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Exploring advertising patterns through parasocial interaction and two-step flow

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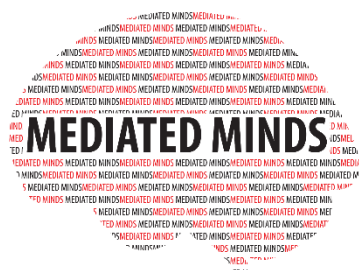
Abstract — *In this presentation I will explore advertising through research done about parasocial interaction and two step flow with the goal of finding marketing and advertising patterns used in an array of mediums in modern media today.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Parasocial interaction is a one sided relationship formed by the audience towards the celebrity where the celebrity does not know anything from the audience member. Two-step flow is the idea that opinion leaders take a stance on mixture of ideas introduced by the media and is followed by the people who follow these opinion leaders. Parasocial interaction and two-step flow are powerful ideas that could be very effective on an advertising level if used effectively. Trends are created constantly and companies depend a lot on celebrity opinion leaders to back up their ideas and trends to bring their loyal fan base along to buy their products and services. The personal relationship that the audience feels towards a specific celebrity makes persuasion from the company much easier. This more frequent after a big social event and/or trend is introduced. Usually after a trend or event, there is an opinion leader that takes a specific stance on the situation and his/her followers are more directly involved because of them.

II. FINDINGS

With the introduction of the internet and television, it became more common to look up to a person to whom you don't even know personally. I found that people who have a one sided relationship with someone of influence is more likely to buy something that they are endorsing or using. Using this parasocial interaction allows companies like Bebe, Quicktrim and Perfectskin are benefactors off of the popularity gained from stars like Kim Kardashian and use her loyal fan base to target potential customers. Also using the two step flow process, companies like Nike, bring in media figures like



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Colin Kaepernick that serve as opinion leaders to help bring in more consumers. This is done after a very public and viral protest. This makes the sponsorship more effective as far as getting someone with a specific stance on an idea and lets his fan base follow him.

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