

“That’s just Common Sense,” or “That’s just the way it is,” or Ideology/ Cultural Mythology

All media products are advertisements in some senses -- themselves, but also for values or ways of life. They usually affirm the existing social system. The ideological messages contained in, for example, a typical Hollywood television narrative are almost invisible to North Americans, but they would be much more apparent to people in developing countries. -- Media Literacy Resource Guide. Ontario Ministry of Education, 1989. 9.

The word “Ideology” has a long history, and the range of meanings attached to word is broad; however, at one level, ideology can be defined as “A body of ideas that reflects the interests of a nation, political system, etc. and underlies political action. 2. In philosophy and sociology, the set of beliefs by which a group or society orders reality so as to render it intelligible.

The nature of Ideology is that it is invisible to those who exist within the culture. Ideology enables the presentation of cultural practices and beliefs as *natural* rather than culturally specific, as “common sense” rather than the product of a cultural consensus. Ideology reinforces itself through assuming a common viewpoint among consumers of cultural texts.

CULTURAL MYTHS CREATED AND/OR

SUSTAINED BY CORPORATE MEDIA

By Don Lutz <<http://www.afn.org/~afn54735/ai-don2.html>>

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1. Assassinating terrorists prevents terrorism.
 2. Chicken and fish are 'health' foods.
 3. There is a unique biological difference between humans and all other animals.
 4. Adequate protein is an important dietary concern.
 5. Men are superior to women.
 6. Human babies need cow's milk.
 7. Animal research is unavoidable.
 8. My religion is the true religion.
 9. High temperature cooking or pasteurization makes all foods safe.
 10. Dairy products are the best source of dietary calcium.
 11. "White" people are superior to "non-white" people.
 12. "Prehistoric" humans were stupid.
 13. Unemployment in the US is under 5%.
 14. Vegetarian diets are risky.
 15. Humans have always made war.
 16. Americans are safe from "Mad Cow" disease.

More Cultural Myths <<http://www.afn.org/~afn54735/ai-don2.html>>

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17. Humans are superior to all other forms of life.
18. Drug laws prevent drug abuse.
19. Humans are natural carnivores.
20. Illegal drugs are dangerous, legal drugs are not.
21. Agriculture is a great human accomplishment.
22. Economic growth is good for everybody.
23. More jails will prevent crime.
24. The Earth, if properly managed, can feed even more than five billion humans.
25. Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated president John Kennedy.
26. Capitalism is a successful economic system.
27. Nature exists for exploitation by humans.
28. Communism failed because of the success of capitalism.
29. Nature is violent, humans are not.
30. Richard Nixon resigned the Presidency because of Watergate.
31. War is sometimes justified.
32. Refined sugar is a natural food.
33. There are 'good' animals and 'bad' animals.
34. Science is always improving agricultural methods.
35. Humans are becoming less violent as history progresses.
36. Nature is our enemy.
37. Science can improve on nature.
38. Competition is the driving force in nature, and so should it be for humans.
39. Honey is a healthy, environmentally 'friendly' food.
40. The American legal/judicial system operates by principles of justice and equality.
41. Planting trees solves the problem of deforestation.
42. The oceans are too vast to become polluted.
43. Human slavery is wrong, but the enslavement of non-human animals is find.
44. The American press is liberal.
45. The prime motivation of the food industry is to provide safe, healthy food.
46. A meal at McDonald's is a healthy meal.
47. Americans are the best informed people on Earth.
48. There is a nutritional need for humans to eat meat and dairy products.
49. Doctors are generally a good source of information on nutrition.
50. Americans are the best fed people on Earth.
51. It's OK to drive 10, 20 or 30 miles over posted speed limits.
52. Immunizations are safe, necessary and required by law.
53. Surgery, radiation and chemotherapy are the best ways to treat cancer.
54. Sport hunting is necessary to "control" animal populations.
55. It is not important whether you use your automobile turn signals.
56. Dairy cows don't go to the slaughterhouse to be killed and eaten.
57. Homosexuality is "unnatural."
58. Al Gore is an environmentalist.
59. Fish don't feel pain.
60. Animals don't think.