

Popular Culture Analysis:

Hidden Motives of Rebecca's Consumerist Behaviour as Shown in

The Movie "Confession of a Shopaholic"

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan



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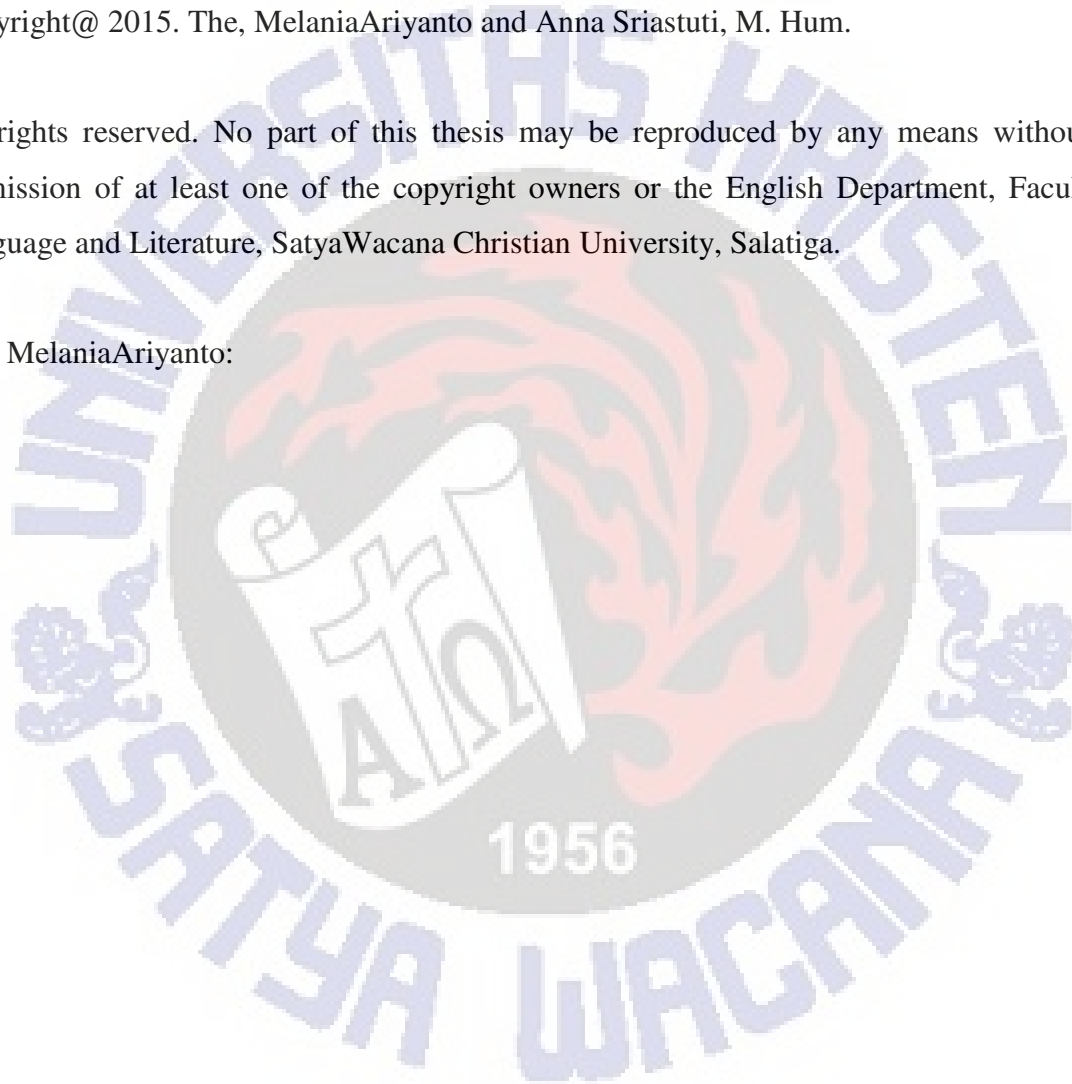
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Last but surely not the least, hopefully this imperfect thesis could be useful for students or researchers especially who are interested in this field of study.

Popular Culture Analysis:

Hidden Motives of Rebecca’s Consumerist Behaviour as Shown in The Movie “Confession of a Shopaholic”

The, Melania Ariyanto

Abstract

As human being we live in a society that confines our perspective and behaviour. The society lives in the world where consuming things is one of the most important things in life. People believe that being a consumerist is somehow a culture. However, people are not aware of the motives that make them a consumerist. They keep consuming without actually knowing the reason why. The movie *Confession of a Shopaholic* is a perfect embodiment of the consumerism issue. The main character, Rebecca shows how she is trapped in consumerism. The purpose of this study is to find the hidden motives of the main character that turns her into a shopaholic. In order to do that the writer will analyse the needs of the main character to understand the reason that makes her a consumer. Then, the writer will analyse the consumerism culture to know the environment the support her to be a consumerist. After that, the writer will analyse the hidden motives using house of popular culture. The result is that she needs to be accepted and respected by the society, as they judge people by their cover.

Keyword: Needs theory, House of pop culture, Consumerism culture.

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Popular Culture Analysis:

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Introduction

"What do people actually know? What they are told"

The quotation is taken from one of the scenes in *Confession of a Shopaholic*, a movie about passion, love, and obsession to consume things. That line simply shows the issue that we experience in the real world. Living in the society seems like living in the world where mask is worn by most people in it. People are commonly believe and do things that the society says in-trend and popular. What we do in our life is determined by what society agree as the standard living. Without knowing the actual reason why a certain thing becomes a compulsory in our life, we undergo a series of trend changes. What once just a thing can transform into a popular culture.

As I quoted from Lause and Nachbar, popular culture is so easy to get because it's everywhere to be gotten-it surrounds us the way water surrounds a fish, as a transparent environment crucial to our survival (1992 2). The issue happens everywhere yet we do not realise it. It is actually a common phenomenon because it is impossible for us to see that, it is as hard as seeing the air we breathe. Consuming things is one of the example of the act of

popular culture. The society lives in the world where consuming things is one of the most important things in life. Therefore the act of consuming or consumerism becomes, as what society belief, a culture.

In our entire life, one of the most common things we do every day is consuming. No matter who we are or where we live, every person in the whole world are accustomed to consume things. People consume things differently according to what they think they need. Maslow believes that people share the same basic needs which things that very trivial to our existence on earth, such as, air, shelter, food, and clothe. After the basic needs is already fulfilled, people are moving on to higher needs which can be different for each person or group. Motivation plays the big role in people needs. He stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs (McLeod 1). The achievement of each people of a certain level leads them to the upper level of needs which ends at self-actualization which implies that human see their potential and willing to get more experience in order to personally grow.

Based on the definition, consuming clothes is one of the basic human needs. However, it walk its way to secondary need because of the function of it is no longer just for covering our body, but also to uphold the sense of fashion. Consuming things is part of human needs which based on the idea of happiness (Baudrillard 30). It simply means that consuming is an activity that brings people happiness. According to a myth stated in Baudrillard, happiness can be measured and it usually equals to salvation. Happiness can be measured in many ways, though mostly it is closely related to the well-being. The more prosperous people are, the happier they should be. People need things not only because it is important to support their life, but they are more interested in collecting things for people acknowledgement. Therefore, human is motivated to consume more goods by the needs to show what they can afford to consume.

One of the most famous American actress, Bo Derek, said that “Whoever said money can’t buy happiness simply did not know where to go shopping”. It is one of the examples that people think that happiness is when we can consume things. Consumerism is seen as a tool to describe a society in which many people formulate their goals in life partly through acquiring goods that they clearly do not need for subsistence or for traditional display (Stearn 2). According to Leiss as quoted in Featherstone (2007 37), products are used as the justifier of people’s social status. It means that the value of the product is not particularly important to our life other than the use to justify that we are capable to own it. People show the level of their affluence in order to state their capability of buying and consuming.

People have their own preference in terms of consumed things. Some of them like to consume gadget and car, others like to consume fashion goods like clothes, shoes, and bags. For me, I do that to look good so that people acknowledge me as a fashionable girl and I personally think that most women do it for the same reason. People are concerned of being judge by what we wear, because apparently, wearing different clothes describes a message of one’s social status (Featherstone 37). We see how the higher class dress up, we grow up into liking and trying to look like them. We start to consume the same brand of goods and wear the same style of clothes. That line of thinking forces us to be a consumerist. Consumption is intimately tied to the creation and production of a sense of self (Todd 1). Therefore, it is impossible to buy any goods without a certain symbol embedded in it. When we use and wear a well-known brand goods, our self-esteem will increase.

Like what Coco Channel, the maker of Channel’s fashion goods like perfumes and bags, said, in order to be irreplaceable one must always be different, consumers think that their consuming pattern is unique, hence it can differentiate us with others. However, according to Todd, consumption is one of our most creative and most restrictive practice (2011 1). It is not for creating illusion of who we are, but more of the sense of who we are

and which social class we belong to. Therefore, the products become the one that classify our social status (Apparaduaiqtd in Featherstone 39). It's like the saying of Mexico rocker band, Zoe, "Style is the way to say who you are without having to speak". The movie "Confession of a Shopaholic" share the image of people who uses those ideas.

The first time I watch the movie "Confession of a Shopaholic", I see that the main character has already been attached to consumerism. She consumes goods without even considering the expensive prices. She only cares about how she will look and how others will see her in that fashion items. She does not care even though she has to use credit card to support her consumerist behaviour and finally has a big debt to the card company. She lives in a society that judge someone from how they look and what they afford to buy. People believe that they can express what we are by the way we dress and the way we live, just like a quotation from Versace that implies we can decide our identity through what we consume. Even though what happened in reality is the opposite of the popular beliefs of fashion, it still forces us to be consumptive.

From that movie, I can relate the issue experienced by Rebecca, the main character of the movie, to the issue happened in real life society. The saying *don't judge a book by its cover* is made because people do judge others by how they look. It seems like someone gain trust from others by the cover. Like the case of salesman who is trying to sale insurance policy. The society will look at him as a joke if he dress like teenager who uses baseball jacket and ripped jeans. They will respect him better if he dress neatly like a manager. So, people are racing to look richer than the other. They buy branded things that can cost them a fortune and also use credit card to help them own things easily even though they still need to pay the next month.

Similarly, she values everything that helps her consume more goods, like credit card that is seen as an important tool to survive as a consumerist. This intrigued a question "what

is the hidden motives of Rebecca's consumerist behaviour as the main character in the movie *Confession of a Shopaholic*?" By viewing the needs of the society in the movie and the consumerism culture I am able to understand the supporting details that create consumerist in the society. Those analysis lead me to find the hidden motive of Rebecca's consumerist behaviour using house of the popular culture. By this theory, I would like to know the reason that support Rebecca's act of consumerism.

Therefore, the study aims to analyse the hidden motive of the main character as a consumer who keeps consuming goods even though she has more than enough goods. The result of this study can be beneficial to all the readers that are interested to popular culture issue, so that they may understand better about the theory of popular culture especially house of popular culture. It is also those useful for them who have consumptive behaviour. So, they can understand better their needs and the function of the things they buy. It is also useful to understand others better.

Literature review

The movie *Confession of a Shopaholic* had been used as a thesis discussion by one the SatyaWacana Christian Univesity student, named Novi SucianiWijaya. She discussed about the consumerism and hedonism found in the novel that have the same title with the movie. In the discussion she stated that she tried to find the underlying reason that made the female protagonist became a consumerist. She used a Marxist Feminist as the theory to find all of the answers. The result stated that patriarchal society require the women to be beautiful. Answering the needs of the women, the producers made goods and marketing strategies that made the women trapped into hedonism and consumerism.

Other people from University of Sumatra Utara, Medan, named Nurhayani Siregar, had also discuss about this movie. She brought up a topic about main character analysis. She believed that the characteristic is a very trivial aspect in a movie. Understanding the character means knowing the reason of the action that Rebecca took as a shopaholic.

Needs theory

According to Maslow as quoted in Griffin, needs are classified in five categories. Each level of category have to be fulfilled and the society have to be fully satisfied with it before they can proceed to the higher level (2014 1).



The first basic needs the people have to satisfy with is of course food, shelter, and clothes. It is the basic of all the basic needs and include as an obligatory things, because we cannot live without eating. After the basic needs is already fulfilled they can ascend to the second level which is security. In this

level, people want to be able to feel freedom of fear and safe from any circumstances that occurred, which is the reason why they need law and order and security.

After those things are fulfilled, they ascend their need to the third level which is love and belongings. Here, people need to feel love and affection from their relationship with other people like family, friends, or colleague. It explains why people like to work with other people that they know before or have things in common, because they need to feel that they belong in the group or society. The last basic needs is the fourth level which is self-esteem. In this level people need to be acquired and respected by others. That is why people

usually show the best of them to other people because they need to be judge of what they show to the society. Prestige and status play important roles in this level of hierarchy. Like the issue the come up in the movie, Rebecca's needs of wearing fashionable things has moved from psychological needs to esteem needs. She does not only needs the clothes to satisfy the needs of covering the body but also to be acquired by other people that she belongs in society with high sense of fashion.

After those four level are satisfying enough, people are motivated to ascend to the highest needs. The highest of human needs or the ultimate goal is called self –actualization. Maslow described it as “the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (130). It is the level where people seek their potential after the lower needs is fulfilled.

Consumer

To understand what consumerism culture is about, we have to understand what the meaning of consumer as the subject of the issue is. Consumer is viewed as person who prefer to possess things than money. It is proven with the fact that nowadays having credit card is more preferable than having cash. Credit cards offer us effectiveness of life because with no cash we still can buy things, even though you still have the obligatory to pay when the bill is due or you will be charged with a large amount of interest. One simple example is buying I-phone. It is easy although you do not have enough money. You can use credit cards and pay it in credit for 12 months. Consumers focus on lifestyle and sense of well-being, so they only see money as the mean of payments. Consumer behaviour is actions that are directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of product and services, including the decision processes that precede and follow these actions (Enjel, Blackwell and Miniard 21)

Consumer is seen as the society that has affluent life and secure position in terms of money (Krugman 4). They are more in favour of life style rather than security. In this case lifestyle is something that developed consciously by the society according to individual preference in personal behaviour. It means that the society forms a certain lifestyle according to their liking. When the consumers cannot control their spending, it indicates that personal income is no longer a perimeter of the consumption. It happens because the effectiveness of using other media to consume things like credit card. This is the kind of freedom to be able to own something even though it is out of budget or more than the personal income. When someone wants to make a credit card, he has to fill the form stating his personal income each month so that the card company can decide the limitation of the card. People may be giving their fake personal income so that they may have lesser limits of the card. By doing that, they can consume more expensive products and afford higher lifestyle.

As the consumer begins to change vigorously in life style, the society begin to have different stereotype regarding consumerism. The consumer are being made to buy more than they actually needed. They unconsciously are persuaded to accept market offers.

Consumerism theory

According to Featherstone there are three main perspectives of things that influenced consumer. The first one is the perspective that the very existence of consumer culture is influenced by the increasing production of commodity in the form of things and places to shop. It means that the massive production lure people to buy some more, especially when the thing becomes a trend and everybody is using it. For example, apple products are always growing and evolving, sometimes the changes are not significant, they only focus in the quantity of the product. Because of the commodity is large the consumer keep consuming,

they may or may not know about the special application or the condition. According to Touraine as quoted in Featherstone, the increasing supply is equal with the demand and that condition makes the person in power have bigger chance to manipulate the culture and create a new symbol (2007 44).

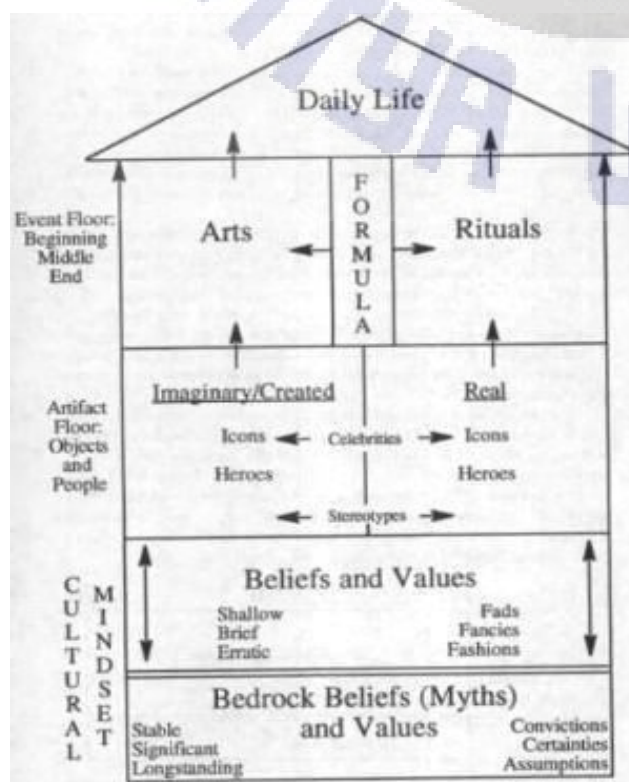
The second one is that consumer culture exists because of the satisfaction that consumers get after consuming things. The satisfaction includes social class status shown by the product they buy and use. According to Leiss, products are used as the justifier of people's social relation. The object's function is for prestige by exchanging the high price with the symbolic goods, e.g.: people use iphones because of its prestigious value, even though the company is over-charging us without offering any progress in its application. The more things are seen as a symbolic objet the more we lose our control over it. It is like a Hermes bag that is so expensive, owning it means we are financially accomplished. So, people keep consuming it. The products become the one that classify our social status. Larger commodity causes a non-stable status and hierarchy (Apparaduraiqtd in Featherstone 45).

The third one is that consumer culture exists because of the support of various consumption sites which bring pleasure to the buyer or consumer. The department store collects our dreams and imagination and reflects it as an industrial object (Morssqtd in Featherstone 54). In the department store every dream seems to be coming true. A store always looks nice, inviting people to come inside and finally buy the products. Not only stores, products like credit cards makes our world easier. We can buy things without actually having cash money.

Popular Culture

Before understanding the house of popular culture I would like to introduce what popular culture or “Americanization” culture is. Basically, popular means issue that still on going and it exists because of the society approves it (Strinati 21). Later on, the issue becomes society’s habit and finally becomes a culture. For example, the existence of social media like Instagram makes the society more narcissistic. They capture what they see and what they eat, even they capture themselves (take selfies) in every occasion. Narcissistic culture does not exist before the Instagram or any social media that encourages the society to be one.

House of Popular Culture theory



Popular culture is pictured as a house with two floors and basement (Lause and Nachbar 21). The basement is beliefs and values that controls and limits our perspective in determining what’s proper or not or good or bad. The basement is classified in 2 values, bedrock beliefs and values as the “base” of the

basement and beliefs and values at the top of it. The bedrock beliefs and values stable and long lasting, it has a significant character, taken from the mindset of the society and the members who belong to it. The beliefs and values are the one that can evolve and change with time. Both of them are the important aspect of our life so that people question and challenge it all the time. This beliefs and culture used in popular culture studies to see the factors or reason determining what society believe as the true things and how their beliefs are expressed and discussed, such as: people's mindset that commodity product is used to classify their identity whether they are financially successful or not.

The first floor is artifacts or the object or people that inspire the society to do certain things. They are accepted and approved by the masses as the reflection of the beliefs and values. Popular artifacts are categorized in several types, real icons and imaginary icons like credit cards which is the icon of freedom as Harry Potter's wizard wand which implies power and magic. Real heroes and imaginary heroes like Martin Luther who fight for African-American well-being in the darkest hour and Harry Potter who resurrected from the death and become the hero. There are also some types that cross over the boundaries because of their existence is between real and imaginary like celebrities and stereotype. Celebrities are real people but the image that they show is somehow created to make us believe they are different from us. Stereotypes are made to create fears and hatred of popular mindset. It is a way to group people with significant characteristics and a way to express beliefs and values.

The second floor is the arts and rituals. Rituals are symbolic events happened annually or continuously. Usually it means a symbol or a celebration of the society's shared beliefs and values. Even if the generations have no longer understand the meaning of doing the certain rituals, they will keep doing it until one of them question the rituals and change the beliefs and values. For example, voting in America. American people respect voting so much

because it represent the freedom of choosing their future leaders and democracy. The moments preceding the real voting like the campaign and debate usually become the big news. Rituals are derived from the icon and heroes. Whereas, arts are limitless and various, it can evolve and change vigorously. It is derived from cultural mindset, like a romance novel. Every writer like to sugar-coat the story that they write, they make it as beautiful and nice as possible. People need to get away from their same activity that happens every day, school or work, and then hangout. There are so few them who have interesting life that change every day and full of challenges. By reading the novels, somehow they enter a new world that feels so different with their daily activity. It is like a way out from the daily activity.

Lastly, the roof represents our daily life. The roof of a house has always be on the highest part of the house. It is similar with popular culture issue that is represented in our daily life, and everyone can see. Our daily life and what we do in our life is the reflection and image of the 3 floors below it. The movie “Confession of a Shopaholic” implies that what is seen by the society is an act of consumerism, it is like the roof of a house which can be seen by the naked eyes. The rest of the house represents the images, beliefs, and values that make Rebecca a consumerist. Although, Rebecca thinks that she is free to choose to believe or like or follow certain things, actually she just follow what society believes.

Research Methodology

The writer will use the movie entitled *Confession of a Shopaholic* to be analysed. The analysis is focused on the main character in the movie, Rebecca, who is pictured as a shopaholic woman. To begin with, the writer will analyse Rebecca’s needs that support her to be a consumerist using Maslow’s needs theory which implies that everyone has the same basic needs that grows well according to the society where a certain people belongs to. Then

the writer will use the consumerism theory to explain the consumer culture. It explains about the things that makes her becomes a consumerist. Lastly, the writer will use the house of popular culture to see the hidden motives that lead them to the act of consumerism.

Summary of the movie

The movie from the director, P.J. Hogan is a blockbuster movie that discuss about popular culture. Rebecca, the main character who is played by Isla Fisher, is trapped in the society that categorized consuming things as a primary needs. When she was a kid, Rebecca Bloomwood never had the chance to wear branded fashion items that her friends did. Her friends used to mock her because of things that she consumed was not categorized as popular in the society. It was because of her mother who focused on saving money. In contrast to her childhood household, she grew up as a shopaholic. She consumed goods that offer by the mannequin of the local shops and the word sale hung in the shop windows. It was her way of saying that she was not the same kid who was far from popular. She felt that stores and goods can enthusiast her. To fulfil her needs of shopping, she used credit card because apparently her income didn't cover her shopping expenses. The company that she worked in went bankrupt, she moved to Successful Saving money magazine run by Dantay West, after she was rejected as a fashion columnist by her dream magazine, Allete. In Successful Saving she became a successful columnist who gave financial advice, but in the real life, she had so much credit card debt. Her situation did not make her stop being a shopaholic. Every time a sale items came she bought it, for example the green scarf, that finally made her popular. Finally it trapped her in a condition where she had to choose between stopping consuming things and moving on with her life or not.

Rebecca's needs according to Maslow

From the first time the movie begins, Rebecca has shown a situation where she was being rejected by the society because of what she was wearing. Her mother bought her things that were necessary like shoes that will last for a really long time. Like what she said on the movie *"When I was a little girl there were real prices and mom prices"* (00.39). On the contrary, the society, consisting of her friends, did not approve that action and even laughed at her. It was proven by the fact that the rest of the girls buy shiny and beautiful shoes which lasted only for weeks before they bought the newest collection. Therefore, she became the strangest person in the group. Because of that, when she saw other shops that sell fashion items for older girl, she felt like seeing a different world. When she is older, she consumes so many things and becomes a shopaholic. Even though she runs out of money and has credit card debt, she still tries to consume things that she wants. According to the Maslow's hierarchy of need, Rebecca's basic need which is to have shelter, food, and clothes have been already fulfilled. However, the demand to meet the security of being proper in her group, turn her into to a shopaholic.

Rebecca's feeling of security means that she needs to physically and emotionally stable. That is why she has twelve credit card which is a symbol of freedom. When she was younger she saw older girls consume goods without paying by cash. She said *"They didn't need any money, she has magic cards"* (01.23). Rebecca used to think that credit card is a magic card and she wanted it so that she could consume it. By having credit card she can be free to consume anything she wants. A credit card does not only mean as a tool to consume things but also a valuable asset that can free her from her childhood issue which force her to wear unfashionable things and make her a target of her friends mockery.

After the safety needs are fulfilled, she urged for belonging needs. This implies her needs to be socially accepted by the society. She consume goods everyday not only to cover her body but also to be seen by other people as proof that she is no longer the child with no sense of fashion. She even thinks that not wearing beautiful clothes means becoming like her mother who thinks so much about saving and does not care of fashion. *“Who needs a scarf? Just put a jeans around your neck that will be warm. That’s what your mother would do”* (05.06). She has improved from her childhood condition. She thinks that she does not need boyfriend because her affection to store and goods are enough to fulfil her needs of love. *“A man never loves you and treat you as well as a store”* (02.24).

Her needs grows to the esteem needs which make her consume more so that she will get respect from the others and also feel prestigious. Like what she says to herself *“You would walk to Allete with confident and poised. The girl in the green scarf”* (05.44). It is proven in one of the scene, before she went to an interview, she allocated time to buy a really nice green scarf so that she would be confident during the interview at a fashion magazine. She needs to be acquired by the society, to feel that she belongs to the group. Not only that, she has already set her goal to work at Allete magazine, the most famous fashion magazine that has been her inspiration since 14 years old, as a columnist. The editor of the magazine named Allete Naylor who has high fashion sense is rather a difficult person to be impressed. For that reason before meeting her in a party, Rebecca buys goods so that Allete will notice her. *“I’m gonna go and impress Allete Naylor, all I have to do is buy a new dress”* (51.45). It is a proof that she keeps consuming goods to be respected by Allete and also people who work in that magazine. Even though she had already have too many clothes, bags, and shoes, she still needs to consume more goods to feel confident.

At first Rebecca shows that she is not yet satisfied with her esteem need because of the fact that she keeps consuming even though clothes bags and shoes are piling up in her closet. However, at the end of the movie, she changes her behaviour because of her debt. In the movie she admitted that she was a shopaholic and all the mistakes that she had done by saying *“I’m a shopaholic, I destroyed my career in national television, I lied to the man I love, I hurt my best friend, I pretended to be stalked, I don’t even speak Finish”* (84.29). After that she sold everything she had to pay her debt. This is a proof that she becomes more than she was before. She is more mature and know how to cope with her problems. She is free from her debt and can allocate some time to do actual work and knowledge like learning Finish language, have a relationship with her boyfriend, and becomes a columnist in her boyfriend’s magazine. *“It’s amazing what you have time to do when you’re not shopping. For example, I actually learn Finish, and instead having relationship with my credit card, I have relationship with someone who loves me back, and never declines me”* (95.31)

Rebecca’s consumer culture

As a person who likes shopping so much, Rebecca refuses to be called a shopaholic. She even denies the fact that she consumes unnecessary things. Her friend Suze tries to help her and put her in shopaholic intervention. In the first session, she still does not admit that she is a shopaholic. She tells everybody that what is wrong with being a person who likes shopping, *“I like shopping, is there anything so wrong with that? Stores are put there to be enjoyed and the experience is enjoyable”* (54.29). She also brings up the issue of credit card function that help people get what they want and consume more. As a part of society which are consumers, Rebecca does a very good job. She fits to the criteria of a consumer which is pictured as a person who focus on the lifestyle and sense of well-being. She had a job as a

columnist at *Gardening Today* before she moves to *Successful Saving*. She hated the job so much, but when the company went bankrupt, she felt sad because it was her only income. “*My income Suze. I need my income*” (12.59). It tells us that she does not see her job as something important, but the salary she gets from her company is the one that matter the most. Without the salary means she does not have any income. Without an income she cannot consume things she wants.

Rebecca’s consumerist behaviour resembles the theory of consumer culture by Featherstone which proposed three main perspective (2007 29). The first one is the perspective that the very existence of consumer culture is influenced by the increasing production of commodity in the form of things and places to shop. It means that the massive production lure people to buy some more. It is similar to Rebecca’s case which implies that she is interested with everything that draped across the mannequin. “*Sheen of silk draped across the mannequin, smell of new Italian leather shoes*” (54.49). The more goods being displayed at the store’s window, lure more people to come and consume what the store offers, especially when the word sale is shown, the consumers are lined up to get what they wanted. Just like most of people, Rebecca shows the same consumerist behaviour. Whenever she sees goods displayed in the mannequin, she will go straight to the store, especially when there is a sale in the store she will not think twice to go to the store and consume things. She does not even know if she needs the goods but eventually she will buy it since it is cheaper than the original price. Hence the stores lure Rebecca to consume more and become a shopaholic.

The second perspective discusses about satisfaction that consumers get after consuming things in terms of prestige and social class status. Rebecca’s needs of esteem has grown into a consumer culture. She thinks that wearing such kind of fashion items and creating her own style are proofs that she belongs to the society. She does not implicitly

states that she consumes goods especially branded item for the sake of her prestige but she shows it in the way she shops. Whenever there's a sale of branded items she gets excited and buys it even though she does not know what she really needs. At the beginning of the movie, her childhood friends bought beautiful and sparkling shoes, whereas she bought only brown things. She felt so sad that she could only afford to consume unfashionable shoes and was not accepted by the society. Her friends were laughing at her. It is similar to her needs of affection that implies her longing to be accepted in the society. After she becomes a shopaholic and wears beautiful clothes, shoes, and bags, she feels confident. She believes that she is accepted by the society and have a higher social class status. It can be seen by how she acted as she walked on the street like a model walking on a stage, showing a stream confidence.

The third perspective of consumer culture discuss about support of various consumption sites which bring pleasure to the buyer or consumer. Rebecca implies that the function of credit card is to help people to consume things without actually having cash. She can buy fashionable items without having to worry about the cash she brings. When she was a child she saw the older girls consume things using their credit cards and she wanted one, but after she grew older she has too many credit cards to uphold her lifestyle of consuming things. *"Little did I know I would end up with twelve (credit card)"* Using credit card is very convenient at the beginning, which is why she adores credit card so much. Her belongings from head to toe are acquired using many kinds of credit card. Not only that, the credit card company provides many offers and discount, so that the consumer feels that they get the benefit of it and consume so much more. The offers like *cashbacks* are alluring, because it is similar to shopping discount even though the things that we buy is not on sale. Rebecca uses it to buy branded things. Not only credit cards, the stores that are located everywhere also gives some sort of convenience to the society. Whenever she walked in the street and see the

word *sale* or *new arrival* the basic instinct will be to go to the stores and see the goods. Eventually, it will built the sense of consuming especially if the offers are captivating. Rebecca is caught in the stores' advertisement. Everywhere she walks, she will stick her eyes on the stores' window that show beautiful goods and many kind of offers. Unconsciously, she goes to the store and starts consuming goods.

Rebecca's hidden motives of her consumerist behaviour

Rebecca's consumerist behaviour can be explained by understanding her needs and also the outer influence that support her act of consumerism. People have different kinds of needs and the needs can explain the action that people do. Even though there are many variety of needs, they are still being controlled by the society. By understanding the outer influence, we can see that the society is lured into a consumerist by the producers or the issuers. Without a large commodity and the availability of stores, the society will not have a desire to consume many things.

Using the house of popular culture, we can analyse the hidden motives of the act of consumerism. Rebecca's behaviour as a consumerist is pictured as the roof of a house. It indicates that the behaviour of consumerism is the one that can be seen by the society just like the roof of a house which stand the tallest, so everyone can see it. It is Rebecca's action that appear in her daily life that is visualized as the roof of house of popular culture.

Below the roof is the second floor which consist of arts and rituals. Art and rituals concern about the things done by the society to support the act of consumerism. The society makes the idea of shopping things an obligatory need. It is true that people need to consume

basic things in a way to survive, however the things that we need is being mixed with the things we want. The society creates the illusion that shopping is a lifestyle that is important to be followed and the producers take advantage of that fact to increase the quantity of the goods and display them so that the consumer will see and have the urge to buy it. Rebecca continuously goes shopping every day, although she does not really need the thing she buy. It happens because she thinks that going shopping is a common things and a form of lifestyle. The art is something derived from cultural belief as a way to escape from the life routine. Rebecca has the same routine as a columnist in *Gardening Today* magazine, so she shops to feel a different world. She says, *"Because when I shop the world gets better, the world is better. And then it's not anymore and I need to do it again"* (73.31). It implies that by doing shopping she finds her gate away from her routine.

Below the second floor is the first floor that discuss about the icon that support society's act of consumerism. The icons can be anyone, from imaginary to real. In the movie, Rebecca adore credit card so much because it helps her to consume more product. Credit card itself is seen as a symbol of human freedom, because by using credit card people will not have to worry to be consumptive, even though later the users have to face the fact that they still have to pay the debt. Rebecca knew very well about the consequences she even said so to herself *"Rebecca, you just got a credit card bill \$900, you do not need a scarf"* (04.57). However, she chose to ignore it and still buy the scarf. She did not think of the long term effect of over using credit card. She just cared of the fact that using her credit card means she can own the things she wants. Based on Rebecca's behaviour we understand that, credit card is the tool to fulfil society needs of shopping. Even Allete Naylor, the editor of *Allete* magazine admitted the use of credit card. She said *"In Allete we print the price very small, and after all, what are credit cards for"* (82.34). She expressed the idea of freedom that indeed having a credit card helps society to be free to consume more goods.

Of course a house will not be a house without the basement that keeps the building together. This idea represents society belief and values which is the foundation of everything done by the society. Therefore, beliefs and values discuss about what makes society do what they do that can be seen in the rooftop of the house. Beliefs and values usually is approved by all of the society, so one group of people share the same beliefs and values. Based on the movie and also earlier explanation about needs and consumerism, we can understand the reason that makes Rebecca becomes a shopaholic. Her needs that always grows suggest that being satisfied with basic needs is not enough. The society is judgemental, unconsciously it requires her to be fashionable so that she can be accepted in the society. The society needs of every people is different, it depends on how they contemplate society's beliefs.

In Rebecca's case, she takes the society's stereotype on how they judge people as a guidance to be a fashionable. It is supported by the prestigious feels she got after consuming certain goods. The society assume that owning goods somehow shows her financial stability and how much you can afford. Fortunately, even though Rebecca is not financially stable, she still can count on the credit card that uses as a form of payment. From the discussion, we can draw the lines that she has hidden motivation to be accepted and also respected by the society. The society share the ideas that people is considered wealthy from the things they can afford to buy. Since she was a child, the false judgement done by the society has already existed and it still happens until she is older. So, she has to do anything so that the society see her as a growing person with a high sense of fashion. Finally, the society gave her respect by how people stared at them when she walked on the street. Not only that, she even got job offer because the receptionist liked her scarf and how she dressed.

Conclusion

When people say, *what is your motivation to do this kind of thing?* The answer will be *I do this to be this or that*. However, to answer the question of hidden motive, we need to know the reason why people do this or that. In Rebecca's case, the inner motivation that makes her a shopaholic is because of her needs that always grows from the basic need to self-actualization. From consuming clothes as a part of basic needs, to owning credit card to feel secure to consume more clothes. Then, her needs grows again to be accepted in the society, to feel that she belongs to the society. After that, she need to be respected by the society, before the self-actualization needs appears. The second reason is because the environment support her to be a shopaholic. The companies keep producing more and more goods, the payment is easier, and the society creates a symbol that states consuming more goods means prestigious feeling and higher social class status. After knowing the reasons why Rebecca ends up as a shopaholic, we can understand her hidden motives that is to be accepted and respected by the society.

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