



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2010 Volume I: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Consumer Culture

The Shroud of Choice: A Psychological Look at Consumer Culture

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by Robert F. Rhone

Think about the last time you went into a store, to purchase an item like a bottle of soda. You went right to the place in the store that has the beverages, you went to your favorite brand, picked it up, and purchased it. This action, simple as it sounds, is loaded with complexities and questions. For example why did you choose this kind of soda? How did it become your favorite? What made this drink stand out to you? How could other soda companies persuade you to buy their drink? Was it the price? Was it the advertising you have seen since you were ten? How does buying this soda make you feel?

These are the kinds of questions that consumer psychology attempts to answer. You can see that the psychology of consumers would be a very valuable thing for producers to have an in-depth knowledge of. Consumer psychology becomes, as you learn more about it, just as valuable for consumers to understand. If you have a basic understanding of consumer psychology, you can avoid the pitfalls of the marketing world. If you learn anything from reading this unit you will learn to have a good understanding of why advertisers cannot be trusted. You must use your intellect and ignore your instinctual emotions when making purchases if you wish to make the choices that are really in your best interest.

Since early in the conversation about economics, consumers have been seen as a group who can easily be taken advantage of. In the words of Adam Smith, "Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer." Smith was not thinking about marketing tricks, but his aim can be used in this context. He says it is ok to advertise and alter prices for the better of the producer, but not to any extreme.

"Only as far as it may be necessary for promoting that [interest] of the consume.r" Adam Smith is all for advertising, if it means more people can have access to more goods. What I think he would not condone is a system of advertising where producers manipulate the consumers only to promote profits. The situation is not that of a consumption war, but in this unit you will see the psychological principles that producers use to try to persuade consumers to buy their products. The more you know about them, the less you will have that feeling of regret for making that impulse buy. Or that late night infomercial purchase that continues with its five easy payments of \$39.95, plus shipping and handling.

The purpose of this unit is to inform students that producers use psychologists' ideas about how humans think and behave to market their products as effectively as they can. Through understanding this idea students become more informed consumers and can make choices that are in their best interest. Of course

consumption is necessary in our modern world. We need to buy food if we want eat and clothing if we want to be socially excepted. How we can be most prepared to make the best decision we can when it comes time to shop.

Introduction

I teach eleventh and twelfth grade at Hyde Leadership High School, a New Haven Magnet School, located in Hamden Connecticut. Our population of students is drawn from the surrounding towns, including West Haven, East Haven, Branford, etc. The Hyde program is one that forces students to get out of their comfort zone and examine their lives and daily actions to develop their character and to become well-rounded adults. The character program manifests itself in many ways day-to-day at Hyde, during school meetings, senior evaluations and character periods that happen weekly. This unit, which involves some introspective contemplation is part of our academic curriculum and our Character Curriculum. Most of my students are on reading level, and although many have academic challenges, most of those are (somewhat ironically) motivation issues. In this unit I plan to present material not only about motivation and emotion but also about how companies use our emotions and motivations to drive our economic choices.

Students will understand their role in consumer culture, both how they are manipulated by the system via advertisements, as well as how students manipulate the system via market research. Students will learn some basic background psychological information in the form of graphic organizers, structured note-taking, and a 'What? Why?' journal; after which they will view clips from the PBS documentary *The Merchants of Cool* (2001) which shows teenagers role in the current consumer culture. Students will also read parts of Lars Perner's *The Psychology of Marketing*, which directly connects the world of Psychology with the world of consumerism clearly and concisely. After being presented with this information, the students will consider their own personal connection to the economy by writing an essay that explains some purchases they have made with detailed descriptions of why they may have made the choices they have.

Objectives

The essential question this unit will attempt to answer is: why do we behave the way do at any particular time? Focusing on buying things seems like a great avenue to take to get to an answer to that question. The consumer-based world that my students live in, often make them feel as if they are not as cool or less cool then everyone else if they do not own the new "best thing." There is a constant feeling that if the hat or jeans you are wearing are not new, then that fact makes you an outcast. As a result of participating in this unit, students will gain an understanding of this phenomenon and its implications for themselves and others. My students will also have an understanding of how advertisements appear to attack their emotions and motivations in order to modify their behavior. In addition students will study both physical and social motivations, and how they may cause distress in their lives. The more important thing that will be discussed is how we can rise above the connections between our happiness and our things. The concluding question that their essay will answer is, did the things you purchased make you happier or a more balanced person because

you purchased them? Finally we will discuss the students awareness of prioritizing the things in their lives, in a very specific way. The essay will give students a chance to examine their personal economic choices and what kinds of implications that they can have for their future.

This unit will be taught over a one to two week period. The first lessons will focus on The Merchants of Cool documentary and the reading of selections from Malcolm Gladwell's The Cool Hunt. The lessons will include viewing the video online and reacting to it with journals, and structured discussions. The next few lessons will provide some of the background information necessary; this includes the biological causes of motivation, the social foundations of motivation, the physiological and cognitive theories of emotion, drive reduction theory and the criticisms of it, as well as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and the James-Lange theory of emotion. Students will explore this information by reading the text book, taking notes, participating in teacher-less discussions, and classroom activities. In the last week students will synthesize all of this information, along with their personal experience into an academic essay explaining how they fit into their own economic world through a dissection of their own purchasing decisions. In this week the students will also participate in group discussions about their purchasing decisions, as well as about the format of the essay. At the end of the week they will participate in a writer's workshop where they edit each other's work.

At the conclusion of this unit students will have a mastery of both psychological motivation and emotion, as well as a sense of how they each fits into his or her own economic world. This exercise will help them in making decisions later in life when they find themselves in a personal crisis about finance, emotions, or motivation. They can lean on some of the things learned here about how to spend and save money.

Consumer Psychology Background

This topic is not one that has much prominence in our current curriculum. Below I have included some background information that will be useful for teachers to have.

There are volumes of information gathered by corporations about the psychology of their consumers. For a business to be successful what better information could be collected than of the way their customers think and feel about goods. A prime example is the Handbook of Consumer Psychology, an over 1,000 page text written by three psychologists discussing and analyzing information and research done about the psychology of consumers and how to manipulate them.

Below is a chart describing consumer's attitude toward making decisions.(Haugtvedt225)

Characteristics	Perceptual 3-7	Analytical 7-11	Reflective 11-16
Orientation	Expedient	Thoughtful	Strategic
Focus	Perceptual Features Salient Feature	Functional/ underling features	Functional/ underling features
Complexity	Single attributes Limited repertoire of strategies	2 or more attributes Expanded repertoire of strategies	Multiple attributes Complete repertoire of strategies
Adaptively	Emerging	Moderate	Fully developed
Perspective	Egocentric	Dual perspectives	Dual perspectives in social context

The most pertinent piece of information may be the very last box, showing us that teenager's perspective on purchasing is based mainly on social context. This means many things. Including social norms and roles that teenagers see themselves fitting. We can also see from the chart how children's decision-making ability changes over time and how, according to these psychologists, teens make decisions depending on many different variables. Showing students this information could be beneficial. At least explaining to them how on some levels we look to others to show us what is cool and what to buy, so they can be aware of the cycle of consumption they are part of.

The Emotional Consumer

Most adults would say that they made economic decisions about what to buy in a rational manner; saying that they do a cost-benefit analysis of the purchase and then, after weighing the options, choose the most beneficial one. This assumption has been attacked by psychologists and economists alike. This argument is presented in PBS' Nova video *Mind over Money* (2010). The documentary explains that what we all would love to think are rational, well-thought-out decisions about what to buy are not that at all. Instead they are choices made for us by the marketing wizards of the modern age. The moment we step into a well-marketed shop, we are bombarded with stimuli that manipulate us into feeling and thinking a certain way so we are more likely to buy their product.

Emotion can be generally defined as an intense affect. "The word affect is commonly used in the research literature to describe an internal feeling state that can incorporate both emotions and mood." (Jansson-Boyd, Catherine, 2010) Emotions and mood are interrelated but can be separated as two separate things in the eyes of a marketer. Emotions are feelings, such as a feeling of happiness with the effectiveness of a product; while mood is a general state of feeling that is a little more elusive than an emotion. Marketers choose to focus more on our mood than our emotions because our mood can be more easily manipulated. They can do this both with visual stimuli like pictures or movies, or an auditory stimulus like music. (Jansson-Boyd, Catherine, 2010) If you think for a moment about the experience at a shopping mall, this manipulation is rather obvious. There are images manipulated to show us exactly what the producer wants. Good-looking, happy people in the clothes sold by that particular store, everything from the background music to the scent in the air. These kinds of images are created to affect our mood in a way that will make us more likely to purchase their items.

How do producers know how images make us feel and what emotions come from different images? They simply ask us. Companies have for many years used the survey method to identify the emotions elicited by their advertising and marketing. They are called self-report measures. Sharing this kind of information with students could be a really helpful way to connect the material to them. There are many resources online where you can find psychological surveys that ask the test taker to self-report on their feelings or attitudes. What companies do, in a scientific way, is show focus groups images or advertisements and have them respond by filling out surveys reporting how they felt. The focus group member, who could be a teenager, reports on a scale created by the psychologist. For example: on a scale of 1-10, one being very sad and ten being very happy, how does this thirty second commercial make you feel?.

This is not the only way to get a response from a focus group, however. Some researchers have used pupillary responses as a measurement for excitement and emotional response. The problem with this way of

conducting research is that it does not give researchers a clear picture of how a viewer is feeling. It is known that pupil dilation (pupils become larger in response to a stimulus) can be a response to a pleasant stimulus, like an attractive person, or an unpleasant stimulus, like a bloody film scene. (Mullen, Johnson, 1990) So this is a way to know that a person is feeling something, but what they are feeling is uncertain unless you use a survey along with pupillary response measurements.

There are four different ways that producers use our emotions against us in trying to persuade us to buy their stuff. The first is repetition, not the most effective but it does work. If you are introduced to a product enough times and in many different ways, it becomes familiar, and familiar things are trusted. So the next time you go to make a purchase you buy that familiar brand you see everywhere, even though you know almost nothing about the product itself.

The second is classical conditioning. This is a complex way of modifying behavior discovered and perfected by Ivan Pavlov. You can read about him in almost any modern psychology text book. Classical conditioning is the process of introducing an unconditioned stimulus along with a natural stimulus to elicit a natural response of the then conditioned stimulus. For example Pavlov had his dogs drooling at the sound of a bell because he repeatedly sounded the bell when he introduced their food.

Producers use classical conditioning all the time. Say for example you really enjoy the way that the caffeine in Dunkin Donuts coffee perks you up in the afternoons. The Dunkin Donuts corporation introduces the same signage and color scheme in all of their businesses. So seeing the sign for Dunkin Donuts and the colors gives you a bit of that pleasant feeling which makes you more likely to turn in and grab your afternoon fix.

The third way producers use our emotions against us is through humor. Market research has shown that if your company has advertisements that are commonly seen as funny, when people think of your company they will feel happy and be more likely to buy your product. (Mullen, Johnson, 1990) There are many examples of this in popular consumer culture. Simply search the internet for the most recent Super Bowl advertisements and you will find plenty of hilarious advertisement footage. Humor disarms us and makes it a bit more likely for us to give in to what the advertiser wants; which is to buy their product.

The fourth way that advertisers use our emotions against us is through an appeal to fear. This basically says if the producer can provide a scenario that produces anxiety and fear, which their product can reduce, their product will be more likely to sell. (Mullen, Johnson, 1990) A good example of this is the button necklace created for elderly people. The advertisements do a great job of creating a scenario of a fallen elderly person unable to get up, which to any one with a grandmother could be a fear and anxiety ridden scenario. Then the advertisers show how their product can reduce your fear and anxiety in that scenario.

Most of us really would like to believe that we are rational thinkers when it comes to purchasing choices. In some situations consumers can become aware of a product, go through a cost-benefit analysis and make a rational choice. In reality we often do not do these things, and make quick uninformed decisions about the products we buy. Think about the last time you went grocery shopping. Did you buy anything that was not on your list? Most likely you bought more than just a few things not on your list. Products are placed with much care in grocery stores. Candies and gum, which are often impulse buys, are placed right by the register. As well as the candy aisle shared with the cereal aisle. We have come a long way beyond the old-fashioned Piggly Wiggly grocery store which were basically mazes that shoppers were forced to go through so they had to pass every item in the store.

The Social Consumer

There are many influences that we receive from our social settings that influence the way we make economic decisions, here are a few. (Apruebo,Roxel,et.al., 2005)

- Culture-It is a way of life that distinguishes a group of people from another. This "way of living" includes attitudes and values, accepted pattern of behavior, language, religion, etc.
- Reference Groups- An individual identifies with a reference group, making the group the standard norm, or point of reference for organizing behavior. A reference group may determine consumption patterns, marketing strategy, and beliefs about a product
- Family- The most immediate and continuous source of group influence on consumer decision making is the family.
- Personality- Each individual has a unique personality that may influence buying behavior.
- Personality refers to a person's distinguishing psychological characteristics that determine and reflect the person's response to stimuli or the environment.

This list of social influences shows that a teenager is not really in control of his or her own purchasing power. All four of these influences are particularly strong in a teenager's life. If a teen does not have an influential family source, he or she replaces it with a reference group of friends. They are stuck in a part of life where they are trying to form a personality that is unique yet fits into the status quo. I think that Apruebo shows us that teenagers are the most at risk kinds of consumers for making bad choices.

Apruebo also simplifies the model of consumer decision making into three steps, which are worth looking at again, input (product identification); process (psychological factors); and output (the purchase behavior itself). (Apruebo,Roxel,et.al., 2005) So each of these steps are saturated with social influences. The way we consume media today has become a social event. We see advertisements before watching a movie with friends; we watch sporting events at parties which are loaded with marketing strategies. Our consumption of products and media has been marketed to an extreme.

Psychologists have found that the second step of consumption is also loaded with social context. How do we know what normal behavior is if we don't have a reference group to go by? If everyone I knew punched a person when they first met, that is what I would think is normal, until I came across a person who did not do that. So our social context has much to do with the way we think and act.

The third step of consumption is also a social one. Gender norms aside, my wife shops with her friends often. Shopping in general has long been a social event. Teenagers spend there weekends hanging out at the mall, a Mecca for consumption. We all follow social norms when it comes to consuming.

Identity and consumption

Whether we like it or not, what we buy says something about who we are. Our identity is interwoven with our consumption. If we choose to eat only vegetables that says something about our worldview. Some buy pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles to show that they are big, powerful people. Others buy small hybrid cars because they believe they are saving the environment. If we believe this to be true then we could subscribe to the idea that every purchase we make says something about who we are, from the ice-cream flavor I like to the color t-shirt I prefer. It is not for me to make any presumptions about what these choices mean for a person. Though we can see that evaluating in general the kinds of things that a person chooses to purchase can be very meaningful in identifying who they are.

Brand choice is the largest of these indicators. In my classroom, in a matter of seconds, my students can identify how cool a person is depending on the brands of their clothes. An interesting activity a teacher might do with their students would be to have them itemize the things that they own, and create a kind of profile about what those things say about themselves. This would get students thinking creatively and concretely about these issues. Of course some one who would fall into the social category of nerd does not become cool if he wears the right brand.

Unit Overview

Over the course of the unit students will daily add an entry into their 'What, Why?' journals, then participate in a class activity. These activities will include readings, note taking, group activities, etc. Below is a list of the journal entries as well as what the general objective of the day will be. Each of these lessons are designed for a forty five minute class period. The 'what, why' questions are used as an initiation at the beginning of each class. I always put my initiation questions in the same spot on the white board in my room. This is a good way to get students busy at the beginning of class, as well as get the quiet quickly. Also at the end of each class, as closure, students complete an exit-slip. This is a quick way to get some feedback from students about what they learned that day in class. It also forces them to practice writing out their ideas. I use the exit-slip answers to judge how effective the lesson was and whether or not I can move on to the next topic. If the exit slips are way off I can review the objective again or maybe even re-teach the topic.

Day one and two: The cycle of marketing

What, Why?: What were your impressions of the kinds of advertisements you saw after school yesterday? Why do you think they were placed where they were? Debriefing about this homework assignment will enlighten students about how much advertising they are actually exposed to. The teacher should prompt the students with questions like: Are you more likely to use these products because of their advertisements? What parts of Hull's equation are being altered by the advertisements you see? What parts of Maslow's pyramid are being fulfilled by these products? What kinds of conclusions can you make about your list of advertisements?

Activity: In class the students will view parts of the PBS special *The Merchants of Cool*. This can be done in a number of ways; there are actually a number of great classroom ideas on the Website where you can find the documentary in its entirety. (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/>) I like to have students

complete 3-2-1 activities while watching such films. They identify three facts from the video, two opinions about those facts, and one connection to their own life. An important part of the film that should be emphasized is the cycle of marketing that they discuss at length. Which is simply that it is difficult to discern the difference between authentic product development and products created using market information gathered from teenagers. A company makes a product ----> teenagers buy the product ----> the product is cool ----->companies make the product. Where does this cycle begin?

Also you can present sections of Malcolm Gladwell's Cool Hunters article you can find online. In the article Gladwell explores almost all the same issues that the film does.

Closure: Was there anything in this film that surprised you about how companies gather information about you? Is this fair? Are you comfortable with it? Will this change your behavior at all?

Extension: Students will write a paragraph summarizing the ideas presented in the film and article. Sentence starter: The Merchants of Cool explains that big companies manipulate teenagers in many different ways, I believe that this practice is.....

Day three: Humanistic Theory

What, Why?: What was the last food purchase you made? Why did you choose this specific item over something else? These questions should lead to a class discussion of the hierarchy of needs. As well as introducing the persuasion of modern advertising. Some questions the teacher can ask during this discussion include: Have you ever seen an advertisement for the product you chose? Did you buy this food item to consume for a meal, or a snack? Was it absolutely necessary purchase? Was this a snack?

Activity: During the class activity students will read an excerpt from their textbook about Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In a group of three they will read and complete a pyramid graphic organizer of the different level of needs. After the groups are finished the students will complete the same pyramid organizer on the board.

Closure: As an exit slip students will give an example of something that fulfills a need for each section of the pyramid. I.E. Physical Need- A bowl of cereal, Safety- A house to live in, etc.

Extension: For homework students will write a five-sentence paragraph explaining how far up the pyramid they think they are, which sections do they have a mastery of in their own life. Each student will receive a sentence starter to begin their paragraph and keep them on track. Sentence starter: In my life, the sections of Maslow's pyramid I have mastered are....., the ones I have not are..... .

Day four: Drive reduction Theory

What, Why?: What instincts do we as humans act on? Why does it sometimes seem we don't have any choice over our actions? These questions should lead to a class discussion that introduces what kinds of drives humans have, hunger drive, sex drive, etc. as well as introducing Clark Hull's theory of drive reduction.

Activity: Hull uses a Formula for what he calls "global behavior." (Background information about Hull could be found in A History of Modern Psychology) The class activity is to first explore what this equation is. Then use it to predict each other's behavior. This could be done in groups or individually during class time. To keep students engaged the teacher can choose all kinds of bizarre behavior and find out how likely it would be for each student or group to actually perform that behavior. For example, what is the likelihood that one of the

male student in class would wear a dress to school, or what is the likelihood that a student will use foul language in class. Together with the class discuss the possible implications of these behaviors. What are the consequences of these actions? Do the consequences change the likelihood of behavior? What behavior can be modified by consequences and what behavior can not be modified? The equation can be simplified for classroom application as follows: $B = H \times I \times D$. B is the likelihood that the behavior will happen, H is the habit strength for that behavior, I is the incentive received for the behavior, D is the drive state for the behavior. (adopted from Shultz)

Closure: Students will complete an exit-pass answering the following question. Explain why you it is almost certain that after being underwater for a few minutes you will come to the surface for airr, using Hull's equation. What are the values for H, I, and D?

Extension: For homework students will write a paragraph to explain what they learned during class, and how they can use Hull's theory to better understand their own life the sentence starter is as follows: According to Clark Hull humans are more likely to behave in a certain way when.....

Day five: Do advertisements motivate us?

What, Why?: What things do you think about before make any kind of purchase? Why are these things considered? This discussion should lead to a conversation about how we are more motivated by advertising then we think we are. Activating prior knowledge this conversation is a great time to return to what conditioning is and how that shapes behavior.

Activity: Students will view different advertisements and evaluate them for effectiveness. The teacher will gather many print advertisements and collect them in either power point or overhead slide show. A few good places to find these are either in magazines or newspapers. The internet has an endless supply of advertisements that one can choose from. Picking a few with some substance is essential for this to be successful. Choose some from the food industry, some for different banking institutions etc. While viewing these advertisements students will evaluate them on a few different factors. For each image they will answer these following questions:

What is this image advertising?

Does this advertisement make me want their product?

Would Hull or Maslow say that this advertisement play on our needs or drives, if so which ones?

Closure: Students will complete an exit pass answering this question: How do advertisers use the human condition to their advantage?

Extension: For homework students will complete an advertising chart. They will keep track of as many advertisements as they notice on their trip home from school that day. They will simply identify what the advertisement id for and whether or not they use the product.

Day six: The question of happiness

What, Why?: What do you feel when you buy something you really want? Why do you think you feel this way?

We all have this feeling of happiness when we purchase the next thing that is on our wish list, that next CD, new iPod, the latest fashion, etc. This is a difficult question to grasp, for even the most mature adult. Most of my students can't really put their finger on their own emotions, but practicing this skill is essential, so if they make an attempt I am happy. Some questions to prompt this discussion include: What makes us happy? Did that thing we bought fulfill a need or reduce a drive? How have we been conditioned to allow stuff to make us happy?

Activity: This an individual activity. Students will compile a list of things that make them happy. Simply bullet-point at least twenty things in their life that makes them happy. Modeling this is essential, so during instruction the teacher should show the class their own list of things that make them happy. After the lists are compiled they should be organized into groups on the board. Have students come up to the board and fill in things that are material in one group and immaterial in another group. After each item have students write a number between 1-10. This number represents how long the happiness derived from this thing lasts, one being a very short amount of time and ten being a very long amount of time. After each student has been able to add something to the list a class discussion should be conducted to understand the list as it is. Some questions this discussion should answer are:

Can you explain using Hull or Maslow why something on the board might make us happy?

Why are the numbers placed where they are?

Do material items really make us happy?

When do material items stop making us happy?

Depending on the cooperation of the students and their level of participation in this activity a good back to this is to read excerpts from The art of Happiness by The Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler. There a number of brief stories especially in the chapter entitled 'the sources of happiness' they could be really beneficial to share with your students. After reading an excerpt student could answer questions like:

How did the person in the story resolve their discontent?

How might Hull or Maslow explain this persons unhappiness?

Closure: Exit pass question: How is this information going to change your focus in life?

Extension: Identify the items on the board with the highest numbers attached to them. Come up with some ideas about how you could increase these things in your life.

Reading List (books)

Apruebo, Roxel A.. Applied Consumer Psychology. first ed. Sampaloc: Rex Book Store, 2005.

Applied Consumer Psychology is a text book loaded with great information about the information gathered by marketers to advertise to consumers. An entire course could be taught through the material presented in this text.

Chin, Elizabeth. Purchasing Power. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

This ethnography is an enlightening look at the economic disparity in New Haven. It highlights the scarcity issue presented to the young.

Haugtvedt, Curtis P.. Handbook of consumer psychology. New York: Psychology Press, 2008.

LaFeber, Walter. Michael Jordan and the new Global Capitalism. New York, London: W. W. Norton, 1999.

This book gives us a narrative about how basketball in general and Michael Jordan in specific effect the global economy and force our economic choice in a very strong way. A teacher could use sections of this text to excite students about the topic.

Mullen, Brian. The Psychology of Consumer Behavior. Hillsdale: LEA publishers, 1990.

Pleck, Elizabeth H. Celebrating the Family: Ethnicity, Consumer Culture, and Family Rituals. Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 2000.

This is a multicultural history of the American family celebration and how consumerism has affected it. This is a good source of information detailing the process of American culture rather than the individual being changed because of consumerism.

Schor, Juliet B.. Born to Buy. New York: Scribner, 2004.

This book is a good resource for teachers to gain knowledge about consumer culture affecting Americans at all ages.

Shultz, Daniel P.. A History of Modern Psychology. seventh ed. Sydney Ellen Shultz. Fort Worth: Harcourt College Publishers, 2000.

This book has been praised for its comprehensive coverage and biographical approach. Focusing on modern psychology, the text's coverage begins with the late 19th century. The authors personalize the history of psychology not only by using biographical information on influential theorists, but also by showing how major events in those theorists' lives have affected the authors' own ideas, approaches, and methods. A great resource for any psychology teacher.

Wade ,Carol. Invitation to Psychology. Fourth ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, INC., 2008.

This is the text book that will be used for student reading, as well as most of the basic Psychology background knowledge needed for students.

Wanke, Micheala. Social Psychology of Consumer Behavior. New York: Psychology Press, 2009.

The range of topics covered in this book is broad including the construal of judgments and decisions, affective and cognitive feelings, social and media influences, and goals and self-regulation; each chapter is focused on one specific theoretical or methodological perspective and thereby gives a comprehensive and penetrating account of the relevant issues and the respective research.

Online Resources

Gladwell, Malcolm. "The Coolhunt" The New Yorker (1997), http://www.gladwell.com/1997/1997_03_17_a_cool.htm. (accessed March 15, 2010).

This is an article describing the life of a 'cool hunter,' which is a person who works to find out what the cool new fad of the day is. Through the marketing strategies that cool hunters use we can learn much about how companies use teenagers when they make decisions about what and how much to produce.

Goodman, Barak. "The Merchants of Cool." Feb. 2001. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/> (accessed March 29, 2010).

This website is a great resource for understanding cool marketing and having a solid understanding of consumer culture in the lives of teenagers. There are interviews with economists and teenagers alike. Also you can view a PBS frontline special on the cool hunters documented in Malcolm Gladwell's The Cool Hunt. It could be used for the teacher to gain knowledge, or to show students the documentary. WARNING: there are parts of the film that get a bit racy; discretion is advised.

Hanson, Jon. "PBS Mind Over Money." May 9, 2010. <http://video.pbs.org/video/1479100777/> (accessed March 30).

A website that hosts a video about our perception about cost benefit analysis.

Perner, Lars. "CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MARKETING." <http://www.consumerpsychologist.com/> (accessed March 28, 2010).

This website is a good resource for student reading. I plan on taking sections from this site and giving them to students to present some of the background information necessary to engage in a conversation about Consumer Psychology.

<http://www.apa.org/>

Schultz, D.P. & Schultz, S.E. (1987). A History of Modern Psychology. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publications.

Appendix

This unit will achieve objectives from both the stated City of New Haven curriculum and the National standards written by the American Psychological foundation. According to these standards students should be viewing the world with an empirical eye, which is exactly what students going through this unit will do. They will meet these standards and take them to the next step by applying some of them to their own lives. Students will have to show they have mastered these objectives by expressing them verbally as well as in written form, through a series of assessments. Including in this series will be: structured discussions, graphic organizers, rubrics for classroom activities and a culminating essay. The unit will also include some interdisciplinary objectives which include the Social Studies state standards (S.S.1.10); Explain how limited resources influence economic decisions. Explore the consumer culture's use of marketing and its effect on individuals students master this objective. (S.S.2.3) Create various forms of written work (e.g. journal, essay, web page) to demonstrate understanding of social studies issues. Students completing this unit will practice this skill with

multiple assessments. The Psychological standards met by this unit include (IIC-1.1) Apply motivational concepts to the behavior of humans. Students will indicate this by describing their own motives, goals, and values in an essay, as well as structured discussions. (IIC-3.1) Describe one or more theories of motivation, such as expectancy value, cognitive dissonance, arousal, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and drive reduction. Students will indicate this by testing their own experiences against the drive reduction theory through a purchasing reflection journal. (IIC-5.1) Use expectancy-value theory to explain their own and other's behavior. Students will indicate this by analyzing how expectancy-value theory explains how they have spent their money over the time of their purchasing journal. This unit will also cover district standards including (PSY.8.1) Students will describe how the theories of Hull, Maslow, and Roger explain human behavior. Students will indicate this by completing a graphic organizer comparing the three psychologists. In addition to these standards this unit will provide practical knowledge and skills that students can take with them into their everyday nonacademic lives after High School.

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