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NRG(energy)Drinks

Red Bull, Rockstar, Full Throttle, Monster... They are sold at your family grocers, so they must be ok, right? Some are all hype. Some aren't. The same amount of Starbucks short coffee throws ten times the caffeine-punch of Coke. Four ounces of Ammo and you can peel me off the ceiling. Check out the caffeine levels at [Energyfiend.com](#).

"I DID FEEL KIND OF WEIRD AFTER THOSE PHOTOS. I HAD, LIKE, EIGHT RED BULLS AND SAID, 'OK, LET'S DO IT.' I LEARNED MY LESSON AND YOU WON'T SEE ME LIKE THAT FOR A WHILE. NOT THAT IT'S DIRTY OR TACKY, BUT IT IS REALLY REVEALING AND I WOULDN'T WANT MY KID, AT 21, TO BE DRESSING LIKE THAT."

~ Britney Spears

on her provocative photo shoot for Esquire November 3, 2003

Youth Culture

newsletter

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BACK TO THE FUTURE

(This article is adapted from a talk given by Michael Shaughnessy to Kairos International Leaders in May 2008.)

What will determine the shape of the future? Technology, wealth, fear, power, population growth, media, government, global warming? There are probably four main scenarios. They all result in a future very different than the present.

The first scenario is more of the same, but even that will yield very different results! More people, who are better educated, will produce more wealth. They will have more leisure time and consume more. People will continue to move from "I work just to survive" — to "I live to play."

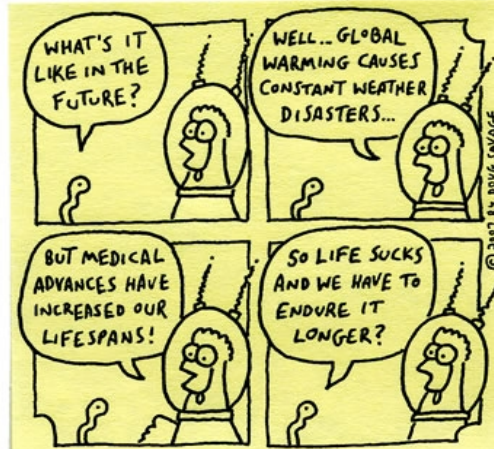
The second is a have-and-have-not world, but having won't be primarily about money. The have-not population will be the victims of the breakdown of family and character. Already there is a growing population that doesn't have the intellectual, relational or moral skills to hold a steady job.

The third is the big accident: nuclear war, global ecological disaster, an unstoppable epidemic that decimates the population ...or maybe even aliens. Survival will be the key concern.

The fourth is the continued, rapid advance of technology, especially in

Savage Chickens

by Doug Savage



genetics and bio-engineering. We might see a Matrix-like world where gaining knowledge requires no effort. It is directly downloaded to your brain. How much should we form the mind, body, will and emotions (either chemically or genetically) and who will control this?

Parents possibly, but that is unlikely. They might have the power to prevent this from happening to their own children, but possibly at the cost of their children

Look me in the eye and tell me that!

Ten years after President Clinton made the argument that oral sex isn't really sex, a generation of adolescents seems to [agree](#). So said seventy percent of 14- to 19-year-olds according to a study in the [Journal of Adolescent Health](#).

Why do some teens view oral sex this way? Oral sex involves less eye contact than kissing ...they see it as **less threatening behavior...**, so it's more casually engaged in, says [William Sydnor](#), a sex education advisor from Broward County, Florida.

being left behind intellectually, physically or even morally. Expect business to be in it for the money. Expect media to want to control the eye and mind. Expect schools to believe they, not parents, are responsible for children. Governments will want to determine what happens to its citizens. The church won't have much say if it remains weak, confused and divided. In any case, a lot more power will be in the hands of fewer people.

Responding with fear is exactly the wrong response. Responding with faith, hope and love is the right response. Faith, because God knows what he is doing; everything is ultimately under his mighty hand. Hope, because it helps us respond joyfully in all circumstances. Love, because it guides us in doing the right thing toward God and others.

We are called, like Queen Esther was, for such a time (kairos) as this. We can expect God's help to do the right thing at the right time, and that is what makes all the difference. It may be that the future of youth culture will be up to us.

SHRINKING YOUR SOAP

In America, [as the world turns](#), a new [guiding light](#) is leading [the young and the restless](#) into the [search for tomorrow](#). That new guiding light isn't a soap opera, it's snack drama.

Soap operas began in 1937 when episodic fiction was broadcast on radio and had a soap company as the main advertiser. They may get replaced by [snack dramas](#) – five minute stories made to be viewed on your mobile phone.

In the U.S. [the average television viewer is aged 50](#), although the average American is only aged 38. Youth are dropping out of the ordinary TV market and switching to computer games and the mobile (cell-phone) web. According to a [report from OTX](#), 41 percent of teens surveyed have video-downloading capability on their cell phones, and half of them are downloading and viewing videos. Teens mostly watch music videos, user-generated content, sports clips, clips from TV shows, [rapid fire recaps](#) of soap operas, and finally, full-length TV shows. What they are watching reflects their mobile TV attention span, which averages eight minutes.

However, for a video to work really well on the mini-screen it needs to be filmed for the mini-screen. [Lonely Girl 15](#) and [Quarterlife](#) were produced for YouTube and the 17-inch screen. They became very popular on-line but even they don't work well on a cell phone. Similarly, the ride into the big sunset works on the big screen but is under-impressive on the mini-screen.

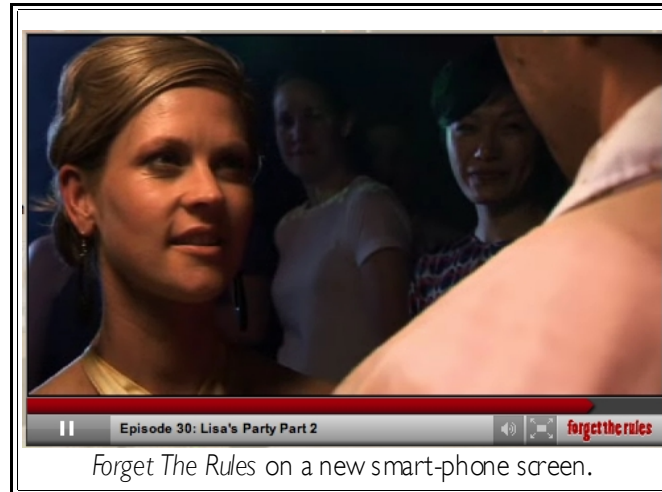


Snack dramas like [Sofia's Diary](#) and [Forget The Rules](#) are written and produced with the 3.5 inch mobile phone in mind not the big screen, HD TV or the 17-inch computer screen.

In a snack drama the number of cuts must also be limited. A change in perspective on the mini-screen can have the

opposite effect it has on television. Rapid perspective changes will lose rather than hold the audience.

Close-ups (web camera style) are what hold the viewers attention. This affects how dialogue is written as well.



Like soap operas, snack dramas have a stable of characters, and the story line moves most of them forward over the course of one episode, but snack dramas must tell their story in a much tighter timeframe. Snack dramas are not just your daily soap cut into five-minute episodes.

Snack drama production costs also are shrunk. The big screen has a big budget, long production times and a huge canvas. Soap operas scale back production (less time to film, less money for sets and travel). Snack dramas are low budget: often filmed with one camera and done in a day. With production costs approaching zero and the interest youth have in making their own videos, expect snack dramas and mobile TV to own the youth market faster than you can say Palmolive soap.

The good news for youth work is that this makes low budget, high quality, Christian youth videos a possibility. Oh, another good thing: the ads are really short, as well.

Back issues of this newsletter are available at

www.kairos-na.org/newsletterarchives.htm

Comments and ideas can be sent to

Kairos_editor@gmail.com

Lies & more lies & statistics

- A survey of teens in the virtual world [Habbo Hotel](#) found that 71% listen to music (mp3s) on their mobile phones, up from 38% two years ago.
- Teen mobile phone usage is up in all areas with 63% playing mobile games—up from only 54% in 2006. Over 25% are using the mobile web to surf the net, check email and Instant Message (IM).
- Many [parents](#) are no longer making decisions about what their children watch TV – or when. More than half of teens are watching television programs on their computer or are digitally recording shows for later viewing.
- [Dwango](#) announced today that it would start selling specialized cell phone ring-tones which can be heard only by dogs.
- Cats with credit cards were seen at Dwango headquarters in Tokyo yesterday.