

TIME

EDUCATION PROGRAM

"Wallets Over Ballots"



//DISCUSSION

A boycott of tea sold by London's East India Company in Boston started the War of Independence and the creation of the USA. Some 182 years later the US civil rights movement grew from black Americans refusing to buy tickets for desegregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama. Choosing to withdraw your custom is one way to force change. Can you name recent examples of this? Do you ever buy things because you want some companies to succeed?

//COMPREHENSION

Joel Stein's column for TIME considers how consumer choices give us more control than voting in elections. Read the questions before reading the article.

1. Why has Joel Stein always liked talking about politics? **It makes others think he's smart.**
2. What would Yahoo have done for us if it had beaten Google? **Brought to our attention stock market prices, the weather and anything 'sexy'.**
3. What might our celebrities have been if Myspace had beaten Facebook? **Strippers (they used to dominate Myspace with adverts).**
4. What would an equivalent of us all owning the same car be today? **Having the same wallpaper photo on our phones.**
5. Why does the Professor Sundararajan highlight that Indian consumers liking East India Company products had long-term implications? **The East India company ruled them (for 150 years before the British Government took over in 1857.)**
6. How does Professor Priester highlight that consumers know that big retailers are destroying US high streets and increasing crime rates, but still buying from them? **He has an Amazon Prime account (meaning he buys regularly from Amazon).**
7. Consumers no longer buy just on price and quality because marketing departments get them to do what? **To become long-term customers.**

//VOCABULARY

Match a word in the numbered column with a meaning from the lettered column.

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---|--|
| 1 | Imparts | A | Enrolled |
| 2 | Enshrined | B | More important than it looks |
| 3 | Sublimating | C | Gives particular qualities |
| 4 | Sign up | D | Weaker or more immoral |
| 5 | Slogan | E | Position set up with sum of money |
| 6 | Subtler | F | Protected by being included in law |
| 7 | Endowed | G | Short easy to remember phrase for promotion |
| 8 | Baser | H | Controlling impulses by doing something else |

1C, 2F, 3H, 4A, 5G, 6B, 7E, 8D

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TIME

//GRAMMAR: When and how to use 'One/ones'

Look at this sentence from the TIME article:

"Our society is shaped by giant corporations, yet we spend no time thinking about which ones we want in control."

Generally we use 'one' or 'ones' to avoid repetition of countable nouns, such as 'corporation/corporations', dog/dogs, car/cars etc.

The boys you saw were the ones we met yesterday.
Ripe pears taste so much nicer than ones straight from a tree.

However, when we introduce relative pronouns such as 'which', 'these' and 'that', the use of 'one' becomes complicated.

After 'which', you can use 'one' - or leave it out. The journalist could have written:

"Our society is shaped by giant corporations, yet we spend no time thinking about which we want in control."

However, after 'these' and 'those', avoid 'one':

Choose some apples. Do you want these or those? (~~these ones~~ or ~~those ones~~.)

When it comes to shoes, I like mine like these (~~these ones~~).

He knew a lot about planes but he had never seen anything like those (those ones).

However, 'one' is always used after an adjective.

When it comes to shoes, these are my favourite ones.

He knew a lot about planes but nothing about those new pilotless ones.

She said to buy special cakes, but which special ones does she mean?

//CLASS DISCUSSION

Working in pairs, imagine one of you is working in a shop and the other person comes in to buy something but is unsure about what they want. The shopkeeper should offer various alternatives and the other student reject and ask for new options. Use these, that, which and one/ones. Then swap roles.

//REVISION: -ING forms of the verb as subject in comparisons

Look at this sentence from the TIME article:

"But voting for politicians is no way less important than deciding what to buy."

The -ing form of the verb can be used as a noun in English (often called a 'gerund').

But when we use a gerund as the noun in a comparative clause, here 'no less important than', the complement has to be a gerund too.

Eating is easier than cooking.

Driving is harder than walking

Baking cakes is less difficult than baking bread.



//ADDITIONAL COMPREHENSION FROM TIME ARCHIVE

“Music: Anthems of the Blank Generation”, TIME 11 July, 1977

This article shows the arrival of punk music troubled everyone, even journalists. Read the questions before reading the article.

1. How did a band that had not excited a West Hollywood crowd revive interest? **They smeared themselves with peanut butter.**
2. Why was The Ramones’ ‘upbeat number’ worrying? **It was called ‘Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue’, a nihilistic rather than positive choice.**
3. What do punks call trousers held together with safety pins? **Dumpies.**
4. Just as fashion designers started to work with safety pins, what did punks do? **Toned down their use.**
5. Who did the journalist call the ‘Mick Jagger of punk’? **Richard Hell.**
6. What did one band at CBGB’s set unofficial records for? **Length of time playing the same chord.**
7. Which stars were British punk bands seen as rebuke to? **Elton John and Peter Frampton.**
8. What did Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren consider the term ‘New Wave’ better suited to? **More descriptive of a new hairstyle than anything else.**
9. What was the first US punk record to make Billboard’s chart? **‘Sheena is a Punk Rocker’.**
10. What did one punk fan say was ‘the final straw’? **Disco.**



Wallets Over Ballots

What we buy determines our fate much more than who we vote for



I'VE CARED DEEPLY ABOUT politics since I was a child and discovered that it's an easy way to make other people think I'm smart. I also care about who I vote for because, as we learned in civics class, it imparts the right to complain, which I believe is enshrined in the Ninth Amendment since no one knows what the Ninth Amendment is. But voting for politicians is way less important than deciding what to buy.

Our society is shaped by giant corporations, yet we spend no time thinking about which ones we want in control. I don't mean whether a company destroys the environment, tests chemicals on puppies or exploits foreign labor. I mean, I care deeply about that stuff, because it sounds like politics. But I'm talking about their plans for our future.

If Yahoo had beaten Google in the search-engine wars, it would not have funded self-driving cars, mapped the world or scanned all our books. We would, however, know even more about stock prices, the weather and everything that is "sexy." If Burger King had beaten McDonald's, children would have had nightmares about a creepy red-bearded king instead of nightmares about a creepy red-haired clown. If Myspace had beaten Facebook, all our celebrities would be Las Vegas strippers.

When Americans bought Model T's, they didn't consider that they were choosing to live with Henry Ford's system of sublimating individual tastes over General Motors' vision of making different cars for different people. For decades, American middle-class suburban driveways were the equivalent of all of us having the same wallpaper photo on our smartphones.

I think about this whenever I choose between Lyft, Uber and not drinking. Lyft wants to build a society where everyone is signed up as a potential driver or

passenger, thereby allowing us to casually pick up riders along our route to help reduce emissions, traffic and the loneliness of commuting. Uber wants to make everyone feel rich by being chauffeured, having restaurant meals delivered, riding in helicopters and, I'm guessing, being taught even scarier German words.

I ran this theory by Jerry Davis, a University of Michigan sociology professor who studies how companies shape societies and who is such an expert on organizations that a recent book he wrote is called *Organizations and Organizing*. Davis, to my surprise, totally agreed with me. "Who you vote for never matters at all. One vote never matters. One purchase makes a difference as to whether Starbucks talks about race or not. You're going to go to Peet's, where they don't make you talk about uncomfortable topics," he said. Admittedly, "Peet's: Where we don't make you talk about uncomfortable topics" is not a great slogan, but it's not bad for a guy who came up with *Organizations and Organizing*.

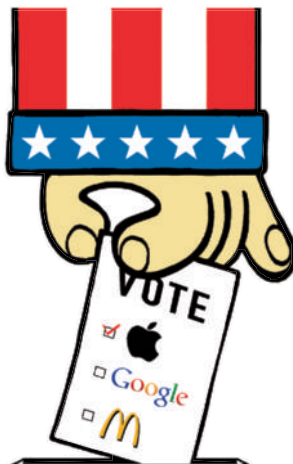
Arun Sundararajan, a professor at NYU's business school who studies how technology transforms society, says it's easy to boycott grapes or eat non-factory-

farmed meat, but people rarely consider the subtler, but equally important, ways companies shape society. "There were consumers in India that embraced the British East India Co., and that had long-term consequences," he noted.

Likewise, Joseph Priester, a marketing professor at the University of Southern California's business school and the former president of the Society for Consumer Psychology, enthusiastically agreed with my thesis, making me realize how desperate academics are to be quoted. But he also said that many times consumers aren't uninformed—they just pretend they are. "If you're shopping at Walmart, you know you're destroying the small businesses," he said. Priester argued that consumers saw malls, then Walmart and then Amazon core out Main Streets, reducing community connections and increasing crime rates in those areas. He then told me that he is an Amazon Prime member.

However, Wharton professor Witold Henisz implied that the Joel Stein consumer-ignorance thesis would probably never get me an endowed chair at Wharton, since what I'm asking for is called a marketing department. "Part of being a successful manager is to get consumers not to just buy on price and quality," he told me. Then they get people to become long-term customers, since they know the direction the company is taking them. "Apple is a great example. People have confidence about where they will be in five years." Which is, of course, in our arteries.

So I'm going to pay attention to companies' marketing from now on. If they're appealing to my baser instincts with ads featuring hot women in expensive places, I'm going to pay more attention. But then I'll pick the product that is steering the world in the direction I want it to go. Though it would be a lot easier if companies just had parties like politicians do. I might call some econ professors about that.



Music: Anthems of the Blank Generation

Monday, Jul. 11, 1977



ITEM: In London, Singer Johnny Rotten spits at the audience and cries out, "I hate you!" Sizing up Johnny's four-letter words, tattered clothing and generally repugnant personal deportment, the British Establishment decides that it hates him. Johnny and his band, the Sex Pistols, are regularly banned from British radio, concert halls and clubs. Nonetheless, the Pistols' latest single, a Jubilee diatribe against royalty called God Save the Queen, is currently a bestselling record in Britain.

ITEM: In West Hollywood, members of a group called the Germs try to redeem a slow evening at the Whisky by smearing themselves with peanut butter.

ITEM: In Boston, the lead singer of the Dead Boys takes a swan dive to the stage floor of a joint called The Rat. He wears a leather jacket and a T shirt decorated with swastikas. He begins to stroke the torn crotch of his jeans with a vibrator. He shrieks, "This is what love is!"

ITEM: In New York, the up-and-coming Ramones decide to turn away from negative songs like I Don't Wanna Go Down to the Basement in favor of the upbeat Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue.

ITEM: In Florida, Promoter Sidney Drashin declares that it is only a matter of time before the punk invasion begins there. Says he: "Our company believes it's going to break loose big. It's everywhere. "

Ye gods, the thoughtful, thirtyish ex-Beatles freak may well ask, what is happening to the younger generation? In Tokyo, Chicago and Paris, kids are bumping, grinding, loving, hating, wailing to the loud, raucous, often brutal sounds of punk rock. For a year or so, punk has been flourishing in the seediest rock joints—a Bowery bar called CBGB's in New York, a dingy cavern called the Roxy in London, and The Rat in Boston. There, shock is chic. Musicians and listeners strut around in deliberately torn T shirts and jeans; ideally, the rips should be joined with safety pins. Another fad is baggy pants with a direct connection between fly and pocket. These are called dumpies. Swastika emblems go well with such outfits. In London, the hair is often heavily greased and swept up into a coxcomb of blue, orange or green, or a comely two-tone. Pierced ears may sport safety pins, some made of gold or silver. Of late, punk chic has even been taken up by a few high-fashion designers. But the punkers themselves are beginning to tone down the safety-pin excesses of a few months ago.

Buzz and Blast. Up on the stage can be found a numbing array of groups and soloists whose names dramatize the nihilism and brute force that have inspired the movement: Clash, Thundertrain, Weirdos, Dictators, Stranglers, Damned, and the demon-eyed New Yorker who could become the Mick Jagger of punk, Richard Hell. The music aims for the gut. Even compared with the more elemental stylings of 1950s rock 'n' roll—which it closely resembles—punk rock is a primal scream. The music comes in fast, short bursts of buzz and blast. Some groups have but two or three chord changes at their disposal, occasionally less: last week at CBGB's a fledgling group set several unofficial records for length of time played without changing chords at all.

Even on the Bowery, lyrics are not as rowdy as in Britain. Punk there is a protest by Britain's working-class children, who have no memory of swinging London and cannot find jobs. Detractors of punk would argue that these children are coddled by a very expensive welfare state and are feeling sorry for themselves. Still, the Sex Pistols' pile-driving Anarchy in the U.K. is an anthem of despair. The British punk bands are a community linked by anger and frustration. They are, within the music world, a rebuke to the bourgeois excesses—and smooth musical stylings—of such stars as Elton John and Peter Frampton.

Says Johnny Rotten: "The millionaire groups were singing about love and their own hang-ups. That's stupid. You don't sing about love to people on the dole." Blithely, whiningly, punk says anything and everything. As the Sex Pistols chant, "God save the Queen/ She ain't no human being."

Despite some of the revolting accouterments, there is real musical value in much of punk rock. More and more, the punkers find themselves being referred to as members of yet another New Wave. Sex Pistols Manager Malcolm McLaren regards that as highfalutin, calling the phrase "Establishment language, more descriptive of a new hairstyle than anything else." In truth, New Wave does seem an apt catch-all label for the energetic and varied kind of music that has emerged in recent months from some of the young American bands. The Ramones stick close to basic rock 'n' roll, but they get better all the time. Last week their latest single Sheena is a Punk Rocker made the Billboard Hot 100 chart—the first New Wave song to achieve that eminence.

Television, which got its start at CBGB's, wraps its big beat in mellifluous instrumental colors. Lead Singer Tom Verlaine's lyrics, like the following from Venus, are among rock's finest in years:

Tight toy night; streets were so bright.

The world looked so thin and

between my bones and skin

there stood another person who

was a little surprised

to be face to face with a world so alive.

I fell.

Richard Hell's Blank Generation, delivered over a throbbing four-note bass ostinato, is already a punk classic:

I was sayin' let me out of here

before I was even born.

It's such a gamble when you get a face.

.. I belong to the blank generation,

And I can take it or leave it each time.

Sire Records' Seymour Stein, an early champion of punk, finds that the music reflects a mood of total indifference among the young. "They feel they had nothing to do with making the world the mess it is today, and they're also not going to do anything to make it any better—because they can't. They come to the music for the sake of the music, for entertainment, for getting it on."

Getting it on, of course, means love and sex, passions that old time rock 'n' roll had plenty to say about. But today's punk rockers have no time for euphemisms like Chuck Berry's "ding-a-ling." Four-letter words are not spared. And when Thundertrain bawls, "I'm hot, ho, hot, hot for teacher," there is no missing the point. The 1970s have been dominated by graduates of the 1960s rock era —Paul Simon and Paul McCartney moving out on their own, groups like the Rolling Stones, the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Starship rambling on as before. The New Wave seems to be saying, "The superstars are dead. Long live the superstars." Down with the smooth confections of commercial rock, even the harmless purr of disco. Says one punk devotee: "Disco was the final straw." Willie ("Loco") Alexander, leader of a Boston band, revels in the studied toughness, calculated cool and throbbing boom-boom of the New Wave. Says he: "Punk looks right at you and says something."

That something has until recent months been too aggressive for the record companies, who in turn have to bear in mind the strictures of radio. Signing with Private Stock Records, the group Blondie agreed to change "sex-offender" to "ex-offender." Not all New Wave groups are going to be that docile. The aura of rebellion is crucial to punk's pleasure. Swing-bred parents of the 1950s may have found Elvis Presley corrupt (as did CBS-TV, which cut him off above the pelvis), but the kids loved him. Folk-and rock-bred parents of the 1970s may not love the Dead Boys, but a lot of the kids do. The biggest catastrophe for punk rock would of course be huge success. How does a rebel maintain his pose while earning \$ 1 million a year?

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