

Log Extract

Title: In money we trust: An investigation into the implications of the commodification of social activism on the public's perception of its capability to educate, persuade and transform.

As a young consumer, brimming with disposable income and an irrepressible avidity for simplified politics, I find myself the target of numerous campaigns that beg for belief of the accountability and social responsibility of an assortment of corporations. Whilst I imagine myself beyond the enticement of advertising and overconsumption, the rainbow T-Shirt, #GirlPower laptop sticker, and PRODUCT(REDD) iPhone in my hand indicate otherwise.

Although my parents hear my tired justification - "I'm supporting a good cause!" - endlessly, the significance of my money remains unbeknown, and frankly, inconsequential to my spending habits. This experience is not unique among my peers, despite our increasing awareness and suspicions of corporate interests as we age in an ever changing world with one apparent consistency - money. The development of my investigation topic was influenced significantly by this personal experience. Initially, my interests resided in social activism and business, and thus it appeared appropriate to investigate both matters conjointly. Throughout the development of my PIP, I found it effective to organise my material by two chapters with extensive knowledge, as opposed to three chapters of broader knowledge. Thus changes were made to the structure of my PIP as information was attained and the scope and direction of my investigation altered.

A significant proportion of my investigation revolved around the collection of secondary research to develop my hypothesis and provide a framework around which my primary research could be developed. Whilst the majority of my secondary research sources were integrated into the PIP, few were not directly mentioned, instead serving to deepen my understanding of the topics and provide background information. As the topic was not widely researched by the academic community, there existed limitations concerning the cross-generational aspect of my investigation, and thus primary research methods were employed to develop this. The first questionnaire, seeking to gain general public opinion on the topic, attained 80 responses. It aided in my understanding of the public perception of social activism, although not detailed nor in depth. Thus a second questionnaire was

developed, aiming to attain in-depth knowledge and opinions, referring to contemporary social movements currently prevalent in the media. Approximately 295 responses were gained, assisting my quantifiable research significantly. A focus group consisting of students in Generation Z allowed me to attain further insight into the spending habits and opinions of young consumers, accompanying my questionnaires in investigating the cross-generational component of my PIP. Finally, an interview was conducted with Adam Johnson, biocultural anthropologist at University of Texas at San Antonio. His responses aided significantly in the development of my PIP, referring to complex terminology and concepts and thus lending reliability and authenticity to my investigation.

Through the nine month journey of completing the PIP, my personal perceptions concerning the commodification of social activism, and capitalism in general, has shifted significantly. Before conducting the investigation, my view held that corporate interests and the interests of social justice may exist harmoniously, however, I currently believe that the actions of corporations and individuals are limited in their authenticity.