

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING



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- **THIS YOUNG WHALE DIED WITH 88 POUNDS OF PLASTIC IN ITS STOMACH**



THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

GREENPEACE & UK SCIENTISTS FIND MICROPLASTIC IN ALL TURTLES



THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- SCIENTISTS: MORE PLASTIC IN OCEANS THAN FISH BY 2050
- A TON OF PLASTIC ON EARTH FOR EVERY PERSON LIVING ON IT – 7.7 BILLION PEOPLE!
- NEW STUDY INDICATES WE MAY BE BREATHING MICRO- AND NANOPLASTICS, WITH CURRENTLY UNKNOWN HEALTH RISKS

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- SO WHICH IS IT? ARE PLASTICS A BOON OR A BANE? BOTH?
- PLASTICS THEMSELVES NOT THE PROBLEM
- THE PROBLEMS ARE HOW PLASTICS ARE MADE AND USED, LACK OF PLANNING FOR CONSEQUENCES, AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- SO: HOW TO FIX THE PROBLEM?
- TO ANSWER THAT, ANSWER THIS: HOW DID SINGLE-USE PLASTICS BECOME SUCH A PROBLEM?
- THE ANSWER LIES IN THE HISTORY OF PLASTICS

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- PLASTICS INVENTED 1869 BY JOHN WESLEY HYATT; IVORY BILLIARD BALL SUBSTITUTE
 - IRONICALLY, MADE FROM CELLULOSE; PETROLEUM CAME MUCH LATER
- WWII RAMPED UP PRODUCTION; THINGS LIKE NYLON & PLEXIGLAS WERE IMPORTANT TO WAR EFFORT
- IN THE '50'S, PLASTICS MANUFACTURE AND DIVERSITY BOOMED; "THROWAWAY LIVING" PROMISED AS FREEDOM FROM BURDEN OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES
- WITH ALL THIS, ADVERTISING BECAME KEY, AND PLASTICS INDUSTRY KNEW THIS

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- 1953: AMERICAN CAN CO. & OWENS-ILLINOIS GLASS, FOLLOWED SOON BY COCA-COLA, ANHEUSER-BUSCH, PHILLIP MORRIS, DIXIE CUP AND OTHERS, CREATE “KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL” (KAB)
- A NON-PROFIT, KAB’S STATED MISSION WAS, AND IS, TO EDUCATE AND ENCOURAGE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP BY THE PUBLIC
- FOCUSES ON LITTERING, RECYCLING, COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION . . . AND POWERFUL ADS
- GAVE US POP CULTURE STAPLES LIKE “LITTERBUG,” “EVERY LITTER BIT HURTS,” AND IN 1961, “SUSAN SPOTLESS,” WHO KEPT AFTER HER PARENTS TO NOT LITTER

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT BY 1971, THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT & GROWING POLLUTION CONCERNS WERE NOT LIMITED TO JUST LITTERING
- EXPECTATIONS OF PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY WERE GROWING
- THIS LED TO ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT ADS EVER CREATED, COURTESY OF KAB & THE AD COUNCIL – “THE CRYING INDIAN”

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**GET INVOLVED
NOW.
POLLUTION
HURTS
ALL OF US.**

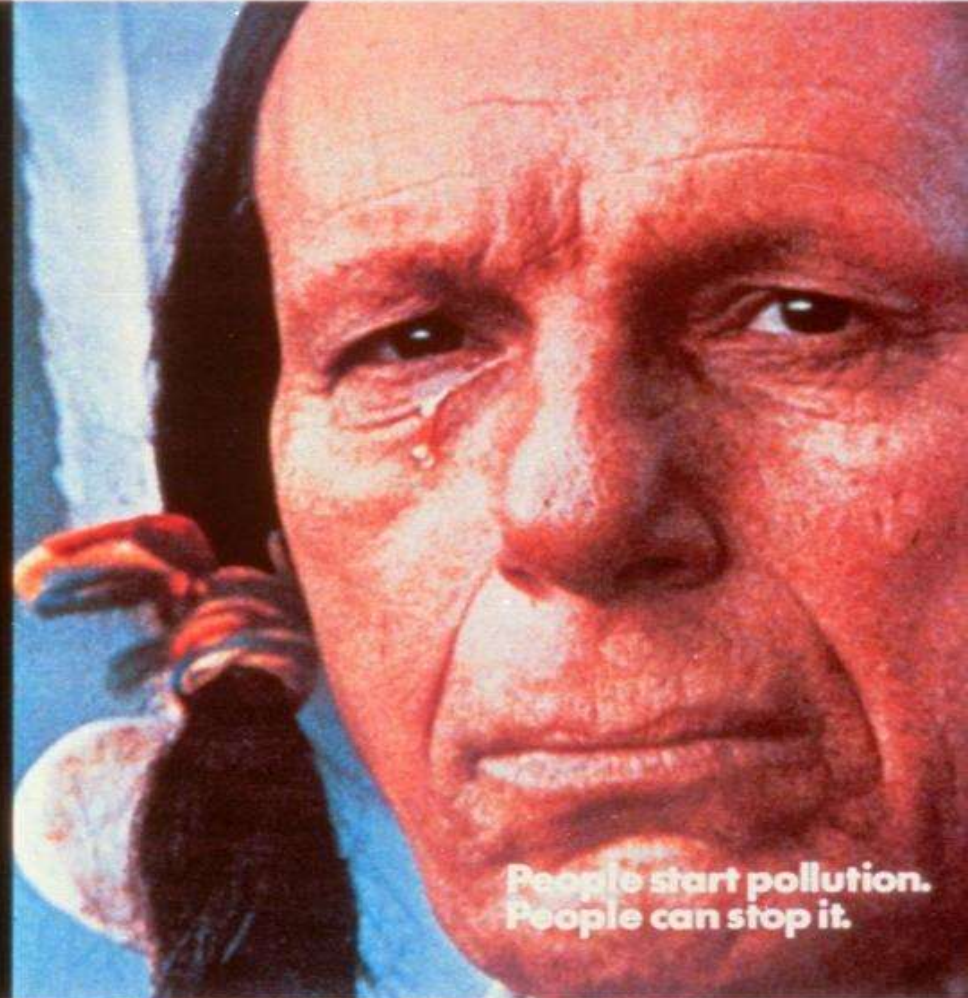
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**People start pollution.
People can stop it.**

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- INDELIBLE, SUBTLE THEMES AND IMAGERY
 - PADDLING OUT OF THE IDYLIC PAST INTO THE FRENZIED PRESENT
 - PLAYED ON NATIONAL GUILT OVER TREATMENT OF NATIVE AMERICANS
 - NOW, IT'S THE SINS OF THROWAWAY SOCIETY!
 - AND ESPECIALLY, AMERICAN INDIVIDUALISM, SELF-RELIANCE AND SELF-DETERMINISM WILL SAVE THE DAY

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT IN FACT, IT WAS ALL MANIPULATION
- INDIAN WAS ITALIAN-AMERICAN ESPERA DE CORTI; PLAYED INDIANS IN REAL LIFE AND ON SCREEN
- POPULAR ZEITGEIST SYMPATHIZING WITH INDIANS HAD NEVER BEEN HIGHER
 - “LITTLE BIG MAN” IN 1970
 - ALCATRAZ OCCUPATION AT THE VERY MOMENT AD PREMIERED

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- WHAT BROUGHT THE AD ON? BY 1971, INDUSTRY FEARED, NOT EMBRACED, ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES
- DESPITE APPEARANCES, KAB NEVER EMBRACED ENVIRONMENTALISM. ITS 1953 BIRTH WAS DUE TO VERMONT “BEVERAGE CONTAINER LAW” OUTLAWING NON-REFILLABLE CONTAINERS
 - SINGLE-USE PACKAGES MORE PROFITABLE THAN INDUSTRY RESPONSIBILITY TO RECYCLE/CLEAN/REUSE
 - KAB TOOK AIM AT THE LEGISLATION; LASTED JUST 4 YEARS, THEN LAPSED
- BUT BY APRIL 22, 1970, FIRST EARTH DAY, INDUSTRY WAS AGAIN CONCERNED:
 - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTESTS FOCUSED ON THROWAWAY CONTAINERS, PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR PROLIFERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

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- ALSO SCARY TO INDUSTRY: NEW “BOTTLE BILLS” REQUIRING DRINKS IN REUSABLE CONTAINERS, WITH A SMALL DEPOSIT REFUNDED ON RETURN
- OREGON FIRST, 1971; IN 10 STATES NOW WITH SUCH LAWS, 60% RECOVERY RATE V. 24% IN OTHER STATES
- KAB FOUGHT BOTTLE BILLS FOR YEARS; 1989-94, BEVERAGE INDUSTRY SPENT \$14M TO DEFEAT NATIONAL BB
- SLYLY PROMOTED INDIVIDUALISM; CALLED BB SUPPORTERS “COMMUNISTS”

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT IN FACT, THROWAWAYS CAUSED INCREASES IN:
 - THE LITTER KAB “OPPOSED;” NATURAL RESOURCE MINING; POLLUTION; AND SOLID WASTE
- UNTIL “BOTTLE BILLS” OPPOSITION REVEALED, KAB DECEIT WORKED WELL; SUPPORTED BY MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL, LIKE AUDUBON SOCIETY AND SIERRA CLUB
- DECEIT PARTLY ENABLED BY INDUSTRY LEADERS BEHIND KAB KEEPING THEIR INVOLVEMENT QUIET, AND LETTING NON-PROFIT KAB APPEAR DISINTERESTED

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- SO WHAT WAS THE REAL GOAL OF KAB, AND INDUSTRY LEADERS BEHIND IT?
- PUT ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRODUCTS ON PUBLIC, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY CULTIVATE TRUST WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT
- LET INDIVIDUALS BELIEVE THEIR EVERYDAY DECISIONS CAN FIX POLLUTION, WHICH HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH POWER, POLITICS OR PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY
- HEATHER ROGERS (“GREEN GONE WRONG: HOW OUR ECONOMY IS UNDERMINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVOLUTION”): 1ST CORPORATE GREENWASHING FRONT

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- AND HAS THIS STRATEGY WORKED?

• **YES!!**

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- EXAMPLE: EARTH DAY: PRESS COVERAGE OFFERS SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS AS INDIVIDUALS' RESPONSIBILITY
 - 2019 EARTHDAY.ORG WEBSITE HINTS AT PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY BUT EMPHASIZES INDIVIDUAL ACTION
- INDUSTRY LARGELY AVOIDS LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLASTICS
 - PLASTIC BAG REGULATION (NOTE RECENT WASHINGTON EFFORT), BOTTLE BILLS, AND AVOIDING FOCUS ON INCREASING PRODUCTION OF PLASTIC

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- AND AVOIDS LITIGATION – BUT OTHER UNSAFE PRODUCTS TREATED DIFFERENT, LIKE ALCOHOL AND CIGARETTES
- PRODUCT DEFECT CLAIMS; IS SOMETHING THAT POLLUTES AND KILLS NOT INHERENTLY DEFECTIVE?
- SAD TO SAY, RECYCLING AND GREEN CONSUMERISM MAY BE THERAPEUTIC FOR THE MASSES, BUT THEY DON'T ADDRESS LACK OF PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

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- AND CAMPAIGNS TOUTING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY CONTINUE TODAY
 - NEW KAB CAMPAIGN: ASSURE BOTTLES/BOXES BEAUTIFULLY REINCARNATED, AFTER RECYCLING
 - AMERICAN PROGRESSIVE BAG ALLIANCE SUCCESSFULLY FIGHTS BAG BILLS:
 - FOUNDED 2005 IN AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL, A MULTI-INDUSTRY TRADE GROUP
 - “PROACTIVELY PROMOTES PRODUCT LINES AND . . . [DEFENDS] AGAINST BAG BANS AND TAXES”
 - FAVORS STATE PRE-EMPTION BILLS, AND INDIVIDUALS’ RIGHT TO CHOOSE
 - MASSIVE COORDINATION TO FIGHT BAG BILLS AND FEES

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- KAB WEBSITE STRESSES INDIVIDUAL EFFORT: “END LITTERING IMPROVE RECYCLING BEAUTIFY COMMUNITIES”
- GOOD GOALS YES, BUT TURNED AGAINST US TO HIDE INDUSTRY RESPONSIBILITY
- WHY? PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY HURTS BOTTOM LINE AND INHIBITS GROWTH
- AND PLASTICS INDUSTRY IS ALL ABOUT PROFIT AND GROWTH

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- PLASTICS GROWTH: GLOBAL PRODUCTION OF PLASTIC RESINS & FIBERS GREW FROM 2M METRIC TONS IN 1950 TO >400M METRIC TONS IN 2015
- ABOUT HALF OF THAT FROM 2002 TO 2015
- FEW MAN-MADE MATERIALS GREW FASTER; STEEL AND CEMENT NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS
 - BUT THEY'RE IN CONSTRUCTION, LAST FOR YEARS; LARGEST PLASTICS MARKET IS PACKAGING – USE ONCE THEN DISCARD
 - HALF OF ALL PLASTICS ARE WASTE WITHIN 4 YEARS OF USE

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- AND HUGE GROWTH COMING, PER 2015 AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL REPORT: “THE RISING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF U.S. PLASTICS”
- ACC IN WASH., D.C.; MANY MEMBERS, INCLUDING WHO’S WHO OF PLASTICS, CHEMICAL, AND PETROCHEMICAL COMPANIES

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- ACC REPORT: NATURAL GAS FRACKED FROM SHALE MAKES U.S. PLASTIC RESINS WAY CHEAPER THAN OIL-BASED FEEDSTOCKS
- 2010 – 2020: >\$130B OF CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING CAPACITY INVESTMENT
- 461,800 NEW DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND PAYROLL-INDUCED JOBS
- NET PLASTIC RESIN EXPORTS WILL TRIPLE BETWEEN 2014-2030

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT ACC REPORT MENTIONS **NOTHING** ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
- WELL, ONE MIGHT SAY, ITS FOCUS IS ECONOMIC AND JOBS ORIENTED
- BUT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AFFECT THE ECONOMY:
 - COMMUNITIES HURT BY NATURAL GAS FRACKING
 - B'S TONS CO2 FROM EXTRACTION; 15% GLOBAL CARBON BUDGET BY 2050
 - HEALTH IMPACTS OF MICRO- AND NANOPLASTICS IN THE ATMOSPHERE

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE SUPPORTS A “CIRCULAR PLASTICS ECONOMY” – A CLOSED LOOP – MANUFACTURE/USE/RECYCLE/REUSE – NO “LEAKING” OUT
 - BUT REQUIRES IMPROVED ECONOMICS/TECHNOLOGY, REPLACING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS WITH SAFER OPTIONS, AND EVENTUALLY ELIMINATING FOSSIL FUEL PLASTICS
- ALL BAD NEWS FOR PETROCHEMICAL COMPANIES, WHO RELY EVER MORE ON PLASTICS-PROFITS
- IN FACT, A SHELL EXECUTIVE RECENTLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT “INVESTING IN CHEMICALS IS PART OF OUR STRATEGY TO THRIVE THROUGH THE ENERGY TRANSITION”

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT ACCORDING TO CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW, 2017:
 - THIS BOOM “WILL PERPETUATE A FOSSIL FUEL ECONOMY THAT UNDERPINS BOTH THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE PLASTICS CRISIS, WHILE IMPACTING FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES AND THE WIDER PUBLIC AT EVERY STAGE OF ITS TOXIC LIFECYCLE.”
- SO CERTAINLY SEEMS REASONABLE THAT ACC REPORT SHOULD MENTION ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, DOESN'T IT?

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- ZERO MENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT THE INDUSTRY, AND ITS CONFIDENCE IN CONTROL OF THE MESSAGE THAT IT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE
- IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY CHANCE TO AVOID A PLASTIC PLANET:

THIS MUST CHANGE

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT HOW? RECYCLING DOESN'T WORK (EVEN WITHOUT CHINA ISSUES):
 - BY 2015, 6.3B TONS OF GLOBAL PLASTIC WASTE ACCUMULATED: 9% RECYCLED; 12% INCINERATED; 79% IN LANDFILLS OR ENVIRONMENT
- MOST OCEAN PLASTICS ARE FROM COUNTRIES WITH POOR RECYCLING PROGRAMS/INFRASTRUCTURE; U.S. RECYCLING HAS LITTLE EFFECT

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- SO WHAT TO DO? THINK DIFFERENT! (APOLOGIES TO APPLE)
- TURN KAB'S "REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE" INSIDE OUT: REFUSE, REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE
- WE SHOULD *REFUSE* PLASTIC PRODUCTS AS MUCH AS HUMANLY POSSIBLE, AND START EDUCATING OURSELVES RIGHT NOW ON ALTERNATIVES, WHILE ALSO REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- BUT IN ADDITION, ***THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY*** SHOULD:
 - REFUSE TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITY FOR GLOBAL CONSEQUENCES
 - REDUCE PLASTICS WHEN OTHER MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE
 - REUSE AND RECYCLE ALL PLASTICS AT INDUSTRIAL LEVEL

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- TALL ORDER? PARADIGM SHIFT? YES. BUT U.S. PLASTICS INDUSTRY **AGREES** WITH MOST OF IT.
- ON 2/20/19, ACC PLASTICS DIV. ANNOUNCED TWO AMBITIOUS “CIRCULAR ECONOMY” GOALS:
 - 100% OF PLASTICS PACKAGING RE-USED, RECYCLED, RECOVERED BY 2040
 - 100% RECYCLABLE OR RECOVERABLE BY 2030
- GOALS SOUND GOOD – ACC SAYS “WE BELIEVE THEY’RE ACHIEVABLE” – BUT CAN THEY AND EXPANSION CO-EXIST, OR IS THIS MORE GREEN-WASHING?

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- STILL, THESE GOALS DO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PROBLEM. CAN WE HOLD INDUSTRY TO THEIR WORDS?
 - LET PRODUCERS KNOW THAT WE KNOW ABOUT THESE GOALS
 - SEEK TO SPEED THE GOALS UP
 - POINT OUT CONTRADICTION WITH EXPANSION
 - CALL FOR GREATER PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY
- OKAY, BUT HOW DO WE DO ALL THIS?

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- REFUSE PLASTICS, LET PRODUCERS KNOW YOU'RE DOING IT, AND EDUCATE
 - HIT THEM IN POCKETBOOK; NOTHING WORKS BETTER THAN THE POWER OF THE PURSE
- WRITE/EMAIL/PHONE/TALK TO:
 - FEDERAL/STATE LEGISLATORS TO TAX OR BAN SINGLE-USE PLASTICS, AND SLOW INDUSTRY EXPANSION
 - PLASTICS MANUFACTURERS TO STOP EXPANSION, AND MAKE CIRCULAR PLASTICS ECONOMY A REALITY
 - PLASTICS BOTTLERS AND BAGGERS TO AVOID PLASTICS AND USE SAFE SUBSTITUTES
- OPPOSE FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS EXPANSION BY PLASTICS PRODUCERS
- WRITE/EMAIL/PHONE, AND **TALK** TO LOCAL GROCERS AND BUSINESSES ON HOW TO REDUCE PLASTICS

THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- LOCAL LEGISLATORS CONTACT INFO IS HERE
- GET ACTIVIST! JOIN SIERRA CLUB, ZERO WASTE WASHINGTON, GREENPEACE, OR OTHERS!



THE TRUTH ABOUT PLASTICS ADVERTISING

- **#PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY**
 - **#PLANETNOTPLASTIC**
- 