 5

I had a good time because I was able to act on "the spur-of-the-moment."

1 2 3 4 5

During the trip, I felt the excitement of the hunt.

1 2 3 4 5

I was disappointed because I had to go to another store(s) to complete my shopping trip.

1 2 3 4 5

While shopping, I was able to forget my problems.

1 2 3 4 5

While shopping, I felt a sense of adventure.

1 2 3 4 5

This shopping trip was not a very nice time out.

1 2 3 4 5



Materialistic Values (Richins & Dawson, 1992)

---

Read each statement carefully and describe how much you agree or disagree with it. For each statement circle a number matching the answer that *best* describes you. Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers.

Please use the following scale:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.

1 2 3 4 5

Some of the most important achievements in my life include acquiring material possessions.

1 2 3 4 5

I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.

1 2 3 4 5

I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.

1 2 3 4 5

The things I own say a lot about how well I am doing in my life.

1 2 3 4 5

I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things.

1 2 3 4 5

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

I like to own things that impress people.

1 2 3 4 5

I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own

1 2 3 4 5

I usually buy only the things I need.

1 2 3 4 5

I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.

1 2 3 4 5

My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.

1 2 3 4 5

The things I own aren't all that important to me.

1 2 3 4 5

I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.

1 2 3 4 5

I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.

1 2 3 4 5

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.

1 2 3 4 5

I like a lot of luxury in my life.

1 2 3 4 5

It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.

1 2 3 4 5

I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know.

1 2 3 4 5

Impulsiveness: Buying Impulsiveness Scale (Rook and Fisher, 1995)

---

Read each statement carefully and describe how much you agree or disagree with it. For each statement circle a number matching the answer that *best* describes you. Please answer every statement. Even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers.

Please use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. I often buy things spontaneously.                              | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. "Just do it" describes the way I buy things.                   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I often buy things without thinking.                           | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. "I see it, I buy it" describes me.                             | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. "Buy now, think later" describes me.                           | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.            | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. I carefully plan most of my purchases.                         | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.                | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Impulsiveness: Impulsive Buying Tendency (Weun, Jones, and Beatty, 1997)

---

Read each statement carefully and describe how much you agree or disagree with it. For each statement circle a number matching the answer that *best* describes you. Please answer every statement. Even if you are not completely sure of your answer. Because people are different there are no right or wrong answers.

Please use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

1. When I go shopping, I buy things that I had not intended to purchase.
 

1 2 3 4 5
2. I am a person who makes unplanned purchases.
 

1 2 3 4 5
3. When I see something that really interests me, I buy it without considering the consequences.
 

1 2 3 4 5
4. It is fun to buy spontaneously.
 

1 2 3 4 5
5. I avoid buying things that are not on my shopping list.
 

1 2 3 4 5

### The Individual Difference Questionnaire (Paivio, 1971)

---

The statements on the following pages represent ways of thinking, studying and problem solving. No two statements are exactly alike, so consider each statement carefully before answering. You are asked to rate each item on a 5-point scale which relates to how characteristic the statement is of you. Circling a rating of -2 indicates that the statement is extremely uncharacteristic of you, a rating of +2 indicates that the statement is extremely characteristic of you, a rating of 0 indicates that the statement is neither characteristic nor uncharacteristic of you.

It is important that you answer as frankly and as honestly as you can. Your answers will be kept in the strictest confidence.

---

	+-----+-----+-----+-----+
	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
<b>Extremely Uncharacteristic</b>	<b>Extremely Characteristic</b>
Listening to someone recount their experiences does not usually arouse mental pictures of the incidents being described.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
By using mental pictures of the elements of a problem, I am often able to arrive at a solution.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I enjoy visual arts, such as paintings, more than reading.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
My daydreams are so vivid I feel as though I actually experience the scene.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I do not have a vivid imagination.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I can easily picture moving objects in my mind.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I can form mental pictures to almost any word.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I have only vague visual impressions of scenes I have experienced.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
I think that most people think in terms of mental pictures whether they are completely aware of it or not.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2
My powers of imagination are higher than average.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2

	+-----+-----+-----+-----+	
	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
<b>Extremely Uncharacteristic</b>		<b>Extremely Characteristic</b>
I can close my eyes and easily picture a scene I have experienced.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
When someone describes something that happens to them I find myself vividly imagining the events that happened.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I seldom dream.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I never use mental pictures or images when trying to solve problems.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I find it difficult to form a mental picture of anything.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
My dreams are extremely vivid.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
My thinking often consists of mental pictures or images.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
My daydreams are rather indistinct and hazy.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I enjoy the use of mental pictures to reminisce.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I often use mental images or pictures to help me remember things.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	
I do not form a mental picture of people or places while reading of them.	-2   -1   0   +1   +2	

The Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility – Response Booklet (Schor & Orne, 1962)

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Study discipline: \_\_\_\_\_ Year(s) in program: \_\_\_\_\_

First language spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_ How fluent are you in English?

Not very fluent \_\_\_\_\_ (circle one)  
Somewhat fluent \_\_\_\_\_

Perfectly fluent \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years of education (starting at Gr.1): \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever taken a class with Dr. Laurence? \_\_\_\_\_

Currently taking psychotropic medication: Yes No

History of problems with attention: Yes No

Colourblindness: Yes No

Head Injury: Yes No

Have you ever seen anyone on television or in the movies who was hypnotized? Yes No

Have you ever read a novel about anyone who was hypnotized? Yes No

Have you ever known anyone who was hypnotized? Yes No

Have you yourself ever been hypnotized before? Yes No

- If so, please cite the circumstances and briefly describe your experience...

<p><b>PLEASE DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL THE EXPERIMENTER SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS YOU TO DO SO</b></p>
--



Now please write down briefly, in your own words, a list of all the things that happened **since you began looking at the target**. Please do *not* go into detail. Spend three minutes, no longer, in writing out your reply.

**PLEASE DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE  
UNTIL THE EXPERIMENTER  
SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS YOU TO DO SO**

On this page please write down a list of **anything else** that you now remember **that you did not remember previously**. Please do *not* go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, in writing out your reply.

**PLEASE DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE  
UNTIL THE EXPERIMENTER  
SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS YOU TO DO SO**

**PLEASE *DO NOT* CHANGE ANY ENTRIES ON THE EARLIER PAGES**

## BEHAVIOURAL, OUTWARD RESPONSES

Listed on the next three pages, in chronological order, are 12 specific suggestions that were administered to you during the standardized hypnotic procedure. We would like you to estimate whether or not you objectively responded to these 12 suggestions; i.e., whether or not an onlooker would have observed that you did or did not make certain definite responses by certain specific, pre-defined criteria.

In this section we are interested in your estimates of your outward behaviour and *not* in what your *inner, subjective experience* was like. Later on you will be given more opportunity to describe your inner, subjective experience, but in this section refer only to the outward behavioural responses irrespective of what the experience may have been like subjectively.

It is understood that your estimates may in some cases not be as accurate as you might wish them to be and that you might even have to guess. But we want you to make whatever you feel to be your best estimates regardless.

Beneath a description of each of the 12 suggestions are two sets of responses, labelled **A** and **B**. Please *circle* either A or B for each question, whichever you judge to be more accurate.

Please answer every question

### **1. HEAD FALLING**

You were first told to sit up straight in your chair for 30 seconds and then to think of your head falling forward. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your head fell forward at least 2 inches (5 cm) during the time you were thinking about it happening?

*Circle one:*

- A. My head fell forward at least 2 inches (5 cm).
- B. My head fell forward less than 2 inches (5 cm).

### **2. EYE CLOSURE**

You were next told to rest your hands in your lap and pick out a spot on either hand as a target and concentrate on it. You were then told that your eyelids were becoming tired and heavy. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your eyelids had closed before the time you were told to close them deliberately?

*Circle one:*

- A. My eyelids had closed by then.
- B. My eyelids *had not* closed by then.

### **3. LEFT HAND LOWERING**

You were next told to extend your left arm straight out and feel it becoming heavy as though a weight were pulling the hand and arm down. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your hand lowered at least 6 inches (15 cm) before the time you were told to let your hand down deliberately?

- Circle one:*
- A. My hand lowered at least 6 inches (15 cm) by then.
  - B. My hand lowered less than 6 inches (15 cm) by then.

### **4. RIGHT ARM IMMOBILIZATION**

You were next told how heavy your right hand and arm felt and then told to try to lift your hand up. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that you did not lift your hand and arm up at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) before you were told to stop trying?

- Circle one:*
- A. I *did not* lift my hand and arm at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) by then.
  - B. I did lift my hand and arm 1 inch (2.5 cm) or more by then.

### **5. FINGER LOCK**

You were next told to interlock your fingers, told how your fingers would become tightly interlocked, and then told to try to take your hands apart. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your fingers were incompletely separated before you were told to stop trying to take them apart?

- Circle one:*
- A. My fingers were still incompletely separated by then.
  - B. My fingers had completely separated by then.

### **6. LEFT ARM RIGIDITY**

You were next told to extend your left arm straight out and make a fist, told to notice it becoming stiff, and then told to try to bend it. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that there was less than 2 inches of arm bending before you were told to stop trying?

- Circle one:*
- A. My arm was bent less than 2 inches (5 cm) by then.
  - B. My arm was bent 2 or more inches (5 cm) by then.

### **7. MOVING HANDS TOGETHER**

You were next told to hold your hands out in front of you about a foot (30 cm) apart and then told to imagine a force pulling your hands together. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your hands were not over 6 inches (15 cm) apart before you were told to return your hands to their resting position?

- Circle one:*
- A. My hands *were not* more than 6 inches (15 cm) apart by then.
  - B. My hands were still more than 6 inches (15 cm) apart by then.

### **8. COMMUNICATION INHIBITION**

You were next told to think how hard it might be to shake your head to indicate "no", and then told to try. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed you make a recognizable shake of the head "no" before you were told to stop trying?

- Circle one:*
- A. I *did not* recognizably shake my head "no".
  - B. I did recognizably shake my head "no".

### **9. EXPERIENCING OF FLY**

You were next told to become aware of the buzzing of a fly which was said to become annoying, and then you were told to shoo it away. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed you make any grimacing, any movement, any outward acknowledgement of an effect regardless of what it was like subjectively?

- Circle one:*
- A. I did make some outward acknowledgement.
  - B. I *did not* make any outward acknowledgement.

### **10. EYE CATALEPSY**

You were next told that your eyelids were so tightly closed that you could not open them, and then you were told to try to do so. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed that your eyes remained closed before you were told to stop trying?

- Circle one:*
- A. My eyes remained closed.
  - B. My eyes had opened.

### **11. TOUCHING LEFT ANKLE**

You were next told that after you were awakened you would hear a tapping noise at which time you would reach down and touch your left ankle. You were further informed that you would do this but forget being told to do so. Would you estimate that *an onlooker* would have observed either that you reached down and touched your left ankle, or that you made any partial movement to do so?

- Circle one:*
- A. I made at least a partial observable movement to touch my left ankle.
  - B. I *did not* make even a partial movement, which would have been observable, to touch my left ankle.

### SUBJECTIVE IMPRESSIONS OF RESPONSE

During the recording, several suggestions were administered. We are interested in your impressions about how you experienced these suggestions. The items, listed in the order presented, are described briefly below. For each item, please check the appropriate column.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Suggestion</u>	<u>Successful</u>	<u>Unsuccessful</u>
1.	Head falling forward.		
2.	Eyes becoming heavy and closing.		
3.	Extended left arm becoming heavy and pulling down.		
4.	Right arm heavy and difficulty in lifting it.		
5.	Difficulty in separating interlocked fingers.		
6.	Extended left arm becoming stiff and difficult to bend.		
7.	Outstretched arms, hands being pulled together.		
8.	Difficulty in shaking head "no".		
9.	Getting rid of annoying fly.		
10.	Difficulty in opening eyes.		
11.	Touching left ankle at tapping sound.		
12.	Temporary difficulty in remembering events of hypnosis.		

## SUBJECTIVE, INWARD RESPONSES

The 12 specific suggestions are listed, again in chronological order, on the next four pages. This time, you should focus on your subjective feelings while responding to these suggestions, regardless of what an objective onlooker would have observed, and even if you responded only partially to a suggestion.

People respond to hypnotic suggestions in a variety of ways.

- Sometimes, their response is mostly voluntary and deliberate. For example, when it is suggested that their hands are moving together (Item #3), they purposefully direct the movement of their hands most of the time.
- Sometimes their response is mostly involuntary and automatic. For example, they may find their hands moving together without their helping them.
- And, of course, sometimes there is no response at all.

To the extent that you responded positively to any of the 12 suggestions, whether fully or only in part, please on the next four pages indicate to what degree your response was voluntary, and to what degree it was involuntary. For each of the 12 suggestions, please circle the letter corresponding to the description that most closely characterizes your experience.

Again, it is understood that your estimates may in some cases not be as accurate as you might wish them to be and that you might even have to guess. But we want you to make whatever you feel to be your *best estimates* regardless. Please answer every question.

Please **DO NOT** return to earlier pages

**1. HEAD FALLING**

You were first told to sit up straight in your chair for 30 seconds and then to think of your head falling forward.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**2. EYE CLOSURE**

You were next told to rest your hands in your lap and pick out a spot on either hand as a target and concentrate on it. You were then told that your eyelids were becoming tired and heavy.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**3. LEFT HAND LOWERING**

You were next told to extend your left arm straight out and feel it becoming heavy as though a weight were pulling the hand and arm down.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**4. RIGHT ARM IMMOBILIZATION**

You were next told how heavy your right hand and arm felt and then told to try to lift your hand up.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**5. FINGER LOCK**

You were next told to interlock your fingers, told how your fingers would become tightly interlocked, and then told to try to take your hands apart.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.



## **6. LEFT ARM RIGIDITY**

You were next told to extend your left arm straight out and make a fist, told to notice it becoming stiff, and then told to try to bend it.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

## **7. MOVING HANDS TOGETHER**

You were next told to hold your hands out in front of you about a foot (30 cm) apart and then told to imagine a force pulling your hands together.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

## **8. COMMUNICATION INHIBITION**

You were next told to think how hard it might be to shake your head to indicate "no", and then told to try to do so anyway.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

## **9. EXPERIENCING OF FLY**

You were next told to become aware of the buzzing of a fly which was said to become annoying, and then you were told to shoo it away.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

## **10. EYE CATALEPSY**

You were next told that your eyelids were so tightly closed that you could not open them, and then you were told to try to do so.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**11. TOUCHING LEFT ANKLE**

You were next told that after you were awakened you would hear a tapping noise at which time you would reach down and touch your left ankle. You were further informed that you would do this but forget being told to do so.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**12. TEMPORARY FORGETTING**

You were also told that after you came out of hypnosis you would be unable to remember the things you did while you were hypnotized, until you were told you could remember everything.

- Circle one:*
- A. I did not respond at all during this time.
  - B. My response was mostly voluntary.
  - C. My response was mostly involuntary.

**If you would like to mention anything else about your experience, please do so on the back of this sheet.**

# MANUAL

## HARVARD GROUP SCALE OF HYPNOTIC SUSCEPTIBILITY

FORM A

*by Ronald E. Shor and Emily Carota Orne*



CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGISTS PRESS, INC.  
PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

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\* \* \* \* \*

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Research findings to date indicate that norms derived from the adapted scale are congruent with norms derived from the individually-administered version (Bentler & Hilgard, 1963; Shor & E. Orne, 1963).

The same social and ethical responsibilities that apply in the individual administration of the scale also apply, of course, in a group administration. Because in a group administration the examiner has little direct contact with the individual reactions of his subjects, it behooves him to take extra precautions to be alert to the possibility of an occasional disturbance which may arise attendant to the hypnotic experience. Out of hundreds of subjects hypnotized with the individually-administered and group-administered versions of the scale, only two or three per cent felt in the least disturbed by the experience, but it is valuable to learn from these subjects. "In some cases a disturbance such as a headache resulted from the revival under hypnosis of bad childhood experiences under chemical anesthetics; in other cases the disturbance attributed to hypnosis could be shown to have been there prior to the hypnotic induction. While hypnosis is in general entirely harmless, and often helpful, the assumption must not be made that it is a trivial experience. For some subjects it is a deep intrusion into their private lives. Hence the person planning experiments on hypnosis should be prepared for the possibility of some unusual consequences" (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1959, p. 6).

ESTABLISHING RAPPORT PRIOR TO THE INITIAL  
INDUCTION (Time: 7 minutes)

It is assumed that subjects have been notified of the hypnotic testing and that their presence is an implicit agreement to be hypnotized. An effort should be made to discourage a lack of seriousness in subjects and to prevent the presence of casual onlookers. Provisions should also be made to prevent persons from entering the room once the examiner begins the introductory remarks. The gist of the following remarks should be memorized, but the conversation should flow naturally; hence these initial remarks should not be read from the printed page. (The main procedures that follow in later sections are intended to be read verbatim.)

Subjects are to be seated. Physical arrangements should be moderately comfortable and relatively non-disturbing. For example, subjects should not be seated so close to a table that they hit against it when carrying out the tasks. Similarly, smoking cannot be allowed during the test proper.

Preliminary Remarks by Examiner. In a few minutes I am going to administer a standard procedure for measuring susceptibility to hypnosis. At the end of the standard procedure you yourself will report on what the experience was like in the Response Booklet which has been distributed to you. Note that the booklet is sealed. Do not open the Response Booklet until I specifically tell you to do so at the end of the standard procedure. On the Cover Page of the Response Booklet are spaces for your name, address, and some other general information. Please fill in this information now. Again, please do not open the booklet now. Fill in the information on the Cover Page only. (Allow a minute or two for subjects to record this information.)

Let's talk a while before we start. I want you to be quite at ease, and it may help if I answer a few of your questions first. I am assuming that for some of you this is the first time you are experiencing hypnotism.

(In presenting the following remarks the examiner may find it useful in establishing rapport to elicit some questioning and participation from members of the group. Questions are to be answered by paraphrasing the points made below.)

People experiencing hypnosis for the first time are sometimes a little uneasy because they do not know what the experience will be like, or because they may have a distorted notion of what it is like. It is very natural to be curious about a new experience. Your curiosity will be satisfied before we are through, but you can best get the answers you want by just letting yourself be a part of what goes on, and by not trying to watch the process in detail.

Some people, however, have a tendency to allay their initial uneasiness in a new situation by laughing, giggling or whispering. We must request that you refrain from this type of response for the duration of the procedures here so as not to disrupt the concentration of the individuals around you.

To allow you to feel more fully at ease in the situation, let me reassure you on a few points. First of all, the experience, while a little unusual, may not seem so far removed from ordinary experience as you have been led to expect. Hypnosis is largely a question of your willingness to be receptive and responsive to ideas, and to allow these ideas to act upon you without interference. These ideas we call suggestions.

Second, you will not be asked to do anything that will make you look silly or stupid, or that will prove embarrassing to you. We are here for serious scientific purposes.

Third, and finally, I shall not probe into your personal affairs, so that there will be nothing personal about what you are to do or say during the hypnotic state.

You may wonder why we are doing these experiments. Hypnotism is being used more and more by physicians: for example, by dentists to relieve pain, by obstetricians to make childbirth easier, by psychiatrists to reduce anxiety. If we can understand the processes involved, we will know more about the relationship between ideas and action, more about the way in which personality operates. So in participating here you are contributing to scientific knowledge of a kind that can be used to help other human beings. We are trying here merely to understand hypnotism. Probably all people can be hypnotized, but some are much more readily hypnotized than others, even when each of them co-operates. We are studying some of these differences among people.

Have you any questions or comments before we go ahead? (Answer questions by paraphrasing the above points.)

Now please make yourself comfortable in your chair. Clear your lap of books and papers, and prepare to begin. Individuals who wear glasses should keep them on. If, however, you are wearing contact lenses, it might be more comfortable to remove them. (The examiner should also communicate the following if the main procedures are tape recorded.) In order to help keep our main procedures constant they have been put onto a tape recording. In a moment I shall turn on the tape recorder.

#### MAIN PROCEDURES

(The following instructions are to be presented verbatim.)

1a. HEAD FALLING (Total time: 3' 30")

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42:15  
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To begin with, I want you to experience how it feels to respond to suggestions when you are not hypnotized. If you will now please sit up straight in your chair . . . . Close your eyes and relax; continue, however, to sit up straight. That's right. Eyes closed and sit up straight. Please stay in that position with your eyes closed, while at the same time letting yourself relax. (Allow 30" to pass.) Now just remain in the same position and keep your eyes closed. . . . sitting up straight in your chair. . . . with your eyes closed.

In a moment I shall ask you to think of your head falling forward. As you know, thinking of a movement and making a movement are closely related. Soon after you think of your

head falling forward you will experience a tendency to make the movement. You will find your head actually falling forward, more and more forward, until your head will fall so far forward that it will hang limply on your neck.

Listen carefully to what I say and think of your head falling forward, drooping forward. Think of your head falling forward, falling forward, more and more forward. Your head is falling forward, falling forward. More and more forward. Your head is falling more and more forward, falling more and more forward. Your head is going forward, drooping down, down, limp and relaxed. Your head is drooping, swaying, falling forward, falling forward, falling forward, falling, swaying, drooping, limp, relaxed, forward, forward, falling, falling, falling . . . . Now!

That's fine. Now please sit up and open your eyes. That's right. Sit up and open your eyes. You can see how thinking about a movement produces a tendency to make the movement. You learn to become hypnotized as you bring yourself to give expression to your action tendencies. But at this point you have the idea of what it means to accept and act upon suggestions.

2a. EYE CLOSURE (Total time: 15' 25'')

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38:45  
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Now I want you to seat yourself comfortably and rest your hands in your lap. That's right. Rest your hands in your lap. Now look at your hands and find a spot on either hand and just focus on it. It doesn't matter what spot you choose; just select some spot to focus on. I shall refer to the spot which you have chosen as the target. That's right . . . hands relaxed . . . look directly at the target. I am about to give you some instructions that will help you to relax and gradually to enter a state of hypnosis. Just relax and make yourself comfortable. I want you to look steadily at the target and while keeping your eyes upon it to listen to what I say. Your ability to be hypnotized depends partly on your willingness to cooperate and partly on your ability to concentrate upon the target and upon my words. You have already shown yourself to be cooperative by coming here today, and with your further cooperation I can help you to become hypnotized. You can be hypnotized only if you are willing. I assume that you are willing and that you are doing your best to cooperate by concentrating on the target and listening to my words, letting happen whatever you feel is going to take place. Just let it happen. If you pay close attention to what I tell you, and think of the things I tell you to think about, you can easily experience what it is like to be hypnotized. There is nothing fearful or mysterious about hypnosis. It is a perfectly normal consequence of certain psychological principles. It is merely a state of strong interest in some particular thing. In a sense you are hypnotized whenever you see a good show and forget you are part of the audience, but instead feel you are part of the story. Many people report that becoming hypnotized feels at first like falling asleep, but with the difference that somehow or other they keep hearing my voice as a sort of background to whatever other experience they may have. In some ways hypnosis is like sleepwalking; however, hypnosis is also an individual experience and is not just alike for everyone. In a sense the hypnotized person is like a sleepwalker, for he can carry out various and complex activities while remaining hypnotized. All I ask of you is that you keep up your attention and interest and continue to cooperate as you have been cooperating. Nothing will be done that will cause you any embarrassment. Most people find this a very interesting experience. (Time: 3' 35'')

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35.10  
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Just relax. Don't be tense. Keep your eyes on the target. Look at it as steadily as you can. Should your eyes wander away from it, that will be all right . . . just bring your eyes back to it. After a while you may find that the target gets blurry, or perhaps moves about, or again, changes color. That is all right. Should you get sleepy, that will be fine, too. Whatever happens, let it happen and keep staring at the target for a while. There will come a time, however, when your eyes will be so tired, will feel so heavy, that you will be unable to keep them open any longer and they will close, perhaps quite involuntarily. When this happens, just let it take place. (Time: 1' 10")

34:00

34:00

As I continue to talk, you will find that you will become more and more drowsy, but not all people respond at the same rate to what I have to say. Some people's eyes will close before others. When the time comes that your eyes have closed, just let them remain closed. You may find that I shall still give suggestions for your eyes to close. These suggestions will not bother you. They will be for other people. Giving these suggestions to other people will not disturb you but will simply allow you to relax more and more.

You will find that you can relax completely but at the same time sit up comfortably in your chair with little effort. You will be able to shift your position to make yourself comfortable as needed without it disturbing you. Now just allow yourself to relax completely. Relax every muscle of your body. Relax the muscles of your legs . . . Relax the muscles of your feet . . . Relax the muscles of your arms . . . Relax the muscles of your hands . . . of your fingers . . . Relax the muscles of your neck, of your chest . . . Relax all the muscles of your body . . . Let yourself be limp, limp, limp. Relax more and more, more and more. Relax completely. Relax completely. Relax completely. (Time: 2'15")

31:45

As you relax more and more, a feeling of heaviness perhaps comes over your body. A feeling of heaviness is coming into your legs and your arms . . . into your feet and your hands . . . into your whole body. Your legs feel heavy and limp, heavy and limp . . . Your arms are heavy, heavy . . . Your whole body feels heavy, heavier and heavier. Like lead. Your eyelids feel especially heavy. Heavy and tired. You are beginning to feel drowsy, drowsy and sleepy. Your breathing is becoming slow and regular, slow and regular. You are getting drowsy and sleepy, more and more drowsy and sleepy while your eyelids become heavier and heavier, more and more tired and heavy. (Time: 1' 25")

30:20

Your eyes are tired from staring. The heaviness in your eyelids is increasing. Soon you will not be able to keep your eyes open. Soon your eyes will close of themselves. Your eyelids will be too heavy to keep open. Your eyes are tired from staring. Your eyes are becoming wet from straining. You are becoming increasingly drowsy and sleepy. The strain in your eyes is getting greater and greater, greater and greater. It would be so nice to close your eyes, to relax completely, and just listen sleepily to my voice talking to you. You would like to close your eyes and relax completely, relax completely. You will soon reach your limit. The strain will be so great, your eyes will be so tired, your lids will become so heavy, your eyes will close of themselves, close of themselves. (Time: 1' 20")

29:00

Your eyelids are getting heavy, very heavy. You are relaxed, very relaxed. There is a pleasant feeling of warmth and heaviness all through your body. You are tired and drowsy. Tired and sleepy. Sleepy. Sleepy. Sleepy. Listen only to my voice. Pay attention

to nothing else but my voice. Your eyes are getting blurred. You are having difficulty seeing. Your eyes are strained. The strain is getting greater and greater, greater and greater. (Time: 50")

28:10

Your lids are heavy. Heavy as lead. Getting heavier and heavier, heavier and heavier. They are pushing down, down, down. Your eyelids seem weighted, weighted with lead, heavy as lead . . . Your eyes are blinking, blinking, blinking . . . closing . . . closing . . . (Time: 35")

27:35

Your eyes may have closed by now, and if they have not, they would soon close of themselves. But there is no need to strain them more. Even if your eyes have not closed fully as yet, you have concentrated well upon the target, and have become relaxed and drowsy. At this time you may just let your eyes close. That's it, eyes completely closed. Close your eyes now. (Time: 35")

27:00

You are now comfortably relaxed, but you are going to relax even more, much more. Your eyes are now closed. You will keep your eyes closed until I tell you otherwise, or I tell you to awaken . . . You feel drowsy and sleepy. Just keep listening to my voice. Pay close attention to it. Keep your thoughts on what I am saying --just listen. You are going to get much more drowsy and sleepy. Soon you will be deep asleep but you will continue to hear me. You will not awaken until I tell you to do so. I shall now begin to count. At each count you will feel yourself going down, down, into a deep, comfortable, a deep restful sleep. A sleep in which you will be able to do all sorts of things I ask you to do. One--you are going to go deeply asleep . . . Two--down, down into a deep, sound sleep . . . Three--four--more and more, more and more asleep . . . Five--six--seven--you are sinking, sinking into a deep, deep sleep. Nothing will disturb you. Pay attention only to my voice and only to such things as I may call to your attention. I would like you to keep on paying attention to my voice and the things I tell you . . . Eight--nine--ten--eleven--twelve--deeper and deeper, always deeper asleep--thirteen--fourteen--fifteen--although deep asleep you can clearly hear me. You will always hear me no matter how deeply asleep you may feel yourself to be . . . Sixteen--seventeen--eighteen--deep asleep, fast asleep. Nothing will disturb you. You are going to experience many things that I will tell you to experience . . . Nineteen, twenty. Deep asleep! You will not awaken until I tell you to do so. You will wish to sleep and will have the experiences I shall presently describe. (Time: 3' 40")

3a. HAND LOWERING (LEFT HAND) (Total time: 5' 05")

22:20

Introduction. As you become even more drowsy and sleepy, it will not disturb you to make yourself comfortable in your chair and put your head in a comfortable position.

Now that you are very relaxed and sleepy, listening without effort to my voice, I am going to help you to learn more about how your thoughts affect your actions in this state. Not all people experience just the same things in this state, and perhaps you will not have all the experiences I will describe to you. That will be all right. But you will have at least some of the experiences and you will find these interesting. You just experience whatever you can. Pay close attention to what I tell you and watch what happens. Just let happen whatever you find is happening, even if it is not what you expect.

Instruction Proper. Please extend your left arm straight out in front of you, up in the air, with the palm of your hand down. Left arm straight out in front of you . . . straight out, up in the air, with the palm of your hand down. That's it. Left arm straight out in front of you . . . palm down. I want you now to pay close attention to this hand, the feelings in it, and what is happening to it. As you pay attention to it you are more aware of it than you have been--you notice whether it is warm or cool, whether there is a little tingling in it, whether there is a tendency for your fingers to twitch ever so slightly . . . That's right, I want you to pay close attention to this hand because something very interesting is about to happen to it. It is beginning to get heavy . . . heavier and heavier . . . as though a weight were pulling the hand and the arm down . . . you can picture a weight pulling on it . . . and as it feels heavier and heavier it begins to move . . . as if something were forcing it down . . . a little bit down . . . more and more down . . . down . . . and as I count it gets heavier and heavier and goes down more and more . . . one, down . . . two, down . . . three, down . . . four, down, more and more down . . . five, down . . . six, down . . . seven . . . eight . . . heavier and heavier, down and more and more . . . nine . . . down . . . ten . . . heavier and heavier . . . down more and more. (Allow 10")

That's fine . . . just let your hand now go back to its original resting position and relax. Your hand back to its original resting position and relax. You must have noticed how heavy and tired the arm and hand felt; much more so than it ordinarily would if you were to hold it out that way for a little while; you probably noticed how something seemed to be pulling it down. Now just relax . . . your hand and arm are quite comfortable again . . . quite comfortable again. There . . . just relax. Relax.

4a. ARM IMMOBILIZATION (RIGHT ARM) (Total time: 2' 55")

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17:15  
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You are very relaxed. The general heaviness you have felt from time to time you now feel all over your body. Now I want you to pay close attention to your right arm and hand . . . Your right arm and hand share in the feeling of heaviness . . . how heavy your right hand feels . . . and note how as you think about this heaviness in your hand and arm the heaviness seems to grow even more . . . Now your arm is getting heavy . . . very heavy. Now your hand is getting heavy . . . so heavy. . . like lead . . . perhaps a little later you would like to see how heavy your hand is . . . it seems much too heavy to lift . . . but perhaps in spite of being so heavy you could lift it a little, although it may now be too heavy even for that . . . Why don't you see how heavy it is . . . Just try to lift your hand up, just try. Just try to lift your hand up, just try. (Allow 10")

That's fine . . . stop trying . . . just relax. You notice that when you tried to lift it, there was some resistance because of the relaxed state you are in. But now you can just rest your hand again. Your hand and arm now feel normal again. They are no longer heavy. You could lift them now if you wanted to, but don't try now. Just relax . . . relax completely. Relax. Just relax.

5a. FINGER LOCK (Total time: 1' 40")

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14:20  
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Now let us try something else. Put your fingers together. Interlock your fingers together. Interlock your fingers and press your hands tightly together. That's it. Put your

fingers together. Interlock your fingers and press your hands tightly together. Interlock tightly . . . hands pressed tightly together. Notice how your fingers are becoming tightly interlocked together, more and more tightly interlocked together . . . so tightly interlocked together that you wonder very much if you could take your fingers and hands apart . . . Your fingers are interlocked, tightly interlocked . . . and I want you to try to take your hands apart . . . just try . . . (Allow 10")

That's right. Stop trying and relax. You notice how hard it was to get started to take them apart. Your hands are no longer tightly clasped together . . . You can take them apart. Now return your hands to their resting position and relax. Hands to their resting position and relax . . . just relax.

6a. ARM RIGIDITY (LEFT) (Total time: 2' 25")

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12:40  
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Please extend your left arm straight out in front of you, up in the air, and make a fist. Arm straight out in front of you. That's right. Straight out, and make a fist. Arm straight out, a tight fist . . . make a tight fist. I want you to pay attention to this arm and imagine that it is becoming stiff . . . stiffer and stiffer . . . very stiff . . . and now you notice that something is happening to your arm . . . you notice a feeling of stiffness coming into it . . . It is becoming stiff . . . more and more stiff . . . rigid . . . like a bar of iron . . . and you know how difficult . . . how impossible it is to bend a bar of iron like your arm . . . See how much your arm is like a bar of iron . . . test how stiff and rigid it is . . . try to bend it . . . try. (Allow 10")

That's good. Now just stop trying to bend your arm and relax. Stop trying to bend your arm and relax. I want you to experience many things. You felt the creeping stiffness . . . that you had to exert a good deal of effort to do something that would normally be very easy. But your arm is not stiff any longer. Just place your arm back in resting position . . . back in resting position. Just relax and as your arm relaxes, let your whole body relax. As your arm relaxes, let your whole body relax.

7a. HANDS MOVING (TOGETHER) (Total time: 1' 45")

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10:15  
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Please hold both hands up in the air, straight out in front of you, palms facing inward--palms facing toward each other. Hold your hands about a foot apart . . . about a foot apart. Both arms straight out in front of you, hands about a foot apart . . . palms facing inward . . . about a foot apart.

Now I want you to imagine a force attracting your hands toward each other, pulling them together. As you think of this force pulling your hands together, they will move together, slowly at first, but they will move closer together, closer and closer together as though a force were acting on them . . . moving . . . moving . . . closer, closer . . . (Allow 10" without further suggestion.)

That's fine. You see again how thinking about a movement causes a tendency to make it. Now place your hands back in their resting position and relax . . . your hands back in their resting position and relax.

## 8a. COMMUNICATION INHIBITION (Total time: 1' 25")

8:30

You are very relaxed now . . . deeply relaxed . . . think how hard it might be to communicate while so deeply relaxed . . . perhaps as hard as when asleep . . . I wonder if you could shake your head to indicate "no." I really don't think you could . . . You might try a little later to shake your head "no" when I tell you to . . . but I think you will find it quite difficult . . . Why don't you try to shake your head "no" now . . . just try to shake it. (Allow 10")

That's all right . . . stop trying and relax. You see again how you have to make an effort to do something normally as easy as shaking your head. You can shake it to indicate "no" much more easily now. Shake your head easily now . . . That's right, now relax, Just relax.

## 9a. HALLUCINATION (FLY) (Total time: 1' 30")

7:05

I am sure that you have paid so close attention to what we have been doing that you have not noticed the fly which has been buzzing about you . . . But now that I call your attention to it you become increasingly aware of this fly which is going round and round about your head . . . nearer and nearer to you . . . buzzing annoyingly . . . hear the buzz getting louder as it keeps darting at you . . . You don't care much for this fly . . . You would like to shoo it away . . . get rid of it . . . It annoys you. Go ahead and get rid of it if you want to . . . (Allow 10")

There, it's going away . . . it's gone . . . and you are no longer annoyed . . . no more fly. Just relax, relax completely. Relax . . . just relax.

## 10a. EYE CATALEPSY (Total time: 2')

5:35

You have had your eyes closed for a long time while you have remained relaxed. They are by now tightly closed, tightly shut . . . In a few moments I shall ask you to try to open your eyes. When you are told to try, most likely your eyes will feel as if they were glued together . . . tightly glued shut. Even if you were able to open your eyes, you would, of course, only do so momentarily and then immediately close them again and relax, so as not to disturb your concentration. But I doubt that you will be able--even momentarily--to open your eyes. They are so tightly closed that you could not open them. Perhaps you would soon like to try to open your eyes momentarily in spite of their feeling so heavy and so completely . . . so tightly closed. Just try . . . try--to open your eyes. (Allow 10")

All right. Stop trying. Now again allow your eyes to become tightly shut. Your eyes, tightly shut. You've had a chance to feel your eyes tightly shut. Now relax. Your eyes are normal again, but just keep them closed and relax. Normal again . . . just keep them closed and relaxed . . . relaxed and shut.

11a. POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION (TOUCHING LEFT ANKLE);  
AMNESIA (Total time: 3' 35")

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3:35  
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Remain deeply relaxed and pay close attention to what I am going to tell you next. In a moment I shall begin counting backwards from twenty to one. You will gradually wake up, but for most of the count you will still remain in the state you are now in. By the time I reach "five" you will open your eyes, but you will not be fully aroused. When I get to "one" you will be fully alert, in your normal state of wakefulness. You probably will have the impression that you have slept because you will have difficulty in remembering all the things I have told you and all the things you did or felt. In fact, you will find it to be so much of an effort to recall any of these things that you will have no wish to do so. It will be much easier simply to forget everything until I tell you that you can remember. You will remember nothing of what has happened until I say to you: "Now you can remember everything!" You will not remember anything until then. After you open your eyes, you will feel fine. You will have no headache or other after-effects. I shall now count backwards from twenty, and at "five," not sooner, you will open your eyes but not be fully aroused until I say "one." At "one" you will be awake . . . A little later you will hear a tapping noise like this. (Demonstrate.) When you hear the tapping noise, you will reach down and touch your left ankle. You will touch your left ankle, but forget that I told you to do so, just as you will forget the other things, until I tell you "Now you can remember everything." Ready, now: 20--19--18--17--16--15--14--13--12--11--10, half-way--9--8--7--6--5--4--3--2--1. Wake up! Wide awake! Any remaining drowsiness which you may feel will quickly pass.

(A distinct tapping noise is now to be made. Then allow 10" before continuing.)

TESTING

Now please take your Response Booklet, break the seal and turn to the second page of the Booklet. Do not turn to the third page until I specifically instruct you to do so later. On the second page please write down briefly in your own words a list of the things that happened since you began looking at the target. You should not go into much detail here on the particular ways in which you responded, but please try to mention all of the different things that you were asked to do. You will now be given three minutes to write out this information. At the end of three minutes you will be asked a number of more specific questions regarding your experiences. (Allow 2') Please complete your list in one more minute. If you have already completed your list, spend the next minute trying to recall if there was anything else which you may have neglected to mention. (Allow 1' more.)

All right, now listen carefully to my words. Now you can remember everything. Please turn to page three and write down a list of anything else that you remember now that you did not remember previously. You will be given two minutes more to write out this information. (Allow 2')

Now please turn to page four, and answer the questions in the remainder of the booklet. Use your own judgment where questions are ambiguous.

(Collect booklets at the end of the session. If necessary, instruct subjects to answer only as much of the last section on subjective experiences as time permits.)

## SCORING

Scoring is simply + or - for each of the 12 items. The objective, behavioral items receive a + for every A response, a - for every B response. Amnesia is scored + if fewer than four of the nine items induced within hypnosis were recalled before the signal to remember was given (items 3 through 11). The nine items need not be mentioned by their names to be counted, provided it is reasonably clear which ones are meant. Each of the items can be counted only once, no matter how much detail is given. Even when a subject's response is sufficiently ambiguous that it could be interpreted to refer to more than one item on the scale (such as the response, "arms felt heavy"), for the purposes of standardly scoring the amnesia item, such a response should be counted as only one item recalled.

Maximum total scale score is 12 pluses.

A comparison of simultaneous self-report scoring and scoring by raters of 7 of the 11 behavioral items yielded a correlation of .82. The self-report scores averaged slightly higher than the rater scores; for the full 12 items, this discrepancy would equal an average of 7/10ths of one item (Shor and Orne, 1963).

Means of the Group form compared with means of three groups administered the individual form are as follows:

Sample	Mean	N
1. Group Form	7.39	132
2. Volunteers	8.77	105
3. Controls	6.73	52
4. Originals	5.25	124

All subjects were college students; the first three from Harvard and vicinity, the "originals" from Stanford. The "controls" were students who had not volunteered for hypnosis experiments. Further normative, reliability, and item difficulty data are reported in the references.

1978

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## Differential Personality Questionnaire (Tellegen, 1978)

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In this booklet you will find a series of statements a person might use to describe his or her characteristics. Each statement is followed by two choices -- True and False. Read the statement and decide which choice better describes you. Then, circle your answer on the sheet.

Please answer every statement, even if you are not completely sure of the answer. Read each statement carefully, but don't spend too much time deciding on the answer.

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- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| Sometimes I feel and experience things as I did when I was a child.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| I can be greatly moved by eloquent or poetic language.  | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| While watching a movie, a television show, or a play, I may become so involved that I forget about myself and my surroundings and experience the story as if it were real and as if I were taking part in it. | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| If I stare at a picture and then look away from it, I can sometimes "see" an image of the picture, almost as if I were still looking at it.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| Sometimes I feel as if my mind could envelop the whole world.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| I like to watch cloud shapes change in the sky.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| If I wish, I can imagine (or daydream) some things so vividly that they hold my attention as a good movie or story does.  | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| I think I really know what some people mean when they talk about mystical experiences.  | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| I sometimes "step outside" my usual self and experience an entirely different state of being.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| Textures -- such as wool, sand, wood -- sometimes remind me of colors or music.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| Sometimes I experience things as if they were doubly real.  | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| When I listen to music, I can get so caught up in it that I don't notice anything else.   | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |

- If I wish, I can imagine that my body is so heavy that I could not move it if I wanted to. **T F**
- I can often somehow sense the presence of another person before I actually see or hear him or her. **T F**
- The crackle and flames of a wood fire stimulate my imagination. **T F**
- It is sometimes possible for me to be completely immersed in nature or in art and to feel as if my whole state of consciousness has somehow been temporarily altered. **T F**
- Different colors have distinctive and special meanings for me. **T F**
- I am able to wander off into my own thoughts while doing a routine task and actually forget that I am doing the task, and then find a few minutes later that I have completed it. **T F**
- I can sometimes recollect certain past experiences in my life with such clarity and vividness that it is like living them again or almost so. **T F**
- Things that might seem meaningless to others often make sense to me. **T F**
- While acting in a play, I think I could really feel the emotions of the character and "become" him or her for the time being, forgetting both myself and the audience. **T F**
- My thoughts often don't occur as words but as visual images. **T F**
- I often take delight in small things (like the five-pointed star shape that appears when you cut an apple across the core or the colors in soap bubbles). **T F**
- When listening to organ music or other powerful music, I sometimes feel as if I am being lifted into the air. **T F**
- Sometimes I can change noise into music by the way I listen to it. **T F**
- Some of my most vivid memories are called up by scents and smells. **T F**
- Certain pieces of music remind me of pictures or moving patterns of color. **T F**
- I often know what someone is going to say before he or she says it. **T F**

I often have "physical memories"; for example, after I've been swimming I may still feel as if I'm in the water. **T F**

The sound of a voice can be so fascinating to me that I can just go on listening to it. **T F**

At times I somehow feel the presence of someone who is not physically there. **T F**

Sometimes thoughts and images come to me without the slightest effort on my part. **T F**

I find that different odors have different colors. **T F**

I can be deeply moved by a sunset. **T F**

## Subject Information Sheet

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All information provided on the information sheet in addition to the answers to the questionnaires will remain confidential.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Other #: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate approximately how much time (in **MINUTES**) you spent with each type of media in the preceding 24 hours before participating in this study?

Television \_\_\_\_\_ News Paper \_\_\_\_\_

Internet \_\_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_\_

Watching Movies \_\_\_\_\_ Listening to music \_\_\_\_\_

In the preceding 24 hours before participating in this study, approximately how many advertisements did you see?

1	2	3	4	5
None		A few		A lot

Please indicate approximately how much time (in **HOURS**) you spend with each type of media **PER WEEK**?

Television \_\_\_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_\_\_

Internet \_\_\_\_\_ News Paper \_\_\_\_\_

Watching Movies \_\_\_\_\_ Listening to music \_\_\_\_\_

What is your yearly income?

Do you get financial assistance from anyone (i.e. parent, guardian spouse, ect...)? If yes please indicate how much.

If yes, please indicate the approximate yearly income of anyone who provides financial assistance to you?

Do you pay rent?                      Yes              No

Do you have any money savings?    Yes              No

Please indicate approximately how much you have saved?

Are you in debt?                      Yes              No

Please indicate approximately how much debt you have.

Ethnic Background (where were you born): \_\_\_\_\_

What is the ethnic background of your parents (where were they born): \_\_\_\_\_

## Original Questionnaire

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Please list everything you presently desire buying. List everything you strongly want or need to purchase even if you cannot afford the product or service.

Take as much time as you need.

What would be the minimum yearly salary for you to be able to live at a basic minimum?

What would be your ideal yearly salary for you to live comfortably and not worry about money?

Are you influenced by advertising?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Not at all                      Somewhat                      A lot

Please explain how advertising influences you?

Are people generally influenced by advertising?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Not at all                      Somewhat                      A lot

Please explain how people are generally influenced by advertising?

Please list all factors that you think would make someone more likely to be influenced by advertising?

Please list all factors that you think would make someone less likely to be influenced by advertising?

As you were growing up, did your parents or guardians explain to you what advertising was or how it worked?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Not at all                      Somewhat                      A lot

What did your parents or guardians they tell you about advertising as you were growing up?



## Consent Form to Participate In Research

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This is to state that I agree to participate in the program of research being conducted by Erik Chevrier in the Department of Psychology at Concordia University.

### A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of this study is to gain further insight into memory, advertising and consumption.

### B. PROCEDURES

I will be asked to complete a questionnaire, complete a memory test, then answer some written questions.

### C. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.

I understand that my participation in this study is CONFIDENTIAL.

I understand that the data from this study may be published.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*Reach Erik at: (514) 998-5889*

*Laboratory Room: LOY PY-037*

If at any time you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, please feel free to contact the Office of Research (Secretary to University Human Research Ethics Committee) at (514) 848-4887.

List of Magazine Advertisements

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Gucci – Sunglasses	Motorola – Razor (mobile phone)
Roland – Drums	Quick – Chocolate Milk
Panasonic – Lumix Camera	Garnier – Hair Dye
Sheisedo – Make-up	Nissan – Car
Jacob’s Creek – Wine	The Bay – Apparel
Saab – Car	Weber – Barbeque
Panasonic – Stereo	Breitling - Watch
Yves Saint Laurent – Perfume	Quick Silver – Apparel
Revlon – Make-up	Birks – Earrings
Budweiser – Beer	Diesel – Apparel
Samsung – Mobile Phone	Schick – Razor Blades
L’Oreal – Hair Dye	Pantene – Shampoo
Magazines Canada - Magazines	Samsung – Electronics
Ikea - Furniture	Payless – Shoes
Chantelle – Bra	Cote d’Or – Chocolate
Tudor – Watch	Ice Breakers – Mints
Onkyo – Speakers	Ubisoft – Farcry 2 (video game)
Silk – Soy Milk	Dasani – Bottled Watter
Cover Girl – Make-up	Samsung – Television
Biore – Make-up	
Subaru – Car	

### Random Number Strings

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**9864**

**3021**

**95432**

**432**

**24**

**8383**

9395

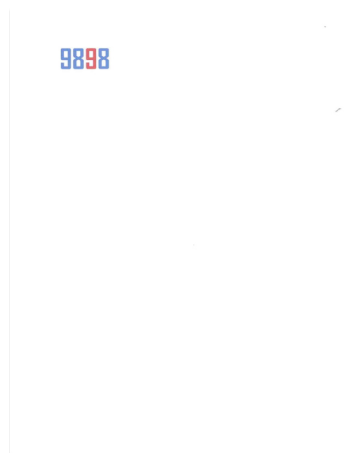
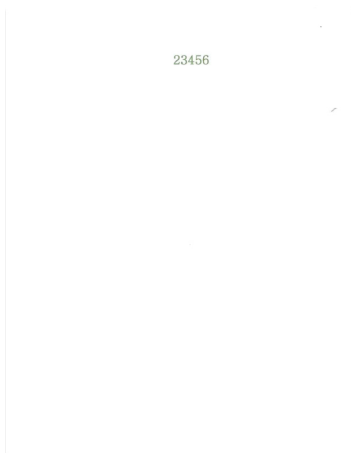
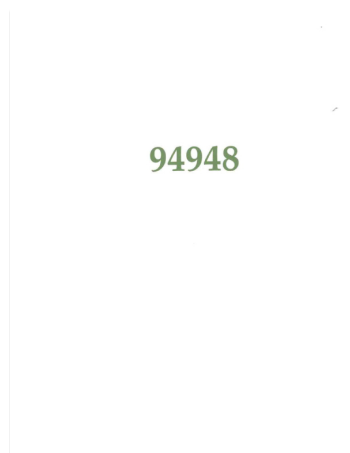
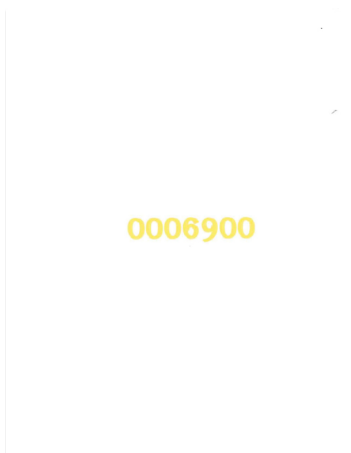
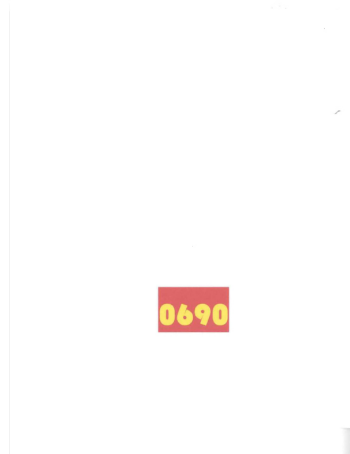
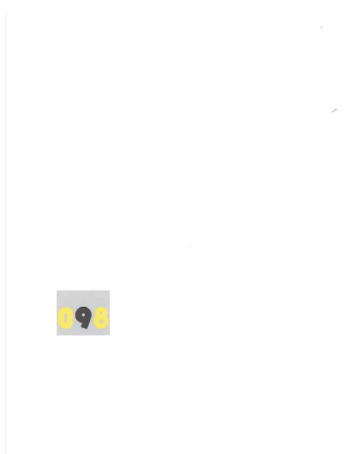
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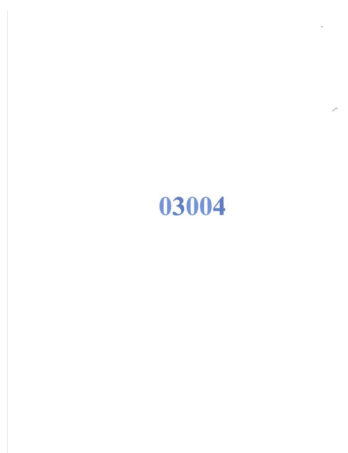
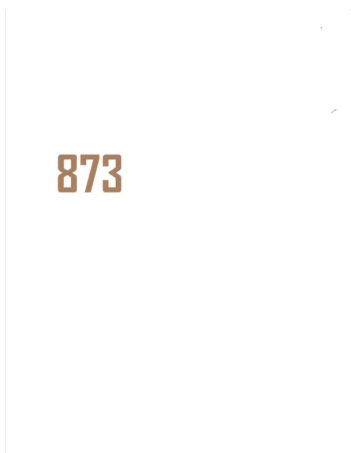
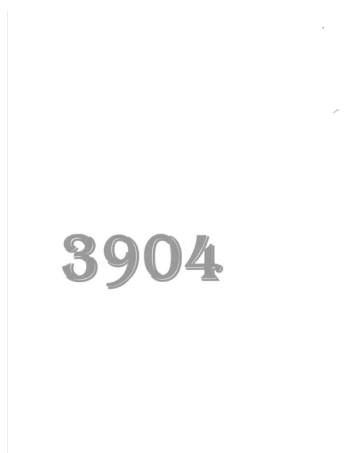
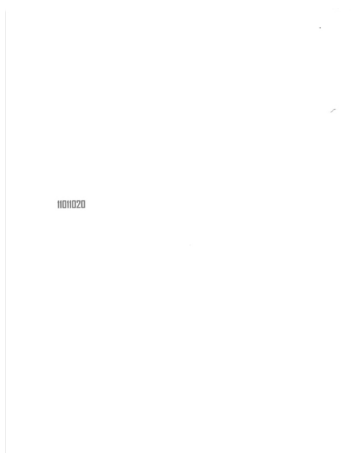
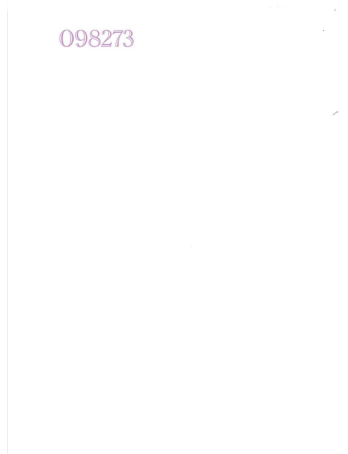
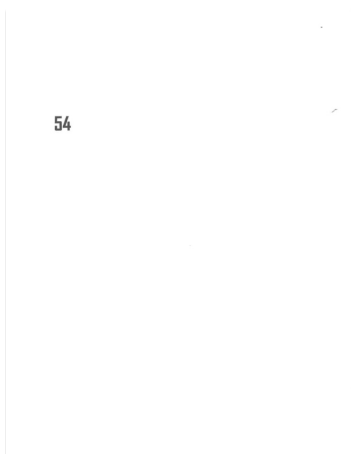
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