

*This 'Ideas Piece' was originally one chapter of 'A Blueprint to Advance Australia Collectively' originally written in 1999 to 2000 and released publicly in January 2001. It has not been adapted or updated from the original. The 'Ideas Piece' format is designed to help generate discussion around areas of social interest.*

## Advertising

No where does Australia's culture face greater attack than through mainstream media.

With particular emphasis on Television, Australian's are exposed to a vast range of culturally diverse expressions and this can be a great thing, though if you watch too much of some of the commercial channels you could be forgiven that all TV shows are created in America or Britain.

The workload for providing greater cultural diversity rests squarely on the shoulders of SBS with an ever diminishing role played by the ABC. The commercial networks have in the main a star spangled programming focus and though their selection of what passes for 'entertainment' can be called in to question, it is the breaks in between the shows that I find a far more sinister attack on Australia's culture.

If you have children below secondary school age, it would now be possible for them to watch an entire children's TV program, and not see ONE Australian produced commercial.

In fact, with a minimal amount of selective viewing guidance, in a short time your 3 year old could be speaking with an American accent.

The corporations who are luring your kids into persuading you to buy these corporations' toys and games and clothes, don't even bother to make a TV ad using Australian talent. They don't believe you have earned the right to have an Australian commercial targeted at your kids.

They are of course happy for you to spend your money with them, purchasing American designed toys made in sweat shops in China and India but they are not willing to support just one Australian industry to do so.

Instead we have poor color quality and American accents squealing about dolls and cars and trucks that turn into robots. Soon your kids will be calling you 'mom' and 'paah'.

Kids aren't the only ones.

We have car companies that have vision of drivers on the wrong side of the car, or driving on the wrong side of the road, images of pizza where the color is washed out (a dead set give away) cereal companies running ads that are less than special, along with banks, white-goods and the ever reliable cosmetics producers.

All of them use commercials predominantly made overseas to get us to use our Australian dollars to purchase their foreign goods.

Some go to the trouble of insulting us in subtle ways by using Australian 'voice overs'. Who can't pick a bad piece of dubbing inside 5 seconds?

So what do we do about it?

If these companies selling foreign goods think we at least rate highly enough for them to come and take our money, the *least they can do* is create, produce and run TV commercials made in Australia using Australian talent.

As Australian's I feel we should **BOYCOTT EVERY COMPANY** that continues to run bland, lifeless and not very clever advertising that has been made overseas.

The implementation process of this would be to ban any non-Australian TV commercial from our screens with a few of exemptions -

- Any commercial containing complex and unique stunt sequences (that would not include most driving sequences)
- Any commercial containing internationally recognised celebrities
- Commercials requiring the back drop or setting of a foreign location specific to the product message
- Commercials targeted to a non English-speaking audience for a culturally specific product or service.
- Commercials classified as being highly creative or unique.

As consumers I believe that we should deliberately avoid buying products from companies that do not make their commercials here in Australia.

It is not an issue of patriotic fervor so much as it is an expectation that the foreign owned companies will do the right thing by at least supporting one Australian industry. The subversive attack on our cultural identity is too sinister to allow to continue.