Chapter 13
Designing an Ethical Structure for Social Influence Marketing (SIM)

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ABSTRACT

Unprecedented advances in media technology have created the need to define ethics for a media-age ontology that combines the dynamics of physics and psychology. This unprecedented human reality has been called the media-sphere, and it appears to have all the dimensions and dynamics of dreams as defined by Carl Jung. Because of the dreamlike dynamics and structural dimensions of the media sphere, its psychological dynamics may be contemplated in terms of Jungian dream analysis which is intrinsically ethical. The Jungian model for dream analysis is structurally and dynamically consistent with the most recent discoveries in cognitive research. Because of its subjective, emotive, interactive integrity as defined by Aristotle's dramatic unities, dramatic structure is a common denominator for the study of conscious-unconscious cognitive states. This chapter explores the ethics of social influence marketing (SIM) relative to the dynamics and standards of morality implied by cognitive principles of Analytical Psychology.

DESIGNING AN ETHICAL STRUCTURE FOR SOCIAL INFLUENCE MARKETING (SIM)

The subject of ethics is vast. "Ethics has been termed the study and philosophy of human conduct, with an emphasis on the determination of right and wrong" (Ferrell, 2010). As such, everyone is a stakeholder. Ferrell points out that, "Marketing is a key functional area in a business that provides a visible interface with not only customers, but other stakeholders such as the media, investors, regulatory agencies, channel members, trade associations, as well as others." Among the many possible perspectives on ethics, this paper goes beyond the personal, organizational, and even societal view and presumes to address the archetypal view afforded by research on dimensions of

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the cognitive unconscious. Though philosophers have long speculated on *a priori* dimensions, such dimensions have only recently become susceptible to scientific scrutiny. Though the influences on human reality of sciences like physics, genetics, and technological media are at least vaguely familiar to people, the influence of the cognitive sciences such as psychiatry and cognitive linguistics is obscure. We have barely begun to consider ethics from the angle of the former, and we have—so far—completely neglected ethics of the latter. If anything, applications of cognitive science to marketing have been profoundly unethical.

Aristotle defined the purpose of ethical behavior as promoting and improving the common good. As a litmus test, he asked whether actions performed by individuals or groups are good both for an individual or a group and for society. A comprehensive review of philosophy, myth, history, the arts, and sciences would affirm a broad consensus on this point. The rub is that everyone doesn't agree on the details as to what is good for the individual and society. Aristotle said it is necessary to possess three virtues of practical wisdom: temperance, courage, and justice. In this modern era, such virtues appear idealistic, and this is the fundamental problem with marketing behavior today. Because unethical behavior has been so profitable, the meaning and function of ethics has been obfuscated.

If one applies Aristotle's definition, marketing during the last half of the twentieth century has been intrinsically unethical. It has flown in the face of virtue and the common good. From the very beginnings of *Public Relations* (PR) as defined by Edward Bernays, advertising practices based on Freudian principles have been intended to serve a wealthy elite and to control the "masses" of people. The origins of psychological advertising are well documented in the BBC Documentary: Century of the Self. (Curtis, 2009, Happiness Machines) Originally motivated by a paranoid fear of the collective unconscious, "Public Relations" began as a method for controlling the "masses", and this control has taken the form of deception and manipulation in which any sort of "truth in advertising" has been irrelevant. In short, governments and industry have employed the psychological principles of Public Relations throughout the latter half of the twentieth century with devastating results.

Applications of unethical PR in advertising have altered human values and changed personal choices and actions from a basis in *needs* to a basis in *wants*. (ibid.) Applied to foreign and domestic policy, the same propagandistic marketing practices that created the Consumer Culture have contributed to the creation of a psychological worldview based on fear (paranoia), militarism (defensiveness), covert violence (repression & regression), and a perpetual war mentality (conflict & hate) throughout the world. (Curtis, 2009, Nightmare)

Whether employed by governments to sell foreign policy, by politicians to sell candidates, or by industry to sell products, since WWII marketing has become blatantly propagandistic. This *Propaganda Marketing* (PM) is essentially unethical because it is based on psychological manipulation of populations without regard to their personal betterment or the common good. Propagandistic marketing is outrageously invasive—tapping into powerful unconscious urges—and intrinsically deceptive. Its *raison d'être* is to manipulate the personal and collective unconscious in order to control it and profit from it. Lies are the keynotes of PM, and enslavement for profit is its tune.

With few exceptions, archaic Propaganda Marketing based on unethical motivations and practices constantly insinuates itself into new campaigns. Because it has been so successful in the area of profiteering, PM has become increasingly rapacious, and—in conjunction with political agendas of elite moneyed classes—has devolved into a dangerous predatory beast.

The nearly complete lack of authentic PR ethics has resulted first in the creation of what has been called the *Consumer Culture* which—in ecologi-

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