

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Why Adidas Should be Paying Me, and Other Rants



The Editorator

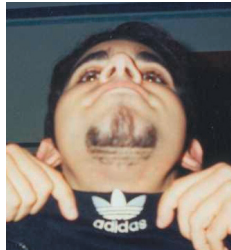
I'll admit, I wear a lot of Adidas. But when it comes down to it, I don't really know why. The whole three stripes thing has its aesthetic appeal, for sure, but it does seem rather arbitrary. Knock-off shoes with two or four stripes seem just as pleasing to the eye. Even so, I still sometimes find myself wearing outfits consisting almost entirely of Adidas. Evidently, I have somehow been

indoctrinated with the idea that items of this particular brand are cool, and as a result, I have continually purchased their apparel, and effectively acted as a walking advertisement for the better part of the past two decades. When questioned or complimented by friends on this fashion choice, I used to joke that I had a \$250,000 a year endorsement deal with them for Ultimate Frisbee. But now I'm not kidding. Hear me now, Oh German athletic clothing manufacturer, for I, Andrew Samuel Friedman demand to be compensated!

In all seriousness, consider the massive trick that has been played on us in regard to brand name clothing. For the mere addition of some arbitrary embroidered logo, we pay far more than the textile and labor costs (never mind who's kid is doing the labor), and turn our chests, backs, and foreheads into person-sized cotton or wool billboards. And we do this willingly. If the Coca Cola corporation asked us to paint their logo on our garage door, and also pay them four thousand dollars for the privilege, we'd pee in our pants laughing. Yet with our actual pants, more often than not, we aren't so smart.

Truth In Advertising

Thank god brand name houses and renting ads on the insides of our eyelids haven't caught on yet. Unfortunately, I can't say the same for athletic stadiums, college scholarship funds, and nations in the unfortunate position of not being very powerful. Recognizing the brainwashing we've undergone through advertising and the media is one thing, but undoing it is



Not Photoshopped

another all together. I can't get it out of my head that Adidas is awesome. My Adidas soccer cleats are clearly way cooler than Nike ones, duh. I've internalized this to the point that it is simply obvious to me. One time, in high school, I lost a bet and had to shave the Adidas logo into my Goatee and wear it around school for a day. Even now, I still get a kick out of it. What the hell is wrong with me?

And advertising is just the tip of the iceberg. In our, largely-free, American society, where governmental coercive force is reserved mostly for the urban poor, individuals who look different, and innocent people in other countries, most Americans are kept in check in ways more subtle than the political can of whoop-ass which has been the standard for most of history. With sound and motion picture added in, today's media is now mightier than the pen or the sword.

Just from watching television news, for example, one gets the impression that U.S. citizens are almost all cops, lawyers, murderer, or victims, and that 95% of all events are crimes or tragedies. When examining the seemingly harmless topics that co-dominate the air time, we find celebrity relationship problems, who's hot and who got fat, and any kind of scandal involving anyone of supposed importance. We're supposed to be afraid of Al Quaida, Pandemic Flu, Drugs, Nukes and our neighbors, and at the same time, afraid that we're too poor, too unattractive, or too unsuccessful for American standards. The corporate-government media today is, unfortunately, not the vanguard of truth, but an art form of thoroughly entertaining distraction, skillfully designed to encourage our own selfishness, fears, and insecurities, while stressing the futility of caring about or improving the lives of other human beings, most especially those who are noticeably different from us. Propaganda, in all its forms, has never been more sophisticated.

Ultimately, in our euphemistically infatuated, politically correct age, the word Propaganda – with all its negative Nazi-esque connotations – has simply been renamed to Public Relations. When confronted with such power, it behooves us to develop our own bullshit detectors so we can read between the lines like media savvy Jedi. Mine is still under construction.

At the small scale level of fabric, I have at least learned to recognize that I like certain clothes for no good reason. This is a far cry from deconstructing and challenging some of the more basic things that I take for granted, but at least it's a start. Am I still going to wear Adidas? Probably. But if you can figure out how I can learn to un-like them, I'll buy you a Guinness or a Newcastle, depending on which beer you think you like better.

