

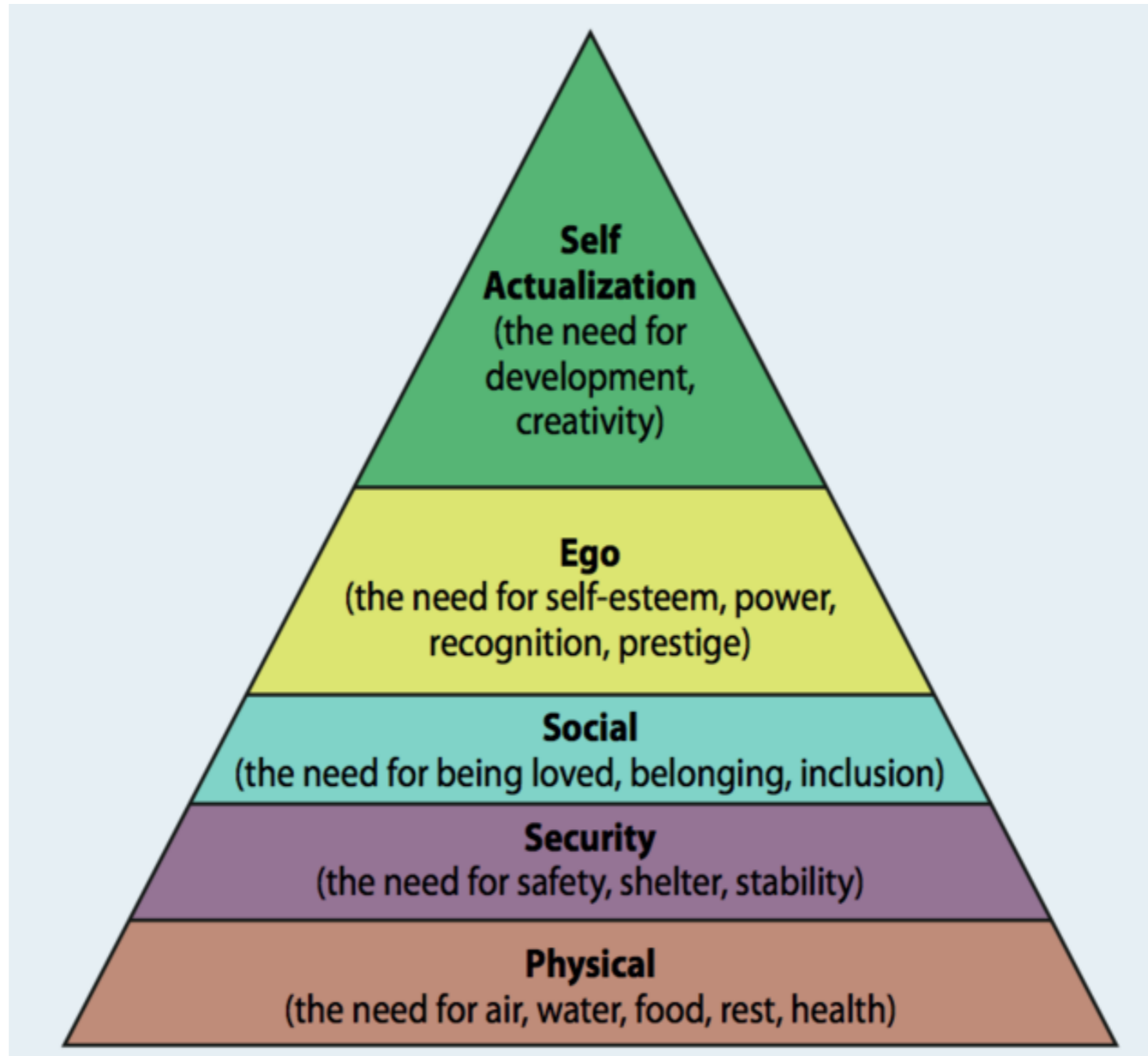
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CS349

ETHICAL CONSUMERISM

WHAT IS A NEED VERSUS A WANT?

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

- ▶ Created in 1943 by American psychologist Abraham Maslow
- ▶ Believed in hierarchy of basic "deficiency" needs versus "growth" needs
 - ▶ Lower needs must be met to allow for higher needs to develop
- ▶ Based on Maslow's observations rather than empirical evidence
- ▶ Potentially useful framework for considering needs versus wants

THE CHEMISTRY OF CONSUMPTION

- ▶ Shopping increases dopamine in reward pathways
 - ▶ Similar spike seen in addictive behaviors such as drug use and overeating
- ▶ Association between “holiday” and discounts also activates dopamine
 - ▶ Discounts as bargains leads to competitive “thrill”
 - ▶ Thinking about purchases activates dopamine as much as actual purchase
 - ▶ Seasonal shopping viewed as a socially acceptable indulgence
- ▶ Pavlovian reinforcement by retail discounters

BUT WHEN DO HOLIDAYS END?

GAME OF THRONES A TELLTALE GAMES SERIES -50% \$29.99 \$14.99 USD	HIGIES SKYLINE -33% \$29.99 \$20.09 USD	NBA 2K15 -75% \$59.99 \$14.99 USD	FINAL FANTASY FRANCHISE -50%	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2015 -66% \$49.99 \$16.99 USD
AGE OF MITHRLOGY EXTENDING THE SERIES -75% \$29.99 \$7.49 USD	DAYS TO DIE THE SURVIVAL HORROR SHOOTING GAME -60% \$24.99 \$9.99 USD	TOTAL WAR FRANCHISE -33-75%	The Elder Scrolls FRANCHISE -66-75%	ASSASSIN'S CREED FRANCHISE -35-75%
H1Z1 -50% \$19.99 \$9.99 USD	THE T.A.L.O.S. PRINCIPLE -86% \$19.99 \$3.39 USD	THE LONG DARK -50% \$19.99 \$9.99 USD	Robbie Rotten -33% \$14.99 \$10.04 USD	Mount & Blade WARBAND -80% \$19.99 \$3.99 USD
GALACTIC CIVILIZATIONS FRANCHISE -25-75%	THE WITCHER FRANCHISE -10-85%	BIOSHOCK FRANCHISE -75-85%	SID MEIER'S CIVILIZATION FRANCHISE -60-75%	grand theft auto -25-75%
VALKYRIA -75% \$19.99 \$4.99 USD	ARK -17% \$29.99 \$24.99 USD	METRO FRANCHISE -75-80%	THE CREW -50% \$59.99 \$29.99 USD	LEGO -66% \$49.99 \$16.99 USD
DYING LIGHT -25% \$59.99 \$44.99 USD	WOLF AMONG US -75% \$24.99 \$6.24 USD	ASSETTO CORSA -50% \$49.99 \$24.99 USD	AGE OF WONDERS FRANCHISE -75%	THE WAR OF MINE -60% \$19.99 \$7.99 USD

FAST FASHION

- ▶ Trend in clothing designed geared around cheap, disposable fashion
 - ▶ Made possible with modern manufacturing techniques and marketing
- ▶ Cheaply made clothing geared around less wear-time and fewer washes
- ▶ Lower cost makes it feel like a value
 - ▶ More expensive over long term
- ▶ 52 micro-seasons for fashion
 - ▶ Designed to make customers feel out of fashion after the first week

FAST FASHION ISSUES

- ▶ Clothing may contain lead or other health hazards to wearer
- ▶ Often made with child labor
- ▶ Heavy environmental cost during manufacturing
 - ▶ Many toxic chemicals used in textile process resulting in tons of waste water
- ▶ Heavy environmental cost after disposal
 - ▶ Average American throws away 68lbs of textiles into landfills each year
 - ▶ Synthetic fabrics made with petroleum-based fibers so they don't biodegrade for decades
- ▶ Heavy human cost after disposal
 - ▶ Many clothing donations end up in developing nations, which competes with local textile industries

A MINDSET ACROSS ALL INDUSTRIES

- ▶ Marketing promotes fast consumption and disposal of a product
- ▶ In manufactured goods, this includes planned obsolescence or constant advertising
- ▶ In media, this includes constant advertising and pressure for social conformity

INSTAPOLL QUESTION

- ▶ What is a product you enjoy consuming? (should go without saying, but list something that is not illegal or inappropriate from work)

A SOCIAL COMPONENT

- ▶ Friendships can include:
 - ▶ Inside jokes
 - ▶ Activities
 - ▶ Social coding



EXAMPLE: FORTNITE

- ▶ Manufactured Discontent:
 - ▶ <https://youtu.be/dPHPNglhR0?t=300>



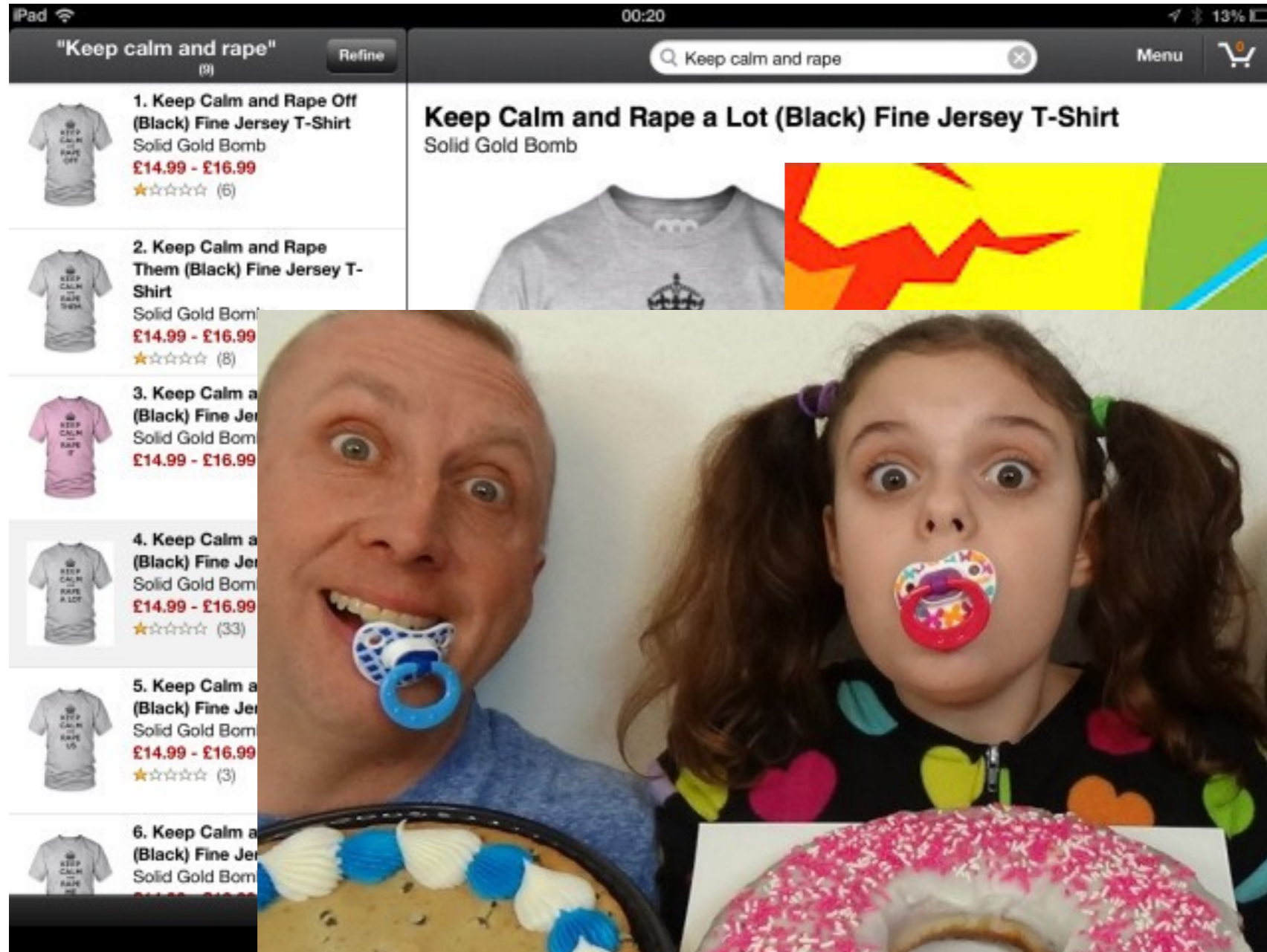
MARKETING FOR CONSUMPTION

- ▶ Must “game” the system to have product stand out
- ▶ Search Engine Optimization (SEO) grew as Internet became a platform for revenue and marketing
 - ▶ In early 2000s, use of spam links, comments, and keywords prevalent for boosting site’s ranking
 - ▶ Arms race between SEO tactics and search engines
 - ▶ In late 2000s, social media became increasingly important component of page rank
 - ▶ Sites expected to produce a constant stream of user-generated content

EXAMPLE: BOTS AND CONTENT-GENERATION

- ▶ “It’s not so much that bots are now passing the Turing test – it’s that humans are failing it.” – Matt Kaemmerer
- ▶ Bots can churn out social media much faster than humans (and are cheaper!)
 - ▶ Prevalent on Twitter, Youtube, and many others
 - ▶ Leads to derivative content at best
 - ▶ Leads to disturbing, manipulative content (often targeting kids) at worst

BOTS, CONTENT-GENERATION, AND THE HUMAN RESPONSE



CONSUMERISM AND WEALTH INEQUALITY

- ▶ Millennials have been accused of killing (among other things):
 - ▶ Napkins
 - ▶ Golf
 - ▶ Soap bars
 - ▶ Vacations/cruises
 - ▶ Homeownership
 - ▶ Wine corks
 - ▶ Diamonds
 - ▶ Department stores
- ▶ Downside of a consumer-based economy is that we all have to contribute by constantly consuming things!

HOW DOES MARKETING IMPACT SOCIETY?

INSTAPOLL QUESTION

- ▶ Which of these is the most important aspect of ethical consumption for you?
 - A. Environmental
 - B. Social
 - C. Political
 - D. Economic

GROUP ACTIVITY

- ▶ Break into groups of 3 or 4 and discuss the following questions:
 - ▶ What do you consider ethical consumption?
 - ▶ How do you try to consume ethically?
 - ▶ When do you cut corners?
 - ▶ What are some practical strategies for consuming ethically?
 - ▶ What are some practical strategies for producing ethically?
 - ▶ Whose responsibility is ethical consumption? (i.e. governmental, business, personal)

EXTREME OUTLIER: BHUTAN

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