

1. *Life* Magazine Identifies the New Teen-age Market, 1959

To some people the vision of a leggy adolescent happily squealing over the latest fancy present from Daddy is just another example of the way teen-agers are spoiled to death these days. But to a growing number of businessmen the picture spells out the profitable fact that the American teen-agers have emerged as a big-time consumer in the U.S. economy. They are multiplying in numbers. They spend more and have more spend on them. And they have minds of their own about what they want.

The time is past when a boy's chief possession was his bike and a girl's party wardrobe consisted of a fancy dress worn with a string of dime-store pearls. What Depression-bred parents may still think of as luxuries are looked on as necessities by their offspring. Today teen-agers surround themselves with a fantastic array of garish and often expensive baubles and amusements. They own 10 million phonographs, over a million TV sets, 13 million cameras. Nobody knows how much parents spend on them for actual necessities nor to what extent teen-agers act as hidden persuaders on their parents' other buying habits. Counting only what is spent to satisfy

Excerpts from "A Young \$10 Billion Power: The US Teen-age Consumer Has Become a Major Factor in the Nation's Economy," *Life*, August 31, 1959, 78-84. Courtesy of *Life* Magazine. Reprinted with permission.

their special teen-age demands, the youngsters and their parents will shell out about \$10 billion this year, a billion more than the total sales of GM.

Until recently businessmen have largely ignored the teen-age market. But now they are spending millions on advertising and razzle-dazzle promotional stunts. Their efforts so far seem only to have scratched the surface of a rich lode. In 1970, when the teen-age population expands from its present 18 million to 28 million, the market may be worth \$20 billion. If parents have any idea of organized revolt, it is already too late. Teen-age spending is so important that such action would send quivers through the entire national economy. . . .

At 17 Suzie Slattery of Van Nuys, Calif., fits any businessman's dream of the ideal teen-age consumer. The daughter of a reasonably well-to-do TV announcer, Suzie costs her parents close to \$4,000 a year, far more than average for the country but not much more than many of the upper middle income families of her town. In an expanding economy more and more teen-agers will be moving up into Suzie's bracket or be influenced as consumers by her example.

Last year \$1,500 was spent on Suzie's clothes and \$550 for her entertainment. Her annual food bill comes to \$900. She pays \$4 every two weeks at the beauty parlor. She has her own telephone and even has her own soda fountain in the house. On summer vacation days she loves to wander with her mother through fashionable department stores, picking out frocks or furnishings for her room or silver and expensive crockery for the hope chest she has already started.

As a high school graduation present, Suzie was given a holiday cruise to Hawaii and is now in the midst of a new clothes-buying spree for college. Her parents' constant indulgence has not spoiled Suzie. She takes for granted all the luxuries that surround her because she has had them all her life. But she also has a good mind and some serious interests. A top student in her school, she is entering Occidental College this fall and will major in political science. . . .

Some Fascinating Facts About a Booming Market

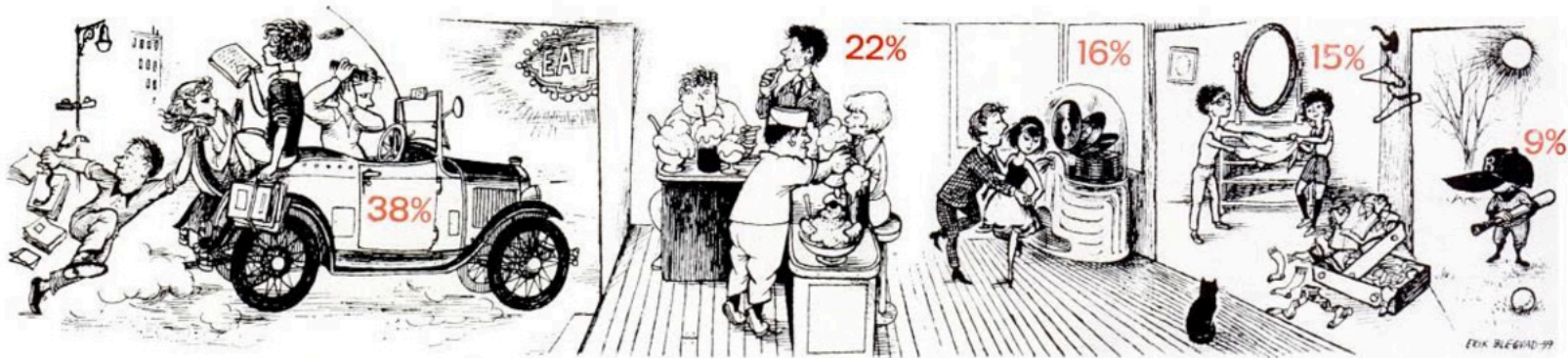
FOOD: Teen-agers eat 20% more than adults. They down 3½ billion quarts of milk every year, almost four times as much as is drunk by the infant population under 1. Teen-agers are a main prop of the ice cream industry, gobble 145 million gallons a year.

BEAUTY CARE: Teen-agers spent \$20 million on lipstick last year, \$25 million on deodorants (a fifth of total sold), \$9 million on home permanents. Male teen-agers own 2 million electric razors.

ENTERTAINMENT: Teen-agers lay out more than \$1.5 billion a year for entertainment. They spend about \$75 million on single pop records. Although they create new musical idols, they are staunchly faithful to the old. Elvis Presley, still their favorite, has sold 25 million copies of single records in four years, an all-time high.

HOMEMAKERS: Major items like furniture and silver are moving into the teen-age market because of growing number of teen-age marriages. One third of all 18- and 19-year-old girls are already married. More than 600,000 teen-agers will be married this year. Teen-agers are now starting hope chests at 15.

CREDIT RISKS: Some 800,000 teen-agers work at full-time jobs and can buy major items on credit.



TEEN-AGE SPENDING HABITS are illustrated in drawing above. Of \$10 billion the teen-agers spend each year 38% goes for miscellaneous items including

transportation, grooming, books, newspapers, magazines, school supplies. They spend 22% on food, 16% on entertainment, 15% on clothing and 9% on sports.



TOWER OF BAUBLES for dancing teen-ager types contains, from top to bottom, samples of favorite items in sports, fashion, food, entertainment,

furniture, locomotion, cosmetics and toiletries—as worked out by best available surveys. One-and-a-half million of them own cars. Last year girls

spent \$837 million on back-to-school clothing. Teen-agers buy more than half of all single records; spend \$300 million on toiletries and cosmetics.



AS SHE DAILY BOUNCES ON A BED IN A WESTWOOD DEPARTMENT STORE, SUZIE SLATTERY HOLDS A BOX CONTAINING A PERFUME SHELF SHE HAS JUST BOUGHT

Suzie Slattery, Seller's Dream

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SHOPPING FOR CHINA. Suzie shows mother \$17-a-setting pattern she has chosen for her hope chest.

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