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In the recent past, the market seems to hold an abundance of innovation. With every new idiosyncratic product seeming to solve a plethora of issues, it is astonishing how society still appears to struggle in any way, shape, or form; clearly, society does not appreciate all the blessings the market has to offer. The abundance of authentic-looking statistics and questionable reviews unmistakably support this further. However if one dives deeper, much of what is advertised today—coupled with the gullibility of consumers—tends to unapologetically adhere to society's wants—even if the product itself does nothing of the sort. In the given article from *The Onion*, the author mocks common marketing techniques in order to call attention to their absurdity.

The author reduces common marketing of medical devices to effectively identify problems in the method of advertisement. In the first paragraph, the line of consent is crossed with the phrase "no fewer than five forms of pseudoscience." Here, the word "pseudoscience" is used to describe an explanation that may sound scientific, but lacks true scientific validity. Line 38 follows this behavior further; products are noted to be developed by "some of the nation's top pseudoscientists." This term is repeatedly used to reduce the credibility of the support that the company has, by indicating that the most distinctive features of the product do not even have real scientific backing to them. Not once does the article indicate that the features are actually proven to be effective according to the scientific method that most medical products would need to go through; instead, they use the phrase "scientific-sounding literature trumpeting the new insoles." The imagery of a blaring trumpet points to how by vocalizing and constantly reinforcing support for something, people are sure to buy into it without a second thought. Overall, the way in which

the author uses different terms to skirt around any proof of validity that these products have satirizes the notion of inflated or phony scientific backing.

Demonstrating how modern companies take advantage of the gullibility of users, the author uses confusing scientific terms to describe the product, showing how complicated words can easily be used as a marketing weapon to confuse the user into believing a company's claim. For example, the author describes the product as being able to heal using "vibrational biofeedback," a term that most users would not understand. In fact, "vibrational biofeedback" isn't a real technique at all. Here, the author criticizes the gullibility of the average user, showing how most users will believe these fraudulent companies based on their manipulation of technical and scientific terms. Later in the article, the author quotes a "biotrician," which is not a real profession. Through this false profession, the author highlights the willingness of users to believe in an established authority, and how companies will fabricate these terms to gain the user's blind trust. Paired with false statistics, like the "Earth's natural vibrational rate of 32,805 kilofrankels," the article references the name of an earlier mentioned scientist, Dr. Wayne Frankel, the author further elucidates the idea of companies making up their own metrics to evaluate the efficiency of their products. Overall, using complicated scientific terms like those mentioned above, the author illustrates how many medical companies take advantage of the user's willingness to blindly trust their product because of the technical descriptions they provide.

Throughout the piece, discernable fallacious logic is employed in order to call attention to the ways that it works to persuade people. As an example, the author uses obvious tautology in line 30 by citing the MagnaSoles website as a reason to buy the company's own product. Not only is the latter a parody of self-referential marketing, it is a parody of the insular nature of this type of medical product. Later, the author employs an appeal to popularity by writing that the

insoles are “popular among consumers” (line 53). This appeal to popularity is a development of the earlier tautology. A major channel through which misinformation spread about health in the 1990s was through other people. Especially with the recent invention and popularization of the internet, people were being flooded with information from other people. The people quoted in the article make use of their own fallacies as well. One woman says that her twisted ankle healed in seven weeks (it would have anyway) thanks to MagnaSoles inserts. A man from Tacoma, Washington says that the insoles must be viable because they were sold to him by “an intelligent-looking man in a white lab coat” (line 68). By nature of being fallacious arguments, the quotes undercut the validity of what the other people are saying. This is a reference to how the echo chamber established through tautology continues through word-of-mouth.

In this article, published originally in *The Onion*, techniques commonly employed by marketing teams are reduced to absurdity to highlight their faulty reasoning. The piece focuses on a *reductio ad absurdium* of the industry as a whole, the jargon employed to confuse consumers and intimidate them into wasting their money, and the fallacious reasoning that keeps the industry running. Together, these satirical devices comment on the echo chambers that developed in the late 1990s around health fads as a result of the internet. In a time where science can easily be confused with myth, the article cautions readers of the danger that these marketing techniques pose.