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February 17, 2014

TITLE: "Red Bull is a Monster"

INTRODUCTION: Influencing Notoriety

The seventh of February marked the start of the twenty-second winter Olympics. Time where Americans find a sense of pride in our athletic achievement. Families gather to watch and cheer our brightest athletes in hope their achievement marks another gold for the United States. Children turning to idolize certain individuals, and setting their standards for a role model. So when silver medalist, professional snowboarder Danny Kass is standing on the podium with three neon green animal tares splayed on his jacket and snow board, what message does it send to the younger demographic, that energy drinks are a viable choice of beverage (monster, 2014)? Unfortunately, although represented as a proper choice for young Americans, energy drinks such as monster and red bull cause substantial health issues especially for developing adolescence. Throughout this piece will be discovering the market strategies of these billion dollar corporations. From there we find out the origins of two of the largest energy drink brands Red Bull and Monster. We will address afterward the health risks these products place upon developing bodies. Then suggest solutions for preventing long lasting effects these notorious beverages can cause for one's health.

1ST BODY: Marketing Strategies

The growing consumption for these products have *increased 6.7%* since the year 2013,

profiting these two beverage giants; Red Bull *3.4 billion* and Monster *3.1 Billion US dollars 52 weeks prior to July 2013* (Exis, 2014). Massive sales are allowing these corporations to produce a greater outreach in marketing, targeting endorsements from influential figures. These beverage companies target athletes as a way to glorify their product. Red Bull hosting annual games to attract the best x game competitors proving they're the stunting elite (Red Bull, 2014). The modern youth is notorious for reckless behavior and what better way to unify daredevils then creating competitions to draw in the masses. What is to be plastered on all items involved? Red Bull, after all Red Bull gives you wings. One event alone in the New York Red Bull arena houses 26,000 people (Red Bull, 2014). During the 2012 X-games 108,000 people were attendance on sight in Aspen Colorado, also, the games were represented on ESPN, ESPN2 and ABC channels in 903,000 households across America (Aspen, 2012). Which also implies the same coverage for Red bull, and Monster companies. But how did these advertising giants become so powerful? When the term energy drink is in several pressing media alerts for health and other substantial risks, who had the desire to found one of the first pioneering brands in this beverage sensation?

2ND BODY: History

Red Bull, an Austrian Company, was created 1976 co-founded by Dietrich Mateschitz working with a toothpaste company, Blendax to develop flavor specifically for the Asian market (Red Bull, 2014). Red Bull's main ingredient is caffeine, taurine, glucuronolactone, b-group vitamins, sucrose, and glucose (Exis, 2014). Its rising competitor, Monster has a different lineage. The younger company was formed in April of 2002, placing its brand securely in BMX, motocross, skateboarding and snowboarding along with E-sports events (Monster, 2014). Also sponsoring musical artist such as the band Asking Alexandria (Monster, 2014). Containing the

same main ingredients as red bull and about twenty others. Monster does contain a warning label for the excess amount of caffeine however, because it states 2500mg of “energy blend” being sold as a dietary supplement you do not have to specify what is the exact makeup of this category, this is the loophole in FDA regulations (Harvard, 2014).

3ND BODY: Health Risks

Perhaps wings in the sense of a brief yet mass enhancement of unnatural energy, from consuming five times the caffeine in comparison for a can of soda (SCAI, 2013). Is that worth the long-standing risks these unnatural supplements cause against your cardiovascular system? Substance abuse and mental health services administration have noted emergency room visits involving energy drinks doubled from 2007 to 2011 now, with over 20,000 patients emitted (SCAI, 2013). Larger more terminal risks of consumption are heart palpitations, which in 2011, 19% of college students have experienced solely through energy drinks (SCAI, 2013). Also increased heart rate and blood pressure and people already with a medical condition such as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, having these beverages could lead to sudden death from cardiac arrest (SCAI, 2013). Because of health studies pertaining to specifically energy drinks, parents, doctors, and health advisors are looking to secure Monster and Red Bull FDA regulatory loopholes. How are these hazardous beverages allowed to contain such unnecessary amounts of caffeine and sugars? Because they’re sold as dietary supplements. Allowing a beverage to be sold under the title of a dietary supplement allows company’s looser regulations (Harvard, 2014). Which is why experts push for these drinks to relocate under the beverage market and a new set of FDA regulations. Several doctors in coordination with researchers wrote to the commissioner of U.S. Food and Drug Administration urging that, “Robust correlation between the caffeine

levels in energy drinks and adverse health and safety consequences especially where children, adolescents and young adults are concerned (Ittleman, 2013)”.

CONCLUSION: Solutions

There are simpler steps to protect your personal health than writing extensive letters to the FDA. Stop purchasing these so-called “dietary supplements.” If perhaps you attend Red Bull games or X games where Monster is a main sponsor, by no means do you have to purchase these beverages instead you should be conscious of the risks you take when consuming unnatural substances. Let the information you read from this text provide as an informative base to compare what you consume in the future. Even a healthier choice is a simple can of soda, because brands such as Coca-Cola are under FDA regulation (Evans, 2013). There are other true dietary supplements such as green juices, smoothies or green tea containing natural grown extracts of caffeine (Evans, 2013). Protein shakes provide perhaps not the mental stimulation such as green tea but a natural source of energy your muscles can process and burn (Evans 2013), similar proteins athletes will consume far over the choice of an energy drink during training and competing. Athletes will always be in a position to influence children across America. Children my generation and below are numb to the overwhelming presence of food corporations mass advertisement. But parents, however, are not. Sally Kuzemchak is concerned about her children watching these sanctioned events, even the olympics considering 79% of the endorsements are high-calories, low-nutrient foods (Kuzemchak, 2014). What message does that send the youth of America? That in order to be athletically successful these unnecessary food corporations should be included in your life? When in fact an olympic athlete’s main diet does not consist of extensive consumption of caffeine and processed sugars. Parents with young

children should strive to impress upon them the faultiness that these advertisements bring. That it takes hard work along with dedication to natural foods that have always been healthy to our development. Nutritional information is scattered across the internet and magazines. The obesity epidemic is rocketing in our nation, and a climbing fad in society is to get fit. People don't note the caloric intake based just on a liquid. That women should consume only six teaspoons and men nine of sugar a day (Center for Science, 2013). In reality though, the average American consume 23 teaspoons of added sugars (Center For Science, 2013). Now place that in comparison to your energy drink, its alarming. Finding the information to properly educate yourself on health benefits is all too easy. Just take the first step and initiate the research. Because when our youth strives to form a portion of their own identity from their idol, it should not be their sponsored energy drinks.

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