

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL IMPACT ON ADVERTISEMENTS IN MEDIA; A PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATION WITH REFERENCE TO CONTEMPORARY SRI LANKA

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Today's world has entered a social and cultural pattern that is guided by a highly competitive market economic system. Through this social and cultural pattern, this economic system and the consumer lifestyle associated with it are spreading and flowing, invading the traditional people's lives all over the world. In order to attract a person to a consumer lifestyle through the traditional way of life, a change in the person's attitude must first be made. In addition to this, if not the behavior of the consumer must be changed. Also, the person or the customer has to be persuaded. Hence, there is a hidden psychological basis behind advertisements. Here the advertiser is tempted to use some psychological tricks. So, advertisement is a subject that influences a person directly or indirectly. Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to find out how far the impact that advertisement has on contemporary Sri Lankan society, the study of ethics of advertisement and the social responsibility of artists. And especially it may discuss on the philosophical view point of decoding advertisement and hyper-real representation of advertisement in relevance to Sri Lanka. Other several propose is are: to understand the modern advertisement culture, to understand the view of Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyper-reality, to re-visit on Saussure and Williamson's view on the decoding of advertisement and to motivate further researchers to explore such field. Several philosophical methodologies such as textual analysis, analytic, and critical method were used to analysis the view of Baudrillard, Saussure and Williamson on the advertisements in media. Mainly primary and secondary sources have been used in analyzing the research. There can be seen the applicability of the theoretical dimension of Jean Baudrillard's hyper-reality to the Sri Lankan context to manifest that the real life has become increasingly saturated with advertisements. And also, Ferdinand De Saussure and Judith Williamson have studied how to decode advertisements and their studies can be applied to understand the Sri Lankan advertisement culture and its effects. According to the critical analysis of this research, it can be concluded that the decoding of advertising is extremely important when looking at the amount of ethical problems that exist today such as giving false facts, stating that old merchandise is new, falsely stating that it is of a certain standard, condition or grade, making double meaning comments and attributing conditions that are not for trade.

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