

Adam Lundegard

MKT 4270

Class Summary 1

International Marketing: Class Summary 1

From the beginning of the semester, this class has framed the world and international marketing into the underlying structure of humans, how humans have evolved into the current state of the species, and what makes us all simultaneously alike and distinct. Consequentially, this is the base on which international marketing, and many other sectors, operate on.

Economies are obsolete without humans, which means that we must first fully understand the input to these structures before we can understand the structures themselves. Not only has this given me the lens with which to look at the marketing world, but by which we can understand the influence of humans on the world as whole. Throughout this paper, I will give a synopsis of this lens and how it has been created through a detailed background on evolution, analysis of the structural states of institutions across the world, and a more contextualized account of major topics in varying countries around the world.

My initial response to the beginning of this class was one of instant engagement. I have constantly found myself in wonder of humans as individuals and as a collective, so the first lecture grabbed my attention right away. I have found myself connecting with many different concepts throughout these lectures, with many of them pertaining to the psychology and development of the human species. So, the first lecture provided the perfect starting spot for this course and incepted my thoughts with even greater wonder and depth.

My first notes from this class being Lee Smolin's perspective on the evolutionary concept of the universe demonstrates this enhanced depth of thought and wonderment. The key idea from Smolin's perspective that grasped my attention was that of cosmological natural selection, meaning the universe follows the same evolutionary laws as humans, and that they have evolved to have the most black holes in order to produce more universes just as we have evolved to live longer in order to produce more offspring. This example is to say that evolution is at the base of all science. From here we begin to learn the root of all humans and the logic of their evolution which can be phrased in many ways, with one of the simplest being: variation, reproduction, and selection. A concept that can be implemented into business success as "detect, adapt, adopt" which led to one of my favorite concepts of the start of this class, which was that of adaptability being two part: passive and active. Autonomous subconscious changes versus present reactions to environments. This lecture concluded with the early stages of humanity and how we are distinct due to larger brains, cooked foods, higher levels of social learning, and prestige mimicry. All knowledge that is important to understanding the starting point of where humans began and how we have been the unique species to form the world we see today.

Continuing from this, we dove into the Kendrick Pyramid and a more modernized take on the hierarchy of needs. I was able to see the programming that we have adopted through evolution that produces our motivations. This was one of the first mentions of structure being transcendental while the content may change. While first being introduced regarding comfort foods, this concept will reappear in many other ways regarding other psychological aspects of humans and their cultures. This led us to a deep dive on the Kendrick Pyramid. My first notice of

this topic was that it took the previous structure of Maslow's hierarchy but with an increased focus on the evolutionary precepts that form the human hierarchy of needs. The first of the Kendrick Pyramid being the physiological needs. This is a key concept in understanding the operation of humans in the structures we see today. Reward is a universal determinant, and it is important to understand the basis of reward as it is central to the forward movement of humans. It is described that rewards are about a tandem of wanting and liking, but that wanting is the more powerful of the two. Wanting is what motivates us to act while liking is what tells us we've made the right decision. This is so crucial to what we are learning because marketing is all about framing the selection process to the consumer in a way that provides their reward system with the highest fulfillment. The end of this lecture concluded with the introduction of the ingroup and outgroup concept. This is one of the most often reoccurring concepts I've noticed thus far in this class and for good reason. Similarly to the understanding of rewards, markets and cultures are based on the concept of being an ingroup member, or one of the accepted majority. This concept is rooted in evolution and the feelings of distrust and stigma historically produced by those that are not a part of the same group as one. In the past, it was connected to those that are outside of a living community "raping and pillaging" those in that community. This concept provided me with a lot of perspective on society and how so many negatives are paired with the most closely related outgroup. This can be exemplified in the United States with our need for constant wars or in our continual blame of immigrants for societal problems.

Continuing into the next lecture where we further focus on the concept of groups, we also learn more about cognition and culture. Cognition is both implicit and explicit, and culture is a product of these two forms of cognition. I really enjoyed this concept of cognition because it

is a concept that I find myself thinking about a lot but without ever understanding it academically. I often recognize the products of my implicit cognition when I lack sleep or am eating the wrong foods but had never found the words or ideas to describe it as it was described in this lecture. This newfound perspective further explained the idea of culture and the concepts of groups. Groups are formed on a combination of implicit and explicit cognition and are often related to norms and customs that can be explicitly apparent and implicit. As we further explored groups, I was able to grow my understanding of how groups form through shared experiences such as religion and other factors like customs.

Status was the topic of the following lecture. This was one of the most intriguing topics for me because the status and hierarchy is at the root of nearly all structures. Status is about standing within a social hierarchy and about the power to restrict access to resources based on this standing. One of my favorite lines about status from this lecture was “we don’t know what we want to be, so we give status to those with direction”. In my personal life, it made me think about the differences between leaders and followers, and how they drive culture forward. With regard to marketing, this prompted me to think more about market foresight. If you can see the leaders before people are following them, or be the leaders, then you have an increased advantage as to where the next trend might arise. I also found it interesting that high status was correlated with increased well-being, self-esteem, and mental and physical health. It seems rather self-evident; however, it made me think more about which comes first. This lecture concluded with the introduction of dominance and prestige networks. Dominance networks are control based while prestige networks are very ability based. This concept has reappeared often throughout the course with regards to varying institutions such as churches and governments.

In particular, this concept provided insight into the validity of institutions and what keeps them stable.

The following lecture covered the tip of the Kendrick pyramid - parenting. From this we covered the critical periods of human development and how they affect the outcome of a person. My biggest takeaways from this section were about connecting the different stimuli with the outcome that they provoke. This was demonstrated precisely in the comparison between fast and slow strategy people. After learning about the rush into development that forms fast strategy people, I was thinking about everyone I know and how their critical developmental periods might have formed who they are today.

Moving on from the topic of parenting, we shifted our focus towards cultures. Something that is central to the world and marketing alike. It is nearly impossible to market efficiently without understanding the culture that you are targeting, and it is also nearly impossible to work productively with anyone without having an idea or understanding of their background. This topic was a point of convergence on many different concepts previously introduced such as groups, customs, mimicry, and status. This was an intriguing lecture largely due to the comparison between the cultures of the United States and other countries. It was fascinating to have concepts that I had been aware of be described so simply, such as the topics of hedonism and utilitarianism. I had previously noticed the factors and products of these two cultural styles, such as a lack of prioritization of the arts in the United States but had never known the actual concepts. Regarding marketing, this is yet another great tool for the analyzation of prospective markets and their utility for practical or impractical goods or services. Another one of these tools is the ability to recognize tight and loose cultures. Again, this was

something I was aware of but did not have much knowledge of. With regards to marketing, the ability to identify tight cultures that transmit trends quickly is another competitive advantage for companies when analyzing markets.

After covering most of the tools for understanding the base of humans, their cultures, and their systems, the class shifted to a more pointed historical perspective within the lectures and within the introduction of the country profiles. In class nine, we started by examining the country profiles of Mexico and Iran. This provided us with an opportunity to witness the practical application of evolutionary psychology and fundamental marketing metrics in enhancing our comprehension of complex geopolitical landscapes. Having been a part of the first country profile presentation, I can attest for an enhanced understanding of Mexico's political, social, and economic environments. Tasked with the goal of explaining the distortion of the Mexican avocado market, I was able to better comprehend the Mexican political corruption impacts of a dominance network and the ingroup-outgroup and status-based tension between indigenous and European descendants. After presenting my groups findings, we listened to a group present about Iran and cultural shifts that surrounded the Iranian Revolution since 1979. Again, we encounter the concepts of ingroup versus outgroup and social status in the confrontation between the urban-elites and the religious conservatives.

Being that the country profiles took up a considerable amount of time, we were only able to receive a more surface level account of western economic history from the lecture. We covered great historical examples of prestige networks like that of ancient Egypt that facilitate on large ingroups, complex social classes, and monotheism. The ability to greater understand the bases on which successful societies thrived allowed me to look at parallels between current

societies and what separates them. This idea reminded me of the inherent challenges the United States faces regarding factors such as having many different ingroups and outgroups. We quickly moved through certain history to greater cover the Reformation and its impact. While revolutionizing literacy and breaking up the world's largest dominance network are some of the few things that came from the Reformation, we also looked at the formative affects it has had on American culture. While the Reformation has had an enormous impact all throughout the world, it can be clearly seen in American culture through the emphasis on literacy, promotion of hard work as a calling, and demand for capitalistic reinvestment.

Diving deeper into country profiles in the following class, we took a greater look at the resource curse and corruption from two different angles. The first group presented a synopsis of how Botswana has evaded the resource curse and become one of the most successful African nations due to its large homogenous ingroup, lack of corruption, heaps of diamonds. In contrast, the following group showed us the downfall of Somalia and how the crashing of a dominance network and mismanaged markets can put a country in turmoil. These comparisons truly grabbed my attention as I have heard so much of Somali pirates and how piracy can exist in the 21st century. While listening to the presentation, my understanding of the stories about journalists and tourists getting captured began to grow, and I was able to see it as a modern product of systems rather than just some YouTube title. The following lecture built on this attention peak by providing unique perspective to a current example of the marketing industry using all the tools that we have talked about to control and manipulate markets, economies, and culture. This being the case of De Beers, the world's largest diamond company that monopolized the diamond industry through fundamental marketing, knowledge of status and

concepts like conspicuous consumption, and an understanding of a newly forming American culture. The introduction of certain basic marketing techniques such as market segmentation was nice to be aware of, but the strategical moves are what intrigued me the most. De Beers' understanding of the malleability of a new malleable American culture, tactical placement, and manipulation of cultural tools such as Hollywood and love was like watching the characters in a heist movie get away.

Up to this point in the course, I have widened my base knowledge of how the world works. I had previously had a passive understanding of humans and the cause-and-effect relationship in the world that produces certain outcomes. With the beginning of this course diving deeper into these concepts, I've found myself with a greater awareness of fascinating concepts such as prestige mimicry, cognition types, reward systems, and social power. As prestige mimicry was introduced, I have thought more analytically about the concept of "fake it 'til you make it". Previously, I understood that it can be easy and efficient to trick people into believing you know more than you do, but now I see the historical and conceptual validity behind the mimicry of phenotypes and the following of social superiors in order to progress the society forward. Regarding reward systems, I took special note on my distinct feelings of wanting versus having, realizing that it is logical to focus more on the feeling of desire in order to find context for these emotions. Lastly, one of my favorite concepts of this course thus far is that of cognition. I consider myself to be hyperaware and often have trouble finding a level of understanding when expressing certain mental and physical notes. I never knew what to call this or why it happened, but with my understanding of implicit and explicit cognition I was able to better analyze which part of me was taking note of the residual effects of lack of sleep,

improper nutrition, and many other inputs of stress and why some people can go to bed at any time or take improper care of their body without feeling many consequences.

Upon entering this class, I never would have guessed that we would have covered topics of evolutionary psychology, physiology and culture so attentively or at all. Furthermore, I would have struggled to properly relate these topics that interest me into the proper framework of international marketing. Yet, I now feel that I have the proper base knowledge to connect these varying topics. At the root of all worldly systems are humans. They impact these systems more than any other input. In order to properly analyze these systems and institutions, we must first know about humans, why they do what they do, and what has led them to the positions they're in. Once this framework is established, we can take a deeper look at the very first networks, systems, and institutions that acted as a starting point to their modernized versions. After establishing the bases of triumph, tragedy, and normality for these, we can then look at the end goal – the systems that we operate under today – why they work, why they fail, and what the driving forces behind them are. That is where I feel this class has brought me thus far - in a position to conceptualize the developments of the world, and find parallels between the current economic and marketing landscape and the history of its formations.