

# No Logo Script

(The video begins...)

**Narrator:** Logos, the symbols for brand names.

They are everywhere:

on our streets,

on our magazines,

on TV,

and even on ourselves.

But what are brands and what impacts do they have on our world?

Economic and social theorist, Naomi Klein, has dedicated the last four years of her life to answering this question. She's written for many publications including Saturday Night Magazine and The Toronto Star.

**Naomi:** "Advertising is a form of branding, but branding is a much more ambitious project than simply buying a billboard or ...a commercial on television."

**Narrator:** She is often asked to take part in panel discussions for schools, festival and broadcast media. To fully explain her theories she has written the book, No Logo. It is an objective and in-depth examination of branding.

**Naomi:** "The idea of branding came about during the industrial revolution. Branding was a process of... trying to create distinction and individuality within the context of manufactured sameness. So you have these identical products coming out through the line, well then you have to say, this product is gonna stand out because it got Aunt Jamima's name on it, or the Quaker Oats guy's ...name is on it."

**Narrator:** But the idea behind branding has now changed.

**Naomi:** "It is ... about .... you. Not about the brand being of good quality, but you being of good quality because you buy that brand."

**Narrator:** Brands are now sold as a lifestyle, a look, a culture.

**Naomi:** "You do not just buy Nike sneakers; you buy in to the entire Nike philosophy"

**Narrator:** Each brand tries to represent a different idea.

For example:

Sport [NIKE logo]

Fashion [Le Chateau logo]

Multiculturalism [Benetton logo]

Canadiana [Roots logo]

Community [Starbucks logo]

**Naomi:** "Starbucks choose the idea of community. The idea of the third place. Public space. A place to congregate. But of course ...these are private spaces; they are pseudo public spaces. ...When you have a private space, um.. you're allowed to protect all kinds of trademarks, you allowed to restrict speech in all kinds of ways. It's like the way I can control the environment my house. That's what a mall is, that's what a super store is. So these claims about Barnes and Noble or Chapters being a library are totally false. And that's not to say they are not great places to shop. Um... But we start looking at the effects they are having on our genuine libraries on our schools, ...um then that's when you see the real effect."

**Narrator:** Large franchise bookstores have taken away attention from the importance of supporting our public libraries.

**Narrator:** Public space is also lost to corporate sponsorship of events. Naomi uses the example of university students who were banned from distributing anti-smoking material on their campus.

**Naomi:** "York University ...which host the Demauria Tennis Open. It's a public university, but students who were handing out pamphlets were ...thrown off their own campus, because it had been branded. Because private and public space are

not the same thing."

**Narrator:** Super brands limit free expression in other ways as well. Large chain stores have the power to censor what we can read, watch, and listen to.

**Naomi:** "When you have a company like... Barnes and Noble, or a company like Walmart, where they have such an enormous market share; when they make the seemingly innocuous decision of 'you know what? I don't like the cover of that magazine' or 'ya know what? I think the lyrics... on this rap album are... too explicit' ....That's just not a casual decision. What actually happens is that the labels, and publishers, um ...movie producers - in the case of Blockbuster - decide based on that decision what kind of movies they are gonna make, what kind of albums they are going to produce.

**Narrator:** Because marketing a brand is so expensive, many brand oriented corporations choose to hire cheap contract labor companies. The large majority of these manufacturing companies work out of specially regulated areas of developing countries, referred to as: export processing zones.

Naomi has spoken to the workers in these areas.

**Naomi:** "and the only way that I can describe them is .... they are basically work camps. You often hear stories about people sleeping under their sewing machines. You here about three overnight shifts in a row. Workers dying of exhaustion. They're just horrible, horrible stories.

**Narrator:** Around the world people are starting to organize and protest against brand based corporations.

**Naomi:** "So what I see is an international kind of brand based movement emerging. Where what we are really talking about is the global economy, and the fact that it is totally disengaged from human rights and environmental justice, and labor standards are dropping."

**Narrator:** Many of the people involved in the movement are students.

**Naomi:** "The reason why young people are at the forefront of this movement... is because young people are the ones who have been... most affected by branding and are in fact the most branded. ...So it is about looking down and seeing the logo on your T-shirt and going 'like, oh my god, ok so this is not abstract, this is very, very personal'. And when people learn about these issues, ...they... have a personal connection to them because of their role as consumers".

**Narrator:** Naomi Klein is, in a small way, changing the world with her writing. With her book, No Logo, Naomi hopes not only to raise public awareness of the inhuman nature of big brands, but to also help people take action.

**Naomi:** "To me the biggest compliment is to have, ya know, my writing photocopied, ...and fired around on the Internet, and reposted and ...used, to be a tool, to be useful. And ...I hope... ...that's my wish for the book, that it's useful."

On screen text: Since the original production of this documentary in November 1999, Naomi Klein's No Logo has sold over half a million copies and is being translated in to 20 different languages.