



After an intense 15-year marketing campaign, the bottled water giants have convinced us that there's nothing wrong with wanting bottled water any time, any place.

Enticed by picturesque labels of clear mountain streams and designer "plastic" bottles, the public pays little heed that Coca Cola, PepsiCo and Nestlé are tapping into our public water commons for their private profit and that 10 billion plastic bottles end up as garbage or litter each year.

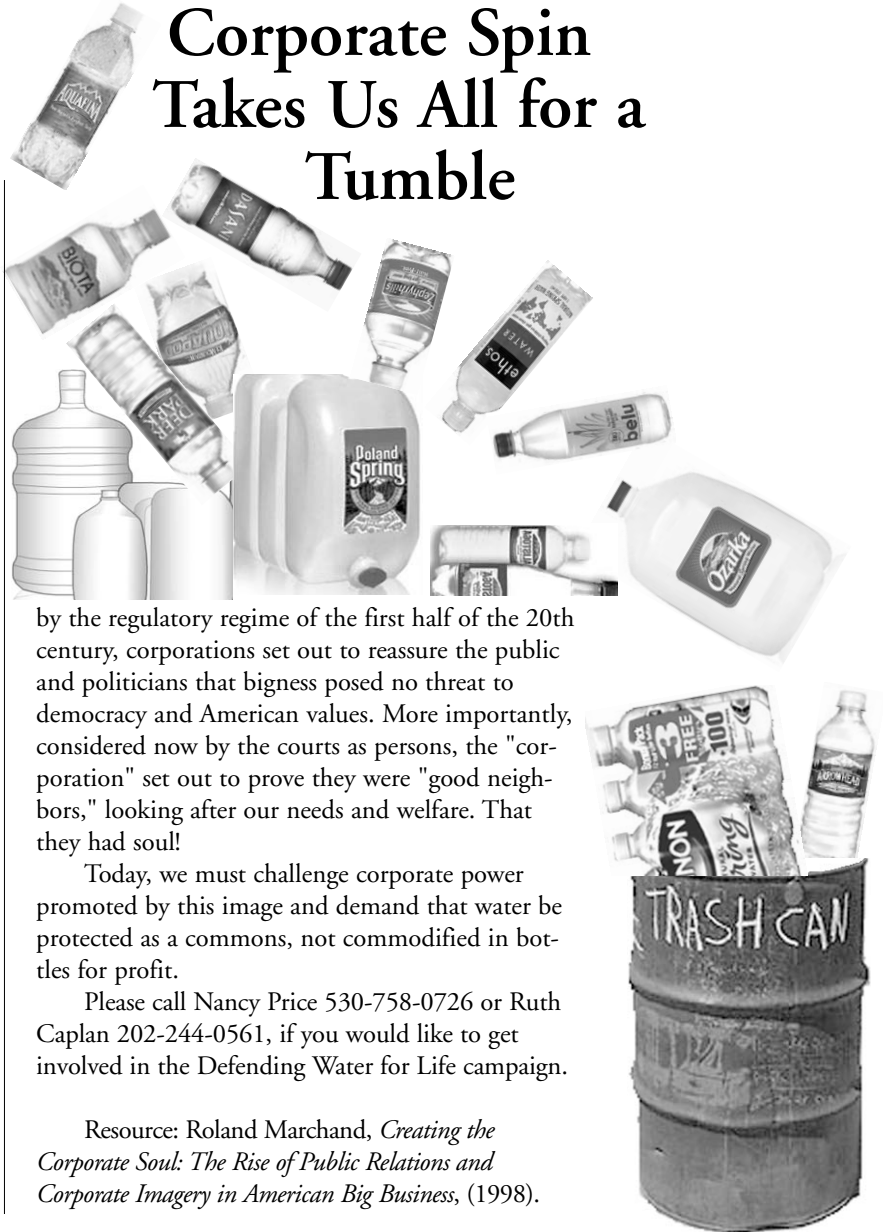
Now, in the U.S., bottled water is the fastest growing "beverage" with more than \$7.9 billion in sales last year. Today, beer, coffee, and milk sales are static, and bottled water outpaces all other beverages, including coffee and milk, and is second only to soda pop.

Bottled water may soon top the list because the beverage-makers have agreed to limit sales in elementary and intermediate schools to bottled water, juices without artificial sweeteners and non-fat milk products by the school year 2009-2010. As expected, an International Bottled Water Association spokesperson said this "reflects an opportunity for the bottled water companies!"

This great success of the bottled water industry is not just the triumph of American consumer capitalism bringing together the persuasive power of advertising and public relations with clever and persuasive text and images. This is the culmination of corporate efforts to refurbish their image and role in society.

After the challenge to corporate power by the 19th century Populists had been safely squelched

Corporate Spin Takes Us All for a Tumble



by the regulatory regime of the first half of the 20th century, corporations set out to reassure the public and politicians that bigness posed no threat to democracy and American values. More importantly, considered now by the courts as persons, the "corporation" set out to prove they were "good neighbors," looking after our needs and welfare. That they had soul!

Today, we must challenge corporate power promoted by this image and demand that water be protected as a commons, not commodified in bottles for profit.

Please call Nancy Price 530-758-0726 or Ruth Caplan 202-244-0561, if you would like to get involved in the Defending Water for Life campaign.

Resource: Roland Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business*, (1998).

The Big 3 Bottlers

Nestlé/ Nestlé Waters/ Nestlé Waters North America

Nestlé is the world's largest food and beverage corporation with annual sales over \$70 billion. Nestlé entered the bottled water market by buying Perrier in 1992. Today, Nestlé Waters is established in 130 countries and markets 77 different brands produced in 33 countries. In the U.S. Nestlé Waters North America was #1 in bottled water sales in 2004 with sales of almost \$2.7 billion. U.S. brands include Arrowhead (CA), Calistoga (CA), Deer Park (PA & FL), Ice Mountain (MI), Ozarka (TX), Poland Spring (ME), and Zephyrhills (FL), which primarily use spring water sources.

Coca-Cola/Dasani

Coca-Cola is a household name around the world, but many people don't know that Dasani bottled water is a Coke product. Dasani is just municipal water with some extra treatment. Coke conveniently draws water from municipal systems near its existing bottling plants. After forming a joint venture with Danone Waters of North America and then buying out Danone's share in 2005, Coke gained full ownership of Dannon, Sparklets and Alhambra brands, becoming #2 in bottled water sales in North America. Coke's bottled water sales in U.S. was still less than half of Nestlé's sales in 2004. Coke has not diversified into non-beverage products.

PepsiCo/Aquafina

PepsiCo ranks as the fourth largest food and beverage company in the world. It began bottling Aquafina in 1994, well ahead of Coca-Cola. Today it has 33 Aquafina bottling sites in US and Canada where, like Coke, it draws municipal water and then adds extra treatment. Pepsi claimed that Aquafina was the best-selling national brand of bottled water in 2003, getting around Nestlé's multiple brands. In 2004 it had \$936 million in sales compared to Coke's \$1.3 billion.