



## MEDIA VIRUS

Twenty-five years ago, when the world had not quite lost all of its innocence and idealism, I was living in a film commune, churning out experimental films—short five- to ten-minute cultural commentaries. All the members of our commune were fascinated with film and its seemingly magical power to change the world. We showed our shorts to small groups around the Pacific Northwest for a couple of years, but yearned for wider exposure. It occurred to us to condense some of our most incisive efforts into thirty- and sixty-second TV spots and air them as paid “uncommercial” messages. In those days, a local thirty-second timeslot after midnight cost only about \$50. Even we could afford that. I walked into the network headquarters of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation with a few hundred dollars in my pocket and tried to buy some airtime. The sales department was on the second floor of a tawdry downtown Vancouver building. I remember feeling intimidated and eventually being laughed out of the office. “I don’t know what this is,” the manager in charge of sales told me as he looked over our storyboards, “but it’s not a commercial.”

I thought it was strange that a citizen willing to pay couldn’t buy

airtime on Canada's public broadcasting system. I sent a letter to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission—Canadian broadcasting's governing body—asking about the rights of citizens to access the public airwaves. I got a very polite letter back saying basically that the whole area was murky, that networks had some rights, individuals had some rights, the law was inconclusive on this point, blah, blah, blah. And that was that. I moved on to a career in documentary filmmaking and the free speech issue slipped to the back of my mind—until 1989.

That year, British Columbia's logging industry, its image rapidly tarnishing, launched a multimillion-dollar PR campaign. Bus-stop posters went up all over Vancouver, and every night when I switched on my TV there was another smooth pitch explaining the wonderful job the industry was doing managing the forests. This slick series of spots, produced by one of the biggest ad agencies in town, always ended with the upbeat reassurance that we British Columbians need have no fear. Our forests were in good hands, they were being well managed, and we would have "Forests Forever." This slogan spread like an infovirus throughout the province.

Those British Columbians who knew what was really happening in the forests were livid. The industry was blatantly lying. In truth, the forests of B.C. and the Pacific Northwest have a history of appalling management. For years the timber companies (whose executives held the view that a tree is just an unemployed log) cut too much old-growth too quickly and without proper public consultation. Consequently, the hills were scarred with clear-cuts, and salmon runs were contaminated and dying. There had been mass demonstrations and civil disobedience to stop this liquidation of the Earth's richest temperate rain forests.

So a group of us—including myself, wilderness cinematographer Bill Schmalz and half a dozen other environmental activists—came up with our own campaign. "Mystical Forests" tried to tell the other side of the story: The industry was logging at an unsustainable rate and the future of forestry in our province was in jeopardy.

When we tried to buy airtime for our ad, the TV stations turned us

down. At the CBC, the same sales manager who had laughed me out of his office fifteen years earlier again wouldn't take our money (this time he did not laugh). He refused "Mystical Forests" even while he continued to sell airtime to the "Forests Forever" campaign. It seemed ludicrous, undemocratic, and it made us furious.

We mobilized in retaliation. We issued press releases, hounded journalists and protested in front of forest company headquarters. There were editorials in the local papers, TV news coverage, appearances on radio talk shows—and suddenly the forest company executives were backpedaling. Their promise of "Forests Forever" caved in under scrutiny. We popped their multimillion-dollar PR bubble right in their faces and suddenly the CBC was on the defensive as well. Hundreds of British Columbians phoned the CBC's head office demanding to know why environmentalists couldn't buy airtime whereas the forest industry could.

A few weeks later, unexpectedly, the CBC had a change of heart. They never did air our spot, but they pulled the "Forests Forever" campaign—a major loss of face for the industry and a big boost for the environmentalists. Many British Columbians—some for the first time—started having doubts about what was really happening in their forests, and, more to the point, started seriously questioning what was being sold on TV as truth.

We'd beaten the forest industry at its own game—on a budget of zero. We felt euphoric, and that heady mood gave birth to the Adbusters Media Foundation (usually just called Adbusters or the Media Foundation). We decided to produce more TV campaigns about the seminal issues of our time, and to insist on our right to purchase commercial airtime for those issues. We also launched the media activist networking magazine *Adbusters*, and, a little later, the *Culture Jammer's Campaign Headquarters* on the World Wide Web ([www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org)).

We produced the "Autosaurus" TV campaign (a takedown of the auto industry involving a rampaging dinosaur made of scrap cars), "Obsession Fetish" (a critique of the fashion industry featuring a bulimic Kate Moss look-alike), "TV Turnoff Week" (a yearly campaign

encouraging TV abstinence) and “Buy Nothing Day”—and all of them were systematically, repeatedly rejected by not only the CBC but by all the North American TV networks, including the big three: NBC, CBS and ABC. (CNN would eventually air the “Buy Nothing Day” ad, but only after a pit bull terrier of a *Wall Street Journal* reporter put pressure on the network to justify its refusal.) Now, these are not crummy low-budget commercials that offended the networks’ delicate sensibilities. They’re effective and professional. The networks could not and did not object to how they looked. They objected to what they said.

And the stonewalling continues to this day.

Sometimes the hypocrisy is maddeningly blatant. Every Christmas season, the airwaves are full of consumption messages as our culture embarks on another whirlwind buying binge. But year after year the big three networks have refused to sell us airtime for our “Buy Nothing Day” announcement.

Over the years, I’ve spent dozens of hours arguing with the network executives about why they’re censoring us. Here’s what some of them have had to say in their own defense:

*“There’s no law that says we have to air anything—we’ll decide what we want to air or not.”*

—ABC New York station manager Art Moore

*“We don’t want to take any advertising that’s inimical to our legitimate business interests.”*

—NBC network commercial clearance manager Richard Gitter

*“I dare you to get any station manager in this town to air your message.”*

—CBS network’s Libby Hawkins in New York

*“We don’t sell airtime for issue ads because that would allow the people with the financial resources to control public policy.”*

—CBS Boston public affairs manager Donald Lowery

*“This commercial [“Buy Nothing Day”] . . . is in opposition to the current economic policy in the United States.”*

—CBS network’s Robert L. Lowary

I get a creepy sense of *déjà vu* listening to remarks like that. I was born in Estonia, where for fifty years during Soviet rule people were not allowed to speak up against the government. There simply were no media channels for debating controversial public issues because the government did not want such discussion to take place. Soviet dissidents used to talk about a “public sphere of discourse” that was missing from their country. The oppression of that era was rightly decried. Ultimately, a lot of Westerners watched the Soviet Union fall apart with some sense of vindication.

In North America today there’s a similar public void. There’s a lack of media space in which to challenge consumptive, commercial and corporate agendas. In the former Soviet Union you weren’t allowed to speak out against the government. In North America today you cannot speak out against the sponsors.

This inability to speak up, this public information void, extends across all media at every level. Young reporters who cut their teeth on small-town newspapers invariably swap stories about how they ran into a wall the moment they tried to do real investigative work. The tales often go something like this: There’s a smelter or a pulp mill on the outskirts of town. It employs a lot of the townsfolk and donates a lot of money to good causes. Unfortunately, it’s an environmental nightmare: For years it’s been dumping heavy metals into streams and poisoning the aquifer. The reporter tries to ferret out the facts. She calls the company’s media liaison, who blows her off. She calls up that guy’s boss, who fails to call back. The next day the publisher takes the reporter into her office and tells her to drop the story. “That company is an esteemed member of the community,” she says. “Every year they buy a huge color supplement, and they host the annual summer barbecue that all the other advertisers attend. So just drop it. There are plenty of other things to write about. Look: They’re paint-

ing the tennis courts tomorrow. Go find the essential drama in *that* story.”

And up the chain it goes.

The looming presence of big advertisers influences, if only subconsciously, every executive decision made in every newsroom across North America. Ninety percent of news editors surveyed in a 1992 Marquette University study said they'd experienced “direct pressure” from advertisers trying to influence content; more than a third admitted they had, at some point, caved in and done what the advertisers wanted. Important advertisers are stroked with “soft” pieces designed to move product while important stories are buried.

The most high-minded, ethically intentioned networks and publications are not above striking Faustian pacts.

The PBS flagship *NewsHour*, which is underwritten by Archer Daniels Midland, conveniently ignored the agribusiness giant's price-fixing scandal throughout 1995.

*The New Yorker* magazine recently cut a deal with Crystal Cruises, wherein the magazine agreed to send seven of its high-profile writers and editors on a world cruise aboard a Crystal cruiseliner (the staffers are required to give some on-board lectures). Its back thus scratched, Crystal agreed to buy six full pages of ad space in the magazine, and it promptly began promoting the cruise (“*The New Yorker Goes to Sea!*”), aiming its ads at rich travelers hoping to gain a little wit and sophistication by osmosis.

Where will all this dirty dancing eventually lead us? The answer may lie in cyberspace, where objective “news” stories already feature hypertext links to advertising merchants. Book giant Barnes & Noble pays *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* to send readers who click on highlighted titles directly to the store's virtual headquarters (where they can order the book themselves).

With this precedent set, many observers predict the full infiltration of commercial forces into all on-line content. You'll read an obituary of country crooner John Denver and grow nostalgic. But here's relief: Double-click on “Rocky Mountain High” and you'll find yourself at the

virtual headquarters of the record company selling a boxed set of Denver's greatest hits. You like the sound of a company mentioned in a business story on Silicon Valley start-ups? Why not buy the stock from this on-line brokerage house? Just double-click here.

In 1997, Chrysler, one of the five largest advertisers in the U.S., sent letters to one hundred newspaper and magazine editors demanding to review their publications for stories that could prove damaging or controversial. “In an effort to avoid potential conflicts, it is required that Chrysler corporation be alerted in advance of any and all editorial content that encompasses sexual, political, social issues or any editorial content that could be construed as provocative or offensive.” According to a spokesperson at Chrysler, every single letter was signed in agreement and returned. This kind of editorial control is widely, quietly practiced throughout the industry.

In today's media environment, advertisers rule—the sponsor is king. That ideology is now so entrenched within media circles as to have become an unspoken operational code. Lessons about power, privilege and access are learned at the lower levels by young writers who take this received wisdom with them as they move up the media ladder. From the smallest community weeklies to the big city and national dailies, from *Forbes* and *Details* and *Cosmo* to the NBC, ABC and CBS networks, our whole social communications system is rotten to the core.



## THE MEME WARS

A meme (rhymes with “dream”) is a unit of information (a catchphrase, a concept, a tune, a notion of fashion, philosophy or politics) that leaps from brain to brain to brain. Memes compete with one another for replication, and are passed down through a population much the same way genes pass through a species. Potent memes can change minds, alter behavior, catalyze collective mindshifts and transform cultures. Which is why meme warfare has become the geopolitical battle of our information age. Whoever has the memes has the power.

Activists can stage sit-ins, organize massive protests and stage mighty battles with riot police. But these events will at best flicker briefly on the evening news and be gone with no demonstrable change in the world. They are spectacles with radium half-lives. The real riots, the important ones that shift alliances, shake governments, win (or lose) elections and force corporations and industries to rethink their agendas, now take place inside your head.

The next revolution—World War III—will be, as Marshall McLuhan predicted, “a guerrilla information war” fought not in the sky or on the streets, not in the forests or around international fishing

boundaries on the high seas, but in newspapers and magazines, on the radio, on TV and in cyberspace. It will be a dirty, no-holds-barred propaganda war of competing worldviews and alternative visions of the future.

We jammers can win this battle for ourselves and for Planet Earth. Here's how:

We build our own meme factory, put out a better product and beat the corporations at their own game. We identify the macromemes and the metamemes—the core ideas without which a sustainable future is unthinkable—and deploy them.

Here are five of the most potent metamemes currently in the culture jammer's arsenal:

**True Cost:** In the global marketplace of the future, the price of every product will tell the ecological truth.

**Demarketing:** The marketing enterprise has now come full circle. The time has come to *unsell* the product and turn the incredible power of marketing against itself.

**The Doomsday Meme:** The global economy is a doomsday machine that must be stopped and reprogrammed.

**No Corporate "P":** Corporations are not legal "persons" with constitutional rights and freedoms of their own, but legal fictions that we ourselves created and must therefore control.

**Media Carta:** Every human being has the "right to communicate"—to receive and impart information through any media.

What would happen if even 10 percent of North Americans came to believe in and support even one of these ideas? Life would change. The ready-for-prime-time metameme—the big paradigm-busting idea that suddenly captures the public imagination and becomes a super-spectacle in itself—is the meme-warfare equivalent of a nuclear bomb. It causes cognitive dissonance of the highest order. It jolts people out of

their habitual patterns and nudges society in brave new directions.

The last time social activists ventured wholesale into TV, they won a magnificent victory. I'm talking about the tobacco war, which history will record as having begun in the 1960s and having ended around the turn of the millennium, with the tobacco giants finally rolling over. The tobacco war marked the first (and so far the last) time anti-ads beat product ads in open meme combat in a free marketplace of ideas.

Here was a multibillion-dollar industry butting heads with the fledgling antitobacco lobby. In 1969, the antitobacco crusaders, through persistent efforts and relentless pressure, managed to secure airtime for their antismoking ads, which ran against the cigarette ads that were then still legal on TV.

I remember those ads vividly—the superclose-ups of the glowing tips of cigarettes, the X rays of cruddy lungs. I remember Yul Brynner, whose last creative act in the world, after a slow disintegration from lung cancer, was to come on TV just months from death, look the world squarely in the eye and say, "Whatever you do, don't smoke." That meme forged the link between cigarettes and death. Everybody watching knew it was the truth. Those anti-ads helped me and millions of others to quit smoking. More significantly, they demonstrated that even a multibillion-dollar cartel can be beaten in a free marketplace of ideas.

The antismoking meme crushed the smoking meme. Even with all its financial might, the tobacco industry was simply unable to compete because it lost its psychological stranglehold on the public mind. It lost its magic. Smoking was uncooled, and no amount of PR money could buy the cool back. In 1971, the tobacco companies "voluntarily" accepted a federal ban on TV and radio cigarette advertising, and their ads have not appeared in those media since.

For the antismoking lobby—early culture jammers—beating the enemy on TV was the key. The victory initiated the great social turnaround of the next twenty years, with smokers in increasing numbers being driven out of the temple.

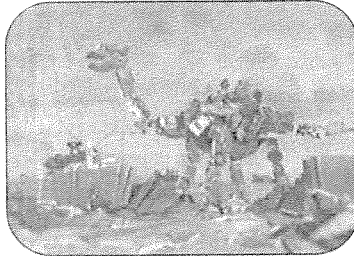
Today a new generation of jammers is inspired by that victory. If the mighty tobacco industry was vulnerable to calculated, well-researched,

**AUTOSAURUS**

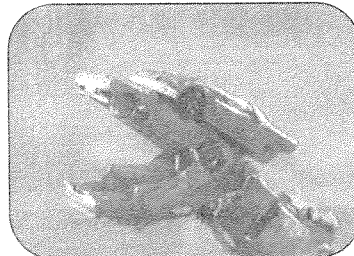
30-SECOND TV SPOT



A woman's hand sensually caresses a shiny new car.



Suddenly, the car morphs into an Autosaurus, a terrifying robotic dinosaur, made of hulks of old cars.



Voice: "It's coming, it's coming . . . the most significant event in automotive history . . . the end of the age of the automobile."

The Autosaurus screeches and collapses into a heap.



Voice:  
"Imagine a world with less cars."

MEME WARFARE TONIGHT 1-800-863-1243

tactical assaults by TV activists, then surely such subversive efforts can be repeated with success on other dysfunctional industries.

Jammers are now mobilizing to repeat the tobacco story in many other areas of life. We're going to take on the global automakers, the chemical companies, the food industries, the fashion corporations and the pop-culture marketeers in a free-information environment. We believe we can launch a new brand and beat America™ in a meme war. We're better organized and much smarter than we were twenty-five years ago. I like our odds.

### Culture Jammer's Manifesto

We will take on the archetypal mind polluters and beat them at their own game.

We will uncool their billion-dollar brands with uncommercials on TV, subvertisements in magazines and anti-ads right next to theirs in the urban landscape.

We will seize control of the roles and functions that corporations play in our lives and set new agendas in their industries.

We will jam the pop-culture marketers and bring their image factory to a sudden, shuddering halt.

On the rubble of the old culture, we will build a new one with a non-commercial heart and soul.

### THE MEME WARRIOR

Next time you're in a particularly soul-searching mood, ask yourself this simple question: What would it take for me to make a spontaneous, radical gesture in support of something I believe in? Do I believe in *anything* strongly enough? What would it take for me to say, This may not be nice, it may not be considerate, it may not even be rational—but damn it, I'm going to do it anyway because it feels right? I'm going to take this pair of scissors and cut my credit card in half. I'm going to take this little doll I've bought out of its huge box, right here at Toys "R" Us, and leave the wasteful packaging on the counter. Next time I'm caught standing in a long line at the bank, I'm going to shout cheerfully: "Hey, how about opening another teller!"

Direct action is a proclamation of personal independence. It happens, for the first time, at the intersection of your self-consciousness and your tolerance for being screwed over. You act. You thrust yourself forward and intervene. And then you hang loose and deal with whatever comes. In that moment of decision, in that leap into the unknown, you come to life. Your interior world is suddenly vivid. You're like a cat on the prowl: alive, alert and still a little wild.



It's fun to wrestle with titans. It's exhilarating to throw a megacorporation like McDonald's or Nike or Calvin Klein to the mat with the awesome momentum of its own icons and marketing hype—leveraging the very brand recognition the company so painstakingly built over the years. It's a fascinating exercise to take on a cartel like the global automakers and try to make it question its mandate. It's empowering to try to force a whole academic discipline like neoclassical economics to rethink its axioms.

In any such fight the underdog is perfectly positioned to take risks and test theories. Culture jammers are continually trying out new strategic ploys in the meme wars. Here are a few we've found so far.

## Leverage Points

Almost every social problem, no matter how seemingly intractable, can be solved with enough time, scrutiny and effort. There's always some little fissure you can squeeze a crowbar into and heave. That's the leverage point. When pressure is applied there, memes start replicating, minds start changing and, in time, the whole culture moves.

There's a story often told by systems analysts—including Donella Meadows, coauthor of *Limits to Growth*—to illustrate how a little action at a system's leverage point can make all the difference in the world. The manager of a housing co-op was growing increasingly frustrated with her tenants. No matter how much she reminded and badgered them, no matter how many meetings she convened, no matter how much goodwill there was for the task, the tenants would not, could not reduce their energy consumption. Finally she hit on an idea. What would happen, she wondered, if the electricity meters were moved from the basement to a conspicuous spot right beside the front door, so that each time the tenants left or entered their home they could see how fast their meter was whirring?

The meters were moved. Lo and behold, within a few weeks electricity consumption fell 30 percent.

This tale inspires culture jammers because it reminds us of what

our movement is all about: *finding that leverage point*. Something is wrong; it can be fixed, but the fix requires seeing the situation in a novel way. "It's not a parameter adjustment, not a strengthening or weakening of an existing loop," says Meadows. "It's a *new loop* delivering feedback to a place where it wasn't going before."

How do you get society to make do with fewer cars? You can encourage people to make bicycles a bigger part of their lives. You can organize "Bike to Work" weeks. You can pay employers to subsidize commuters who pedal in from the suburbs. All of these things will certainly help. But the leverage point may turn out to be an idea that uncools one of the core rituals of car culture—the Indy 500. We uncooled beauty pageants, why not Indy races? Both are relics of a bygone era.

Other examples abound. When citizens are in the grip of fashion chic, you can "skull" fashion billboards, you can organize national "Fashin' Bashin' Weeks," you can point people toward thrift stores. But if you concentrate your energies on one fashion mogul—I suggest Calvin Klein—and try to uncool his line and logo, then you may have found a way to leverage the whole industry. An activist-induced drop in cK sales of even a few percent would signal that the tables have turned.

Leverage points are easier to find if you brainstorm and are ready to act on a grand scale. Why not go head to head with the junk-food industry on TV? Why not take legal action against TV broadcasters who won't sell you airtime? Why not take your case to the World Court? Why not try to launch a global media reform movement? Why not try to revoke Philip Morris's corporate charter?

## Détournement

Corporations advertise. Culture jammers *subvertise*. A well-produced print "subvertisement" mimics the look and feel of the target ad, prompting the classic double take as viewers realize what they're seeing is in fact the very opposite of what they expected. Subvertising is potent mustard. It cuts through the hype and glitz of our mediated reality

and momentarily, tantalizingly, reveals the hollow spectacle within.

Suppose you don't have the money to launch a real print ad campaign. What you *can* do is mimic the million-dollar look and feel of your opponent's campaign, thereby *détourning* their own carefully worked out, button-pushing memes in your favor. They spend millions building their corporate cool, and you keep stealing their electricity.

## Cyberjamming

The Internet is one of the most potent meme-replicating mediums ever invented. With cyberspace growing at about the rate of an infant—doubling in size every ten months—and with users always looking to pass on a scoop, good memes reproduce furiously. In 1997, Buy Nothing Day grew from a relatively small counterculture event in the Pacific Northwest to one of the biggest outbursts of anticonsumer sentiment the world has ever seen. Anyone with a PC and a modem could go to the Media Foundation's website ([www.adbusters.org](http://www.adbusters.org)), download a Buy Nothing Day poster and a T-shirt template, and view quicktime versions of the Buy Nothing Day TV campaign. And hundreds of thousands did.

Cyberjamming is evolving at a dizzying pace. Here are a few interesting techniques in use at the time of this writing:

### *Cyberpetitions*

Don't wear out your shoes trying to collect hard-copy signatures in person. Instead, use the Internet to gain immediate access to millions of like-minded souls to consider your proposal, sign your petition and e-mail it back to you.

### *Virtual Protests*

Link people who visit your website directly to the site of your quarry (be it Monsanto, McDonald's, Philip Morris or NBC), where they can find creative ways to lodge a protest.

### *Virtual Sit-ins*

Immobilize an enemy site by organizing a few dozen cyberjammers simultaneously to request more texts, pictures, animations and multimedia elements than the site can handle.

### *Gripe Sites*

Create and maintain a site dedicated to uncooling one particular corporation or brand.

## TV Jamming

A fifteen-, thirty- or sixty-second TV spot created by a team of passionate filmmakers is, I believe, the most powerful of all the weapons in the culture jammer's arsenal. I sometimes call a well-conceived and -produced social marketing TV message a "mindbomb" because of how it explodes in the collective psyche, sending out shock waves of cognitive dissonance. An effective TV subvertisement (or uncommercial) is so unlike what surrounds it on the commercial-TV mindscape that it immediately grabs the attention of viewers. It breaks their media-consumer trance and momentarily challenges their whole world outlook. It's guerrilla meme warfare on the most powerful social communications medium of our time. It can catch whole industries by surprise, trigger government policy reviews, derail legislation, launch new political initiatives. A thirty-second TV campaign is a legitimate way for a private citizen or activist group to challenge government, corporate and industrial agendas. And the idea that *you* have the right to do that in a democracy is utterly empowering.

Hundreds of protesters in front of a McDonald's may or may not make the local evening news, but a relatively modest national TV campaign (for example, twelve spots costing \$2,500 each on CNN's *Headline News*), pointing out that a Big Mac contains over 50 percent fat, can strike to the heart of the fast-food industry. A cheeky anticar spot, aired repeatedly during international Indy and Nascar broadcasts, can begin to unnerve the global automakers. An uncommercial that fingers the

global economy as a doomsday machine, aired during the weeks leading up to a G-7 summit meeting, can trigger a worldwide debate about unsustainable overconsumption by the affluent "First" nations of the world.

Eventually, we will have access to the airwaves. We will have the "right to communicate" with each other in a free information environment. In the meantime, TV jamming is still a win-win strategy: If you are able to buy time and get your ad aired, you win by delivering your message to hundreds of thousands of attentive viewers. If the networks refuse to sell you airtime, you publicize that fact. Now you have a news story (the media are always willing to expose a dirty little secret) that will prompt debate in your community about access to the public airwaves and perhaps draw more attention to your cause than if the networks had simply sold you the airtime in the first place.

## The Industrial Pincer

Squirming out from under a big, dysfunctional industry that's controlling some aspect of our lives and setting new agendas in that industry requires more than just a hot TV spot and a little ad hoc anger. Breaking the auto industry's hold on our transportation and environmental policies, or the food industry's hold on our nutritional agendas, or the fashion industry's hold on what constitutes attractiveness requires protracted meme warfare on many fronts over many years. The "pincer strategy" is a way to organize the forces. You apply it as follows:

1. You attack the industry from above with hard-hitting media thrusts. You break its unchallenged run on television by airing dissenting ads. You run subverts and spoofs in magazines. You place anti-ads right next to their ads in the urban landscape.
2. Simultaneously, you attack from below. You lobby at the grassroots level. You contact citizens' groups (cyclists, vegans, women's groups, Christians against TV violence, Green entrepreneurs) and catalyze

actions (anticar rallies, street parties, sticker campaigns, Fashion' Bashin' Weeks, cyberpetitions) calculated to attract press and TV coverage.

3. You apply the pincer to the industry and don't let up for at least two years.

A well-organized pincer will get millions of people thinking about their lives—about eating better, driving less, jumping off the fashion treadmill, downshifting. Eventually, the national mood will evolve. Single-occupant commuters will begin to resemble the smokers of today—outsiders, even villains. People scarfing a Big Mac, Coke and fries for lunch will feel a little guilty, a little sick, a little stupid. Teenagers wearing Nike caps and Calvin Klein jeans won't feel so trendy anymore.

That's when these industries will change. That's when the global automakers will suddenly realize there's no future in single-occupant commuting. When McDonald's stops trying to sell another generation on a deep-fried, high-fat diet. When the beauty myth loses its hold. That's when the corporate cool machine suddenly starts spluttering, and, in a great surge of self-determination, we the people stand up and reclaim our culture.

In my more melodramatic moments over the last ten years, I have let myself imagine the culture-jamming crusade building to a single, almost solemn moment of reckoning, like the scene in Shakespeare's *Henry V* where the king summons his troops before the battle of Agincourt and delivers the gut-check talk:

*And gentlemen in England now a-bed  
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here  
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks  
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.*

It's not inconceivable that the culture-jamming movement will be remembered by our grandchildren for having been one of the catalysts