READING

"ANTI-ADVERTISING"

Advertising in public places is everywhere, literally. Every time we step outside our homes, we are bombarded with adverts; they're on the streets we walk down, the places we shop and eat, and the transport we use.

In just one example of how **persuasive** advertising in public space is, research in London showed that in 45-minute commute the average person sees over 130 adverts featuring 80 different products, because advertisers pay transport company huge sums to reach us as often as posible.

However, a growing number of people are now fighting back. They're against advertising in public space because they consider it to be "visual pollution", something that harms us through our eyes. They believe that even if you do not conciously read an advert, the constant barrage of images has an effect. Seeing them time and time again creates memories and feelings that influence us and encourage us to buy a product at a later date.

To understand why people are concerned, it is necessary to understand modern marketing. In the early days of advertising, adverts focused on explaining that a particular product was cheaper or better than its rivals. Modern advertising, however, aims to **shape** our understanding of what it means to be happy, beautiful and successful. It is not about **catering** to existing needs, but creating new desires so that we want new things even when the ones we have are still usable or not used up. We want them because they will make us better-looking, more sophisticated or more successful.

People are particularly concerned about advertising in public spaces because they feel it invades our right to choose whether we see something or not. Unlike when you're at home, where you

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have a great deal of control over the number of adverts you see, outside the home people have little control over whether they see adverts or not. So, individuals and groups have started "anti-advertising" campaigns" to try to combat the influence that these adverts have.

Brandalism is one such group. It was founded in London by two friends who believe our public spaces belong to the people who live there, not to media companies. They didn't like being constantly exposed to adverts that made people feel insecure and unhappy, so they decided to do something about it. The duo produced artwork the size of posters to make people think about advertising and the messages advert **convey**.

In their first campaign, Brandalism spent five days replacing adverts in 36 bus shelters in five cities around the country with their artwork. There was a positive response to the campaign and 16 teams of people were **subsequently** recruited by the organisers. Their second campaign, Takeover, was more ambitious and took place simultaneously in ten cities around the country. In two days, they did 365 advert "takeovers" replacing adverts with unsigned works of art by 40 international artists.

The english graffiti artist Bansky, whose real identity is unknown, has also got involved with the anti-advertising movement. He has encouraged people to make adverts their own by altering them. In an online post said to be his, he condemns "bully" advertisers for making consumers feel small and inadequate. He argues that we need to assert our right to choose whether or not we see any advert in a public space because we have the right not to be made to feel inadequate as a result of something we see in an advert.

Peopleproduct123 takes a different **approach** to anti-advertising and instead of changing adverts on billboards, they change the

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packaging on goods. They believe we have no idea who makes the products we use or how they do it. They had new packaging created by a team of artists for a variety of products. The new packaging features stories and images about the workers who produce them to remind us that the good we buy are made by real people. The target of the campaign are large stores and supermarkets. After preparing the new packaging, which has been designed to be easy to print off, participants put it over the original packaging, then place the goods in stores and supermarkets using a technique called shopdropping.

Of course, not everyone agrees with the anti-advertising campaigns. Critics say they are subversive and do not represent the feeling or wishes of the majority of people. They argue that these movements are illegal and acts of vandalism, and that adverts fulfil a function because people want to be informed about products. Whether you agree or not, the different campaigns raise an interesting point about our public spaces: Who should decide what can or cannot appear there?

I. Choose the best answer.

1.More and more people…

A) are exposed to over 130 adverts in less than an hour.

B) are buying products because of advertising.

C) are taking action against advertising in public spaces.

D) remember adverts long after they have seen them

2) According to the author, the purpose of modern advertising is …

A) to inform us about products we need to use.

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B) to make us feel happy and successful.

C) to explain why one product is better than another.

D) to influence our ideas so we will buy things.

3) People are concerned about advertising in public spaces because…

A) adverts in public spaces are more influential tan others.

B) people can not choose whether they see it.

C) people are watching fewer adverts at home.

D) they want people to have more control over the content.

4) Brandalism …

A) was started by two friends who felt insecure and unhappy because of adverts.

B) has carried out two campaigns so far, replacing ordinary adverts with artwork.

C) is planning to recruit more people in ten cities for their next big campaign.

D) has had two five-day anti-advertising campaigns using work by 40 artists.

5) The packaging produced by PeopleProducts123 …

A) was created to show who made a product and how.

B) features people invented by the team of artists

C) is a response to people criticising how the products are made.

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D) gives instructions about how to use the product.

6) In shopdropping …

A) people put he packaging over products and leave photos in supermarkets.

B) people ask to leave items with the new packaging in shops and supermarkets.

C) items with new packaging are secretly left in big shops and supermarkets.

D) people download the packaging and leave it in stores but not in supermarkets.

II. Write the words in blue with the definitions and explanations.

1) Communicate ideas indirectly ._____

2) Influence the way a situation develops. _____

3) After something else happened. _____

4) A particular way of thinking about something. _____

5) Providing people with something they want. _____

6) present in every part of something. _____

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