

## EVENT REPORT

Winter Conference 08 Faith for the World was held in Columbus, Ohio, January 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> with over 430 in attendance. The five main university chapters sent 60-70 students each: Ann Arbor, Columbus, Lansing, New Jersey and the Twin Cities. Other chapters came from Grand Rapids, Miami, Ottawa, Pittsburgh, and Northfields, Mn. Students from Los Angeles, Vancouver, Montreal, Phoenix, Madison and Latrobe, Pa. may signal new outreach locations.

As expected the worship and fellowship were great! The Saturday evening talk by Andrew Pettman from London was an inspiring call: "You Only Have One Life," and the first International Film Festival was a hit, won by Sarah Hughes of Ann Arbor.

Three days after the winter conference ended a 16-inch water main exploded in the rooms we had been using, shutting down the entire Greater Columbus Convention Center. Thank you. Lord!



# Youth Culture

newsletter

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## DOUBLE LIFE

**The double-life syndrome** says that youth live one way in a one context and quite differently in another. How accurate is this?

Some youth **want to be Christian**. They live a double life because they don't know how to handle the challenging, secular situations they must be in, like school or work.

Some youth are **nominally Christian at best**. They act Christian when they must, such as at church or youth group, but only in these situations. They may not say it, but they probably want out.

Some youth **don't know** what they want. They flip between these two modes constantly.

The double-life behavior they manifest is similar, but the underlying realities differ.

### The Fractured Life

The double-life paradigm also fails to capture the fact that youth live in multiple moral worlds. Theirs is a fractured life not just a double life. They encounter many moral

environments daily and each has its own values for behavior: community, neighborhood, youth group, work, sports teams, family and school (with its own set of multiple classrooms, peer groups, etc... ) Every youth must learn the expected behavior for each environment if he or she is to fit in – and fitting in is incredibly important in the teenage world.

"I live out my life in different ways – a different way for each context. Parts of my life I keep hidden in *each* context. Only I know the real me."

– Carl age 16

Even Christian environments give conflicting moral signals. My family's approach to dating or media may differ from that held by my church, my youth leader, my Christian friends or school, or another Christian family. So, who is right?

Christian youth face constant moral pressure: to live a consistent life in environments **they do not choose or govern**. Unlike adults, youth have little say in their moral environments.

I won't say ours was a tough school, but we had our own coroner.  
– Lenny Bruce

They are just expected to get along – nor can they simply leave the moral environments they don't like.

### What Can We Do?

Let's start by recognizing the challenge youth face. It is tough living in a fractured moral world where they are expected to fit in everywhere. It's not possible. So, it helps if we express a bit of understanding.

Next let's equip our youth to handle well their multiple moral worlds. Let's help them see their challenge and then work through any specific situations with them. Let's provide more help, not more pressure.

### TO THE POINT

Personal moral integrity – the ability to act the same in every environment – is important. It is part of growing up. It is a sign of maturity. It is gained in the fiery furnaces of everyday life. It is that inner strength to be right from the inside.

# Lies & more lies & statistics

- ✚ The U.S. now has more television sets than people to watch them.
- ✚ 78% of American Christian parents purchased DVDs for their teenagers last Christmas. One of every four did not feel comfortable with the DVD they purchased.
- ✚ Luxembourg has 1.5 cell phones for every man, woman and child.
- ✚ *Halo 3* recorded the biggest opening day in entertainment history, bringing in \$170 million in its first 24 hours.
- ✚ More than one million people played *Halo 3* on Xbox Live in its first twenty hours.
- ✚ *Depends* (adult diapers) stock price is forecast to rise due to video-gaming.

MARKETERS ARE CHANGING THEIR EYE-TIME STRATEGY AS ATTENTION SPANS DECREASE. ONE SECOND OF YOUR ATTENTION IS WORTH HAVING NOW. SEE FOR YOURSELF. WATCH TELEVISION FROM A DISTANCE AND NOTE HOW MANY CAMERA ANGLE SHIFTS THERE ARE PER MINUTE. DO THE SAME WITH A MOVIE PREVIEW.

## Marketing to Youth

Youth marketing is about...

- ✚ Promoting moral rectitude
- ✚ Increasing time youth spend with family
- ✚ Teaching financial discipline
- ✚ Sharpening decision-making skills
- ✚ Fostering realistic body images
- ✚ Upholding truth, beauty and goodness

...or maybe not.

The youth market focuses on, music, visual technology, fashion and alcohol. It is hard to see how hip-hop, *Halo 3*, Bottega Veneta, and P.I.N.K. add significant Christian value to one's life. Exactly how much harm these cause is another question.

**WE OWN THE YOUTH MARKET.**  
- KEVIN LILES, (Def Jam) Warner Music

To "own" the market, especially the male market, you need to seduce and addict. Seduction gets them started but the real goal is addiction: keep them coming back. Get them dependent on your product. The most addictive products for boys are:

- 1) Pornography with 70% of internet-using males aged 18 to 34 visiting a porn site

**ADVERTISING IS A VALUABLE ECONOMIC FACTOR BECAUSE IT IS THE CHEAPEST WAY OF SELLING GOODS, PARTICULARLY IF THE GOODS ARE WORTHLESS.**  
- SINCLAIR LEWIS (1950)

## VOCABULARY

**Halo 3:** an X-box game about interstellar warfare.  
**Bottega Veneta:** a seriously expensive, fashion clothing line.  
**P.I.N.K.:** the producer of a Vodka laced with caffeine.  
**Seduce:** to lead astray, as from duty or rectitude, to allure, deceive and corrupt (see: tempt).

each month. (28% of those visiting pornographic websites are women!)

- 2) Video games: with 45% saying they are addicted and 70% having played for more than 10 hours straight.

Seven out of ten is impressive – somebody knows how to get people to do things, which, in their sane moments, they would never choose to do.

What defines a successful video game or pornography site? Repeat visits. Addiction simply is the goal.

In the next 60 days over 230 new video games are set to be released. Many will flop, but some will generate new and more clever ways to draw in boys (and more and more girls) and to hold them there.

Be careful when someone is after your wallet. Be even more careful when they are after your soul.

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