

New advertising trend caters to the neurotic

By SCOTT PRUDEN
Staff Writer

Scott Pruden's Lifestyles

Flipping through the Sunday *State* newspaper day, I found myself at the coupons. Since I'm a cost-conscious guy, I usually take time to go through these to see if I can save a little dough on deodorant and belly-button-lint remover and stuff like that.

On my way past the Ex-Lax coupons, I was suddenly faced with an unassuming cartoon ad for Liquid Dial soap. Standing at a sink is Soapy the Raccoon, diligently washing his hands, with two freckle-faced, white-bread American youths smiling and looking on.

What bothered me was what Soapy is saying in the ad. Soapy says, "Since germs can be on anything you touch you can never wash your hands too much." Apparently Dial has lousy copy editors, because they need a comma in there.

Then with the coupon, they include an order form for a plush Soapy doll, some cute stickers and a book to help children learn how to wash their hands.

Pretty sick, eh? I think we've entered a new age of advertising, in which corporations are promoting psychological disorders to sell their products.

If enough children paid attention to this ad, we could have a nation of little future obsessive-compulsives, rushing at every opportunity to scrub their hands clean of those evil germs they picked up when they hugged grandma.

Maybe this campaign was sparked by the AIDS scare. To tell you the truth, I don't think picking up the HIV virus is on the mind of your average fourth grader, even though it may scare the bejesus

out of Mom and Dad to think that little Fritz in the kindergarten class might have hung out in a couple of gay bathhouses or shot up with a dirty needle one time too many.

Personally, I think about children as having dirty hands all the time. And not just germ-infested hands. I'm talking grimy, dirty, mud-encrusted hands. That's just the way little kids are. Push the handwashing too much, and we'll end up with children growing up to be Howard Hughes clones.

Imagine these scenes. A sixth grade boy returns from a day at school, sits down to the snack dutifully prepared by his mother, and says, "Mom, Jenny Lewis kissed me today. Can you hand me that Brillo lip scrubber?"

Or this. A wife returns from work and says, "Honey, make sure to burn this outfit. I think it accidentally brushed against the sink at work."

Or even better. A young man returns on his first trip back from college, anxious for a warm, fatherly handshake from his dad, but Pop says, "Nope. No touching, son. No telling what you might have picked up at school."

See what I mean? This could really get out of hand if measures aren't taken right now.

Before we know it, companies might start pushing drinking straws and cigarettes to the anal-retentive. "Need something to suck on? Try

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A Traveling Salesfamily

Family travels across nation to sell tie-dyes

By ELIZABETH LYNCH
Staff Writer

It is a beautiful autumn day at USC. The leaves on the trees are gold and red with brightly colored sheets strung in between them.

T-shirts, dresses and tights tied-dyed in every color of the rainbow are piled high on tables. This is the setting in which Heatherlynn Schroeder and her daughter, Samantha, make their living.

"To have tie-dyes hanging up and having people smile when they see what I sell really makes me happy," Schroeder said. "Some people see tie-dyes as an art form, and somebody actually accused me of adding to the campus beautification."

Schroeder, along with her husband, Mitch, have been selling tie-dyes across the country for almost two-and-a-half years. Their tie-dye company is presently called "Mickey-Tee's."

"We're capitalist hippies. Dad (Mitch) stays home and does the dyes and housework while I watch Samantha and sell the dyes," she said.

There's not always a lot of money, but they seem to manage, she said. "It's a matter of priorities, really."

"I like tie-dyes because they're cheerful and bright," sophomore biology major Becky Shuler said.

"Heatherlynn is someone who is making her own living, and I'd much rather buy from a person

who I can talk with and enjoy rather than buying a mass-produced tie-dye from some company," Shuler said.

Presently the Schroeder family makes their home out of a 1966 Ford schoolbus. "The bus has beds, tables, chairs and a deep freezer. We're working on getting a real stove and oven," Schroeder said.

"We don't have a shower, VCR, television or microwave — but my kid's healthy."

Schroeder plans on getting a little house with some chickens in the yard and a place to raise her kids, as she does not plan on selling forever.

"Samantha has really changed the lives of Mitch and myself," she said. Samantha, or Sam-Sam as her mother calls her, is almost 17 months old with golden blond hair, crystal blue eyes and is always wearing a tie-dye T-shirt.

"Sam-Sam loves it here at USC. There are always students around to take her on walks and for her to practice her new vocabulary on," she said.

"Being a hippie is fun when you don't have a lot of responsibilities," she said. Since the family had Sam-Sam they have had to take on more responsibilities, such as worrying about diapers and clothes.

"We don't travel with The

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TEDDY LEPP/The Gamecock

Heatherlynn Schroeder and her daughter sold tie-dye items on the Russell House patio last week.

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