

Freud on Madison Avenue: Motivation Research and Subliminal Advertising in America

Lawrence R. Samuel

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Lawrence R. Samuel : Freud on Madison Avenue: Motivation Research and Subliminal Advertising in America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Freud on Madison Avenue: Motivation Research and Subliminal Advertising in America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Forget Wall St, Go to Madison Ave!By Tofig HuseynzadaThis book deserves 6 out of 5 rating. It is unbelievable how this side of history has been almost ignored in the marketing, psychology, advertising, consumer research books. Surprisingly, we still live in a world where Wall Street is

overestimated and Madison Ave is underestimated for its power. The reason why this book is one of my favourites in my library is that it provides great research material collected by a UPenn Prof. Lawrence R. Samuel. This is a must buy for all market researchers, executives and may be for all the Professionals within the global communications business. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By BIRGIT WASSMUTH Very accessible! 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A strong pick for anyone who wants to understand consumer psychology, either as a business man or just the endlessly curious By Midwest Book Review Without even thinking about it, you may be being advertised to. "Freud on Madison Avenue: Motivation Research and Subliminal Advertising in America" discusses psychology and why people shop the way they shop, breaking down these unusual habits in people who claim to be rational. This concept has been researched through years, and author Lawrence R. Samuel gives a thoughtful and scholarly look at this work and provides a very eye opening read. "Freud on Madison Avenue" is a strong pick for anyone who wants to understand consumer psychology, either as a business man or just the endlessly curious.

What do consumers really want? In the mid-twentieth century, many marketing executives sought to answer this question by looking to the theories of Sigmund Freud and his followers. By the 1950s, Freudian psychology had become the adman's most powerful new tool, promising to plumb the depths of shoppers' subconscious minds to access the irrational desires beneath their buying decisions. That the unconscious was the key to consumer behavior was a new idea in the field of advertising, and its impact was felt beyond the commercial realm. Centered on the fascinating lives of the brilliant men and women who brought psychoanalytic theories and practices from Europe to Madison Avenue and, ultimately, to Main Street, Freud on Madison Avenue tells the story of how midcentury advertisers changed American culture. Paul Lazarsfeld, Herta Herzog, James Vicary, Alfred Politz, Pierre Martineau, and the father of motivation research, Viennese-trained psychologist Ernest Dichter, adapted techniques from sociology, anthropology, and psychology to help their clients market consumer goods. Many of these researchers had fled the Nazis in the 1930s, and their decidedly Continental and intellectual perspectives on secret desires and inner urges sent shockwaves through WASP-dominated postwar American culture and commerce. Though popular, these qualitative research and persuasion tactics were not without critics in their time. Some of the tools the motivation researchers introduced, such as the focus group, are still in use, with "consumer insights" and "account planning" direct descendants of Freudian psychological techniques. Looking back, author Lawrence R. Samuel implicates Dichter's positive spin on the pleasure principle in the hedonism of the Baby Boomer generation, and he connects the acceptance of psychoanalysis in marketing culture to the rise of therapeutic culture in the United States.

From Publishers Weekly An author, cultural consultant, and founder of Culture Planning, a company with Fortune 500 clients, Samuel delves into the ways in which Sigmund Freud's theories on psychology were implemented, for better or worse, by the advertising industry more than a half century ago. Samuel analyzes the work of Viennese-trained psychologist Ernest Dichter, along with Paul Lazarsfeld and many others, but it's Freud's contributions that laid the groundwork for ad strategy then-and now. By the '50s and '60s the industry had shifted its focus from how consumers behaved to why, and Samuel contends that Freud's "concept of the unconscious, with its hidden desires that shaped people's behavior, was a particularly powerful idea for marketers to embrace and exploit... a godsend to Madison Avenue." Although subliminal advertising was challenged on ethical grounds, and consumers feared Orwellian invasions of privacy, many of the practices developed at the time, such as focus groups and account planning, are still integral tools of the modern ad trade. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "This bracing tour of the psycho-cultural badlands of advertising is sure to provoke the reader's imagination. Nobody charts commercial history like Lawrence Samuel." — John F. Sherry, Jr., University of Notre Dame "Pull up a couch. Open your mind to this incisive, intriguing and intelligent revelation of how psychological analysis transformed modern advertising." — John Bowman, Global Director of Strategic Equities, Saatchi Saatchi "The first-ever look at the powerful yet controversial beginnings of the consumer research industry that exists today. Brilliant, thorough, and fascinating." — Megan Kent, Founder, Brand Synchronicity "A good book. . . . The work is insightful, well-written and is an excellent introduction to this important area of business history." — Business History "Commercial historian Lawrence R. Samuel presents a rich, detailed, and fascinating look at the historical evolution of motivation (aka motivational) research." — Journal of Consumer Research "If you have any interest in marketing research, advertising, or communications, this book deserves a place on your shelf." — Neal M. Burns, University of Texas at Austin "Freud on Madison Avenue offers a valuable window into life in the United States in the 1950s, a time when consumerism was being rethought and Freud's influence was at its zenith." — American Journal of Sociology "In Freud on Madison Avenue, Lawrence R. Samuel delves deep into the consumerist 'Mad Men' of midcentury, explaining how the subconscious mind could be imprinted for commerce, which laid the foundation for consumer insights, brand imagery, and disruptive creative ideas. A terrific read!" — John Gerzema, Chief Insights Officer, Young Rubicam and author of The Brand Bubble About the Author Lawrence R. Samuel is the founder of Culture Planning LLC and the author of several books, including Rich:

The Rise and Fall of American Wealth Culture and Future: A Recent History.