Thinking Small: The Volkswagen Beetle in History and Educational Pedagogy

James D. Armstrong

The College at Brockport

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/ehd_theses

Part of the Education Commons

To learn more about our programs visit: http://www.brockport.edu/ehd/

Repository Citation

http://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/ehd_theses/36

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Education and Human Development at Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in Education and Human Development Master’s Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact kmyers@brockport.edu.
Thinking Small: 
The Volkswagen Beetle in history and educational pedagogy

by

James D. Armstrong
January 1, 2011

A thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of the State University of New York College at Brockport in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education
Thinking Small:
The Volkswagen Beetle in history and educational pedagogy

by

James D. Armstrong

Approved by:

Advisor

Date

Director, Graduate Studies

Date
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page ...................................................................................................................... 1

Signature Page .............................................................................................................. 2

Table of Contents .......................................................................................................... 3

Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 4-6

Part I. Historiography .................................................................................................... 7-33

Part II. Original Research .............................................................................................. 34-53

Part III. Application and Educational Research .......................................................... 54-102
Material wealth often defines prominence in the United States. Among such affluence are automobiles, which make their way to the forefront of peoples’ identities and serve as status symbols for all to see. For over a century automobiles have taken on all shapes and sizes, transforming themselves to meet the needs of the public and absorbing mainstream cultural demands. The fins and chrome of Detroit’s gas-guzzling beauties crowded driveways and newly established highway systems in 1950s America. Owning a car became associated with the “American Dream” which soon bolstered a new age of consumerism and global influence. Within ten years a “small” surprise transformed into a well-known fixture in American culture. Americans warmly embraced the German-born (and once Adolf Hitler-supported) Volkswagen (VW) Type I--Kdf-Wagen---Beetle---Bug. No one could foresee the impact the “Beetle” would have as a practical, utilitarian form of transportation, let alone an American icon in the form of a diminutive two-door sedan with a German company’s name at its helm. By investigating what historians (and enthusiasts) have researched, perhaps one event could be singled out as the turning point of successful German automotive engineering on United States soil. The Volkswagen Beetle’s triumph has often been attributed to a number of sources. The first was the influence of Adolf Hitler’s demands for a German “Volk-Wagen” or “people’s car” to advance nationalism, and his own economic and political agendas. The second was the insight and developmental parameters of Dr. Ferdinand Porsche, creator of the versatile engineering designs that would make the car into an iconic superstar. The third was the post World War II existence of the Volkswagen factories and production equipment, thanks to the swift actions of British army officer Major Ivan Hirst. A fourth element was the contemporary advertising under
the direction of the Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) agency to bring the Beetle to the masses via statistical research, graphic design, and a keen desire to communicate to the public using a new methodologies. The last milestone in Volkswagen’s success can be measured by its social dominance across the country. “Beetlemania” originated from the nonconformist design that allowed for the car to be maintained by owners themselves, to the reported durability that would bring hundreds of thousands of miles, to the cult following of Herbie the Love Bug. By the 1960s, the Volkswagen Beetle had begun to transform itself into an American pastime. Deeply researched history regarding the Volkswagen or the inception of the Type I (Beetle) is difficult to come by. However, a wealth of books have been compiled on the history of the Volkswagen Beetle, the earliest of these dating back to the 1960s. With the Beetle’s increasing popularity among enthusiasts during the 1980s and 1990s, a number of people began their research and released their books. Much of the historical information on the automobile and company come from the hobbyist sphere. Many of the books are therefore thought of as being written without much analysis, and with an extremely positive bias and tone— but not so. Those who were a part of the Beetle’s livelihood, that is, those working as engineers, factory employees, or soldiers during and after World War II, offer much to the texts that have been written. Although much of the Beetle’s history was lost during the occupation of Germany, and other components are disorganized and un-translated in the archives of the Volkswagen company itself, writers seem to find what they are looking for. Pilgrimages to the fatherland and German fluency seem like a necessity in order to find resources among German motorcar magazines and old racing literature, but American authors seem to follow the right avenues as well. The market place is teeming with
books which recall personal stories and tribulations of owners, or production year
differences in great detail. Publishers and writers alike have chosen books that will help
hobbyists effectively bid on Ebay, perform do-it-yourself shade-tree mechanics, and
understand the essence and history of the car. The Volkswagen Beetle’s literature has
certainly become a part of the culture it has created.
As Adolf Hitler looked to strengthen the Germany he helped raise from the ashes of the Great Depression, he too, looked to punish the world for the atrocities of World War One (WWI), most notably the stipulations set forth in the Treaty of Versailles. At the time that western forces began to “appease” the great leader, Hitler embarked on a new kind of project within his great country. Hitler’s personal motivations and drive put things in motion which ultimately lead to his suicide, the fall of Germany, and the export of the Volkswagen in the United States. Karl Ludvigsen in, *Battle for the Beetle*, documented in-depth stories of the pre- and post-war “battles” for the Porsche-designed car that became an icon for generations around the globe. Ludvigsen has a background in the automotive world, facilitated by his training and experience as a mechanical engineer and industrial designer. He has worked with the General Motors, Ford, and Fiat, and serves as a technical writer for a variety of publications. Karl Ludvigsen’s range of background allowed for his in-depth analyses and interpretations of events with an array of research that included plentiful details from both primary and secondary sources.

“When Hitler’s top aides could not find him, he could always be found near automobiles, a passion of his from his youth. Cars were an obsession with him,” said his foreign press attaché Ernst Hanfstaengel.\(^1\) Hitler believed that enhanced motorization should be a major goal of his once he became Chancellor of Germany in 1933. It was of no surprise then that in a speech at the opening of the Berlin Autoshow on February 11, 1933, that Hitler laid his mental groundwork for his projects to come. “He set out the guidelines of a mass mobilization of Germany: tax abatements for car buyers, the building of the

---

Autobahns, repeal of the obligatory driving school, and encouragement of the motorsport.”

Hitler and his associates debated on whether or not to hold a prize competition for the design for the new “people’s car” or to search for an outstanding engineer/designer. One designer held standing in Germany in 1933 and was admired by Adolf Hitler---his name was Ferdinand Porsche. Upon their first meeting Hitler surprised Porsche with the recollection of their previous introduction, which took place in 1926 at a German Grand Prix race. Hitler then focused on the task at hand, and after feeling sufficiently briefed, ended the meeting with compliment: “You will hear from me.”

Karl Ludvigsen recognized that Volkswagen historians know—and enthusiasts have experienced—Hitler’s goals for a car that could fit three children and two adults, a car that is proper and turns heads, but is not too fanciful.

Lastly, The Battle for the Beetle looked at a number of Beetle history myths, including one in which Ford and other automakers were not at all interested in Ferdinand Porsche’s innovative automobile. On the contrary, the Beetle was seen as a serious threat to British and French automakers whose own small car plans, and capacity, were lesser in comparison. Henry Ford’s son may have been wrong to believe, after his first drive in a Beetle, that the car had no market in the U.S., but he saw the car and its factory as an asset worth having in Europe. Ford had dispatched his international operations to purchase controlling interest in VW in order to merge the rebuilt Ford of Germany with VW. At the same time, however, Britain’s auto industry was working to dismantle VW completely, fearing strong competition.

---

2 ibid., 2.

3 ibid., 8.
Karl Ludvigsen’s forward for *Battle for the Beetle*, was written by Ivan Hirst. Major Ivan Hirst spent four years at the Wolfsburg factory after World War II taking on the responsibility of managing the Volkswagen. Many authors credited him as the single most important element in the Volkswagens livelihood. The late Major Hirst helped restart the production of the Beetle after the partial deconstruction of the factory from Allied bombing. Accordingly, the author’s prestige in his writing was acknowledged when Hirst said, “I feel in some measure qualified to commend on Karl Ludvigsen’s book…he has skillfully rendered a highly factual account based on extensive and through research in which much of the material presented has never been published.” When the book was published in the year 2000, Ludvigsen set the bar for what would be expected in the forwards of other Volkswagen histories.

Although much was covered about the Volkswagen in *Battle for the Beetle*, Chris Barber’s *Birth of the Beetle* provided a unique record of the car’s early evolution and contained many rare photographs and production drawings. Barber is unique in that he is not only a Volkswagen historian, but also an English teacher and hobbyist. According to the book’s jacket, Barber has driven air-cooled Volkswagens for forty years and still owns a Beetle for everyday use. Like Ludvigsen, Chris Barber is fluent in German, and without a language barrier to contend with and ties in the automotive world, he was granted access to the early designs, drawings, minutes of meetings, and politics surrounding the Volkswagen’s origins.

Barber’s book was intriguing from cover to cover, and is written more like a story than a list of compiled research. His investigations were validated in his books’

---

4 ibid., 7.
dedication and forward to men whose lives advanced the Volkswagen. Authenticity comes from Barber’s discussions into detail the history of the Volkswagen from men who had actually driven the first prototypes, sometimes including Ferdinand Porsche himself. He thanked Ghislane Kaes, nephew and personal secretary to Ferdinand Porche, with whom Barber researched. Undoubtedly having a primary source like Kaes helped Barber not only infuse his work with never-before-seen data, drawings, pictures and quotes, but also gave him further avenues of research and clearance from the Porsche/Volkswagen company. Barber’s second thank you went out to the late Heinz-Willi Lottermann, world renown hobbyist and automotive restorer who orchestrated one of the world’s most acclaimed Volkswagen car shows in Germany, Bad Camberg. It is interesting to see Barber link two ends of the Volkswagen spectrum, a “blood” relative of the Porsche family who saw the Volkswagen come to life, and another who brought Beetles back to life in restoration and connected people from continents around the globe to celebrate their love for their cars. Aside from the dedications, Birth of the Beetle has its forward written by engineer Herbert Kaes. Kaes was the last surviving engineer/member of Porsche’s team that helped develop and test-drive the pre-war Volkswagen Beetle. Where other books mentioned Kaes in passing as the name of a test driver, Barber used Kaes as a “connection between Porsche, the man, his Type 60 (the Volkswagen) and the further development of the Porsche Type 356.”

Birth of the Beetle discussed the submission of Porsche’s ideas about a people’s car to the German government and auto industry in 1934 and concluded with the end of

---

the war. Barber covered all the struggles, the many variations of the car, and depicted how Porsche and his collaborators came up with the final version of the Beetle. These topics have been researched in other books, but Barber added a new perspective in detail. Ferdinand Porsche is often discussed as the engineering genius that only made the designs for the Beetle because Hitler demanded. In fact, “the Volkswagen was not Ferdinand Porsche’s first small car design—indeed it was his eighth attempt.”

*Birth of The Beetle* emphasized the early years at Porsche’s helm, and Chris Barber was able to reconstruct the process of design, development, building, and finally testing of the early versions of the Volkswagen prototype vehicles. “With the information gained from many hours of spent in the [Porsche] archives...most of the design blueprints have been linked to photographs of the actual vehicle.”

Although the book can be praised in many arenas, the author’s details and focus on Porsche’s principals allowed him to achieve many objectives. Hitler often overshadows Porsche in history, and the great engineer seemed like a pawn in many other books on the same topic. Barber took a different approach when he focuses on the *Exposé* written by Ferdinand Porsche on January 17, 1934. Ferdinand Porsche wrote not only about his construction of a “German People’s Car,” but foreshadowed the economic successes that the little car could bring. Porsche compared his future intentions to that of a radio receiver. “The so-called Volksradio has shown how important a product is if high quality can be united with an extremely low price. Such a high number of these Volksradios have been sold within a short period of time that the desired aims—to bring a

---

6 ibid, 7.

7 ibid, 9.
radio within the reach of everybody and at the same time to produce so many new jobs to
the domestic economy-has been exceeded buy a high margin."8 In his opinion, a people’s
car, or Volkswagen, should be fully adequate and reliable automobile, low in weight and
with “foolproof equipment.” It was to be fast with a powerful engine able to propel the
car speedily over any mountain pass. The seating layout should provide excellent
comfort and all this was to come at a low price. The design brief set improbable
demands, however, it resulted in a milestone car with an unforgettable rounded shape.
Soon after the Expose, Porsche wrote another paper, Thoughts about the German
Volkswagen. In it “reference was made to the success of the ‘Tin Lizzie’ in the USA,
based on huge sales, such that other manufacturers could not touch the Model T for
price.”9 With lessons learned from the American assembly lines, practically from scratch
the Volkswagen would prove to be a huge leap forward in automotive history. None of
the Beetle’s design principals were in themselves completely new: a modern streamline
all-steel body, torsion bar suspension, a tough and economical rear-mounted engine and
rear-wheel drive. However Porsche’s office fashioned a functional combination of these
elements, which was a breath of fresh air in the motoring world of the day. This
marrying of concepts with fanatical attention to design detail gave rise to both a
revolutionary and timeless vehicle.

Beside the new information and Porsche perspective founded in this book, much
of the book is adorned with supplemental pictures that have never been seen, and have
now been reproduced in a high definition of quality. During an Easter family trip

8 ibid., 312.
9 ibid., 15.
Ferdinand Porsche and his cousin drove two prototypes and took a number of photos if both the hardtop and cabriolet sedans. A story found in every Volkswagen history book is that of a test driver running into huge stag on the Autobahn. Although the car’s front end was ultimately destroyed the car still had the ability to drive under its own power to the main facility at Stuttgart. Making this story more striking in Birth of the Beetle is the image never before seen before of the test car when it got back to the garage. A half page image layout showed the precise details as no attempts have been made to compress the picture or cut out details. The Beetle had a considerable amount of body damage. The front axle was destroyed, the front apron and hood were peeled up and both fenders were heavily damaged as well. Even more dazzling was the fact that the car took five days to complete all the repairs and the car ran reliably again. Aside from the countless other test photos, military action photos, and vehicle schematics, the most interesting photos come in the forms of maps simple shots of the Beetle test prototypes. The prototypes were put through rigorous testing and on the spot improvements. While the testing was going on the “people’s car” was a mystery to the German people. The cars were driven on back roads and through forested trails. Chris Barber displayed this not only with photos in a variety of scenarios and locations but also the miles clocked in each car and elevation maps that depicted the ability of the Beetle to handle more hilly terrain and an assortment of climate changes. In a majority of the test photos the cars had been hidden in barns, had tarps put over them, and even had their lights blacked out

10 ibid., 10 & 57.

11 ibid., 83.

during daytime driving. It is not unclear whether or not Porsche laid the groundwork for such undertakings, as he would also claim creator to such techniques. In comparison to the present day methods of automotive testing, whether it is American or foreign, compact or sports car, automobile companies carry out the same procedures of cross country drives, and attention to ambiguity in public.

The last, and truly “first” historical book on the creation of Volkswagen and the Beetle is Walter Henry Nelson’s, Small Wonder: The Amazing Story of the Volkswagen Beetle, the most successful book of all time on the Beetle, having been the first historical account of the Beetle published in 1965. Noted in many other VW books, Small Wonder was a complimentary gift from Volkswagen dealers in the United States to their patrons in the 1970s. More importantly, Small Wonder is often quoted as the go-to source by many subsequent histories. Walter Henry Nelson gave a highly detailed account of the Beetle’s development and success filled with numerous personal tributes and valuable insights. Small Wonder provided readers with a better understanding of the Beetle’s “cult car” status that will be further analyzed in this historiography. It is amazing how well written and researched the book was seeing that Nelson did not have the Internet and e-mail connections that today’s modern writers have at their disposals. He also had no other authors before him to base his writings on which made him a true pioneer in the field.

The most important connection that Nelson made is in his eleventh chapter appropriately named “Volkscloreh’.” This chapter shared a focus that is the content of a majority of Volkswagen books that are written today. Never before had a car elicited such a social response from Americans and others around the world since the Model A
Ford. The Beetle’s shape, structure, and name went from obscurity to world status in under twenty years. With the appeal of Volkswagens are the stories of VWs that float and fly and compete in rally races. The development of car clubs and an unexpected “snob” appeal is another topic of focus. Such stories have added to the legendary exploits of the little Bug:

“A raging flood swept Mrs. Mabel Stevenson’s Volkswagen down Palmer Canyon...when the torrential rains had stopped a wall of water had tumbled it down a stream bed for a quarter of a mile. [With the storm over] she open both doors and recalled that the interior was bone dry and undamaged. All the windows were in perfect condition and [she] was sure she could have ridden down the canyon. Neighbors who saw it said that it rode the water like a little ship.”

It is no surprise to those who have owned or have worked on a Beetle that a Volkswagen has a degree of “seaworthiness.” The sheet metal floor pan halves are welded to the vehicle’s frame, and a rubber gasket firmly seals the body and pan together. To prove the truth of an article titled “The Beetle Does Float” Sports Illustrated lowered a Beetle into a body of water in Florida where it “remained on the surface for 29 minutes and 12 seconds.”

It is of course on dry land that the Beetle had been tested to outperform other cars. Not only had Porsche tested the car to meet stringent requirements, but military vehicles, too, had been tried and qualified on the battlefields of World War II—more specifically on the African front.

---

13 ibid., 244.
14 ibid., 245.
Walter Henry Nelson continued to enthral readers with stories like Hans Kriess, who had driven his VW Beetle along the notorious Skeleton Coast and through the Namib Desert of South Africa. "It is unbelievable what it stood up to. The Volkswagen carried twenty-two gallons of extra petrol, emergency water rations, a complete camera outfit, a tent and all personal effects of the crew, cooking utensils, storage, et cetera...she did not give me any trouble whatsoever."\(^{15}\) It seemed to be this kind of performance under grueling conditions that helped popularize the VW further around the world. The Beetle’s design went on to win further off road races and lengthily road rallies.

Understanding the fads of the past allow us to understand the "Volkslore" we see presently in the world. Nelson noted that Volkswagen Beetles in the 1960’s saw a good number of fads across universities begin. Students crammed into Volkswagens like they had previously done in telephone booths. The goal of course was to set a record, and then break it time and time again. Another game that had been created was the "Volkstote." "The competition involves carrying a VW one hundred feet and then racing it back to the stating position, with all the bearers having to get inside the car for the drive back. Its present [record] location in the world is questionable, as is the permanence of the fad."\(^{16}\) Still the Beetle benefited from societal stories beyond obscure parlor tricks and games that were making themselves norms.

Outside the university life, the Beetle saw a great deal of "reverse snobbery." Royalty, politicians, and movie stars drove along in Beetles instead of the previously selected Rolls-Royce, Mercedes-Benz, or Jaguar. The Beetle found itself as a status

\(^{15}\) ibid., 247.  
\(^{16}\) ibid., 252.
symbols far beyond what Hitler imagined as his “people’s car.” “In Rochester, New York, Del Ray told reader of the Times-Union that a woman was seen wearing a mink stole and riding in an automobile driven by a uniformed chauffeur arrived at the Eastman Kodak theater the other day. That’s not very unusual, even in the informal Great Society. But the car the uniformed chauffeur was driving was a Volkswagen---and you’ve got to admit that’s different!” 17 VW owners had become a classification of owners that on a whole were different. Whether it was to keep up with the Joneses, to find a dependable and affordable automobile, or to show oneself as an intellectual snob, the VW Beetle had ingrained itself in the world.

The last element that Nelson focused on, citing specific examples throughout his analysis was that of the Volkswagen advertising. After shopping around different agencies Volkswagen decided on the Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) agency. DDB used honest advertising to showcase the Beetle. The advertisements have since been characterized as “excellent, witty, sophisticated, delightful, truthful, to the point, informative, unique, and cute.” 18 They never sought to attack the competition found at Detroit by American automakers. Not only were those companies well established, but DDB realized that their advertising would show the Beetle in a negative light. With humor and honesty in mind, they canvassed Volkswagen owners for ideas and toured the factories and dealerships for ideas.” This effort was not always welcomed at first, even in the ranks of the Volkswagen organization in the field. Some VW dealers complained

---

17 ibid., 254.

18 ibid., 226.
that the ads did not say ‘Buy one today!’ To that, the company answered back that every one of these ads said preciously that---without saying it at once." Nelson gives a thorough investigation into how responsible the ads were for the Volkswagen’s growth in the United States. He makes numerous examples of how the DDB agency contributions were significant to sales in the United States, coupled with the quality standards of the VW on U.S. soil. Nelson undoubtedly believes that the “original” advertising helped people appreciate the Beetle’s merits and accelerated its success.

No other book since “Small Wonder” has done the Doyle Dane Bernbach agency justice in showing their part in the rise of the Volkswagen in America. In 1982 (fourth addition in 2008), authors David Abbott, Alfredo Marcantonio, and John O’Driscoll, brought into vision what Walter Henry Nelson printed about the DDB agency. 

Remember those great VW ads? looked briefly at the birth of the car, and spotlighted the DDB campaign. The ads went on to make the VW Beetle a bestseller and have done a similar job for this book as all three earlier editions seem to be sold out in online bookstores and other copies have become something of a collectors’ item, holding top dollar. In 1959 the Doyle Dane Bernbach not only handled the VW account in the United States, the advertisements they produced changed the face of advertising---not just in America but across the world. A fact confirmed by the appearance of the cover ad “Lemon” in an episode of the A&E series MAD MEN that showed main character Don Draper and his advertising company discussing the campaign’s merits: [Looking at the VW ad] “No chrome, no horsepower, foreign, ugly. I guess they went with their

---

 strengths.” Advertising is a world where cutting edge ideas can make or break a company. The advertising of the Volkswagen was transformed from being Hitler’s strange looking car into an American icon and household name. After examining the picture ads with Walter Henry Nelson’s analysis in mind one cannot doubt the influence advertising has over a nation of consumers. The Volkswagen ads Doyle Dane Bernbach created in New York and London raised the bar to a height and no car campaign since has matched it’s breakthrough qualities. For Volkswagen, their spot-on honesty helped sell cars for more than two decades.

“No sooner had the campaign started running than advertising industry researchers found that the ads were getting unusually high readership. The acid test, which assessed whether or not the ads were selling cars, came soon enough when Detroit’s big guns launched their ‘compacts.’ Within 24 months of these new, smaller cars being launched by Ford, GM, and Chrysler, the US sales of imported cars plummeted. From a high of more than 614,000 vehicles in 1960 they fell to less than 340,000 within 24 months. Unbelievably, VW sales were unaffected. In fact they rose, reaching 200,000 in 1962.”

Obviously those extra sales were not due solely to DDB’s campaign, but it is equally clear that the car’s advertising played a part. Most VW customers probably went to dealer showrooms with the headline of the latest ad on their minds and others.

---

It should come as no surprise that in our recent economic recession VW advertising is taking Americans away from the present and into the cultural and advertising past. “Max,” a 1964 Volkswagen Beetle, is the spokesperson for the automaker’s recent ad campaign. The Bug’s iconic shape is an instant attention-getter, and many Americans remember that Beetles were cheap to buy and even cheaper to keep running. Clearly, VW’s ad campaign has the best in mind for their company, but it is all a huge mistake. The ad actually reminds people of what VW used to be—and should be, but is not. Other than making a series of cars and trucks that look appealing to buyers, as well as offering great incentive plans, the ad highlights the fact that VW still does not know where or what they want to be in the US market. Until Volkswagen returns to the characteristics that made it great in the first place, they will continue to fail in America and state their new claim—“Drivers Wanted.” It is one thing to celebrate the past. It is another to do so while ignoring its lessons and failing the test ratings of almost every automotive magazine.

In the mid-1990s the literature of Volkswagens changed. The market places of VW books claimed to all have the Beetle’s most in-depth history. Sadly, many of the books barely scratch the surface in terms of the books previously discussed. Magazine articles and editorials have always been popular with Beetles owners and hobbyists. Therefore, a strong correlation can be drawn between the readers of these magazines and the writing styles of more recent “Bug books.” Today’s Volkswagen text is strongly paralleled to the writing found in magazine entries. Whoever couples this strategy with the most obscure facts and photos seems to sell the most books. *Birth of a Beetle* for instance is a solidly written story with expert interview data, vivid pictures, and the
author's ability to have and support his own thesis. This book is carried by few suppliers and sells for less than its retail. In stark contrast, however, Bob Cropsey's book *Volkswagen---History to Hobby: All the Facts All the Fun* retails for $24.95 and sold out in most retailers. A popular online shopping site has copies of the book starting at $115 used. It is through further text analyses that one realizes that the bulk of today's historical information on the Beetle and the VW Company come from the hobbyist sphere.

*History to Hobby* opens unlike its historically motivated counterparts. Rather than an intriguing forward or preface, Bob Cropsey handwrote instead "*I hope you enjoy my book---Bob Cropsey*" in blue pen on inside cover of the book. It is unknown whether or not this is done as a gimmick in all the books, or if the signature was a sincere gesture to his customers. The book continues to go forward with an in-depth background of the author's years owning and restoring Volkswagens. It ends with "[Bob] has spent years compiling information for his book. So please enjoy his work"22 Within two flips of the page the terms "enjoy the book" have been administered. Before moving further, a comparison of sources had to be done. The other authors noted previously, who had not claimed to have the most extensive research on Volkswagen and their Beetle had multiple pages of articles, interviews, memos, sources from multiple countries and contacts---some before Internet and e-mail was available. Cropsey's list seemed more like a sales pitch for other books on VWs, although it should be noted that his first citations were for *Battle for the Beetle* and *Birth of the Beetle*.

22 Bob Cropsey. *Volkswagen---History to Hobby: All the Facts All the Fun*. Wallington: Jersey Classic, 2008), About the Author.
It is only after finishing the book that one learned of Cropsey’s true passion for Volkswagens. His first eighty-three-page chapter had a different format from that of other books. Instead of more formal paragraphs, Cropsey had sorted information into smaller informal paragraphs or mere sentences of information in order to put the Beetle’s history into chronological order. It was also interesting to note that he chose to include the Volkswagen car clubs that began forming in the 1960s, following the humble beginnings of “Volkslore.” “We as hobbyists owe it to the people of Volkswagen’s history and hobby alive by restoring and keeping our Vintage Volkswagens on the road. If it were not for the original Beetle, no other Volkswagens would be here today.” 23 It was with this in mind that the section laid the groundwork for how the rest of the book would follow. Summaries on VW ads are found, written almost as an index to the Remember those great VW ads? book. The third chapter was the most obscure, but nonetheless highlighted important elements to understanding the popularity of Beetles in America. Cropsey informally discussed what had been done with a VW in explaining a campaign that offered U.S. savings bonds to babies born inside a VW beetle and a multitude of actors and actresses who drove the cars both before and during their stardom. He quoted Dr. Jean Rosenbaum’s 1970 pop psychology in Is your Volkswagen and Sex Symbol: “you don’t just get a car, you also acquire a lot of friends, other Volkswagen owners. The Volkswagen is a way of life.” 24 The book went on to showcase a 96 percent approval and satisfaction rating of Beetle owners in survey reports, as they were being built around the world and showcased in artwork and movies.

23 ibid., 83.
24 ibid., 114.
The Beetle had seen itself modified into a boat, plane, and even had its power plant 1600cc motor used in Zamboni machines and fire engine water-pumps. The finale of the chapter came with a list of four hundred seventy custom VW themed license plates and a listing of Beetle sightings in movie and televisions.

Even the most detailed of history books evaluated on the history of the VW Beetle have left out one of the most important elements that turned people into VW enthusiasts. After the U.S. movie release of “Herbie the Love Bug” people would never see the Volkswagen Beetle the same. Herbie became a cultural icon and one of the world’s most recognizable cars in cinema. Cropsey pointed out that “Herbie was the only car to have his tire prints in the sidewalk of stars at Grauman’s Chinese Theater in Hollywood California.”

It has been said on numerous Herbie fan sites and in the bonus DVD footage that Disney based the car on an original story called “Car-Boy-Girl” by Gordan Buford. Although Buford stated that the car in his story was a VW, Disney had doubts and parked several vehicles within the park for an informal survey. The Beetle is said to have gotten the most attention and so the decision was final. When interviewed on Herbie’s popularity actor Dean Jones said,

“It’s such an innocent little car, the VW. It was not a luxurious thing. It was not a hip thing. It was not a chic thing to drive a VW Bug. They were just basic transportation. But here was the little bug with more heart than the big cars and it was the underdog that became triumphant. That was the basic appeal of Herbie.”

---

25 ibid., 135.
26 ibid., 136.
“Herbie the Love Bug” went on to become the highest grossing movie of 1969. There are still many items that were released after the movies that are sought after by collectors. Books, coloring books, record albums, and even View-Master discs were made to promote the film and further entrench the sounds of Herbie into aficionados’ hearts.

Lastly, Bob Cropsey compiled what is now seen in most Volkswagen books as history. It was not weaving of the social, political and economic spheres that he was concerned with. It was not the interviews and quotes from engineers and last surviving test-drivers. The new Volkswagen history written by hobbyists like Cropsey involves not only the little known facts on the Beetle, but instead looks at the classification of Bugs in terms of production parts, accessories, special additions, and prices. Exact colors, horn grille placements, and detail on whether the wolf on the front hood’s crest had its tongue in or out is what people look for today. This history helps restorers compile the parts they need for their projects or discussion topics for VW clubs at car shows and diners across America. Although a true historian cannot ignore the fact that other books are written with more detail in regards to pertinent information, analysis and interpretation, books need to fit into the literacy practices and wants of today’s VW culture.

In comparison to Bob Cropsey’s entertaining piece, author Phil Patton and his Bug: The Strange Mutations of the World’s Most Famous Automobile tried to transition between both history and hobby. Patton described how the VW mirrored the various time periods of it’s existence. From Adolph Hitler’s intent to create a car for the German people; to the heir apparent to Henry Ford’s Model T in America, to it’s “status” as a fashion statement by leftist college educated Americans in the 1950s and early 1960s who were making a statement against Detroit’s agenda of “bigger is better.” “Since
World War II it had been gospel in Detroit that the real people’s car, the inexpensive model, the first car, was a used car. There was no need for small inexpensive cars in America when there were so many large inexpensive ones.27 Soon after the Bug became the icon of the drug-fueled hippies of the late 1960s and it’s demise came forth because it was a product that had been ignored for too long except by hobbyists and third world cultures. “VW executives arrogantly ignored the doubts and suggestions of others, especially Americans. They had remained deaf to the cries of U.S. dealers for nearly fifteen years and refused to bring automatic transmissions, larger engines, [and] air-conditioning and radios lagged.”28 In the early 1970s, the Beetle was faced with an even more devastating challenge—Ralph Nadar. Nadar and his colleagues at the Institute for Automobile Safety had begun attacking auto safety. In 1972 the Institute for Automobile Safety published “Small on Safety,” and laid out in exacting detail the safety flaws of the VW Beetle. Volkswagen owners already knew of their cars defects, anyone who has driven one can tell you about its weak brakes, body roll in turns, exhaust perfume, and thin metal construction that would make it vulnerable to accidents with larger cars and trucks.

“[Nadar’s] book was a précise document, like the testimony of an engineer serving as a witness at a damage trial. It came complete with diagrams of the VW fuel filler cap, which would allegedly belch gasoline in an accident, ready to ignite with a spark from any shorted wire. Dotted lines


28 ibid., 125.
marked the likely path of ejection through the rear window of a driver whose seat came loose. Nadar’s attack helped crystallize an emerging view of the [Beetle] not as a dream machine, but as a transportation appliance. Nadar completed a debunking process VW had begun in its ads.” 29

Most of Patton’s book concerned itself with more interesting ideas about the connections between technology and human culture. This did not come across as a standard VW history, but rather a wide-reaching history of the importance of automobiles and the way people connect and fail to connect with certain models. The author was not afraid to try to find connections between ideas and words in interesting ways. The book also steered away from the technical styling that has been found in more recent books. Whether or not Phil Patton’s book was merely a revisionist history, the narrative sadly lost focus and seemed to lose its way amid references to Charles Manson, Mickey Mouse, Nike Town, and a host of other pop culture items. It was almost like the author was not quite sure which direction to take, and a Bob Cropsey style would have fit better. It would also seem logical that a book about the various mutations and variations of the VW Beetle would be full of illustrations, but book had very few. The last piece of research that truly sets this book apart from any other VW book is in the book’s conclusion. The “Autostadt” was often referred to as the city within Wolfsburg, where VW Beetles were being made. In June of 2000 the Volkswagen and Porsche companies built the New Autostadt. It resembled a fairground complete with gardens, watermarks, an auto museum, a hotel, and two glass towers filled with cars awaiting their new owners.

29 ibid., 126-127.
Intended to bring excitement to the cold and isolated VW city, the company looked to make a visit to the Autostadt a family outing. The Autostadt is located next to the factory, a spot that Hitler chose for his Kdf-wagen. This is where author Phil Patton introduced a new topic of discussion and debate.

[The factory is easily found and] “matched up with the World War II reconnaissance photos that showed POW, slave labor, and concentration camps around the factory and labeled the site as ‘hutted encampment’ with barracks for some of the 15,000 forced laborers. One of the concentration camps stood just to the North. While the Autostadt’s architecture aims to speak of a bright future by spotlighting the symbolism of ‘brand heritage,’ its location had inevitably stirred the ghosts of Volkswagen’s wartime past.”

According to Patton, slave laborers have sought compensation from Volkswagen and other German companies. In 1990 a series of class-action lawsuits were filed in the United States as well as in Europe. In 1998, a twelve million dollar fund to compensate forced laborers was set up seeking to address the claims without admitting legal responsibility. In 1922 VW Carl Haun commissioned Hans Mommsendm, a well-respected German historian, to write a history of the company during the Third Reich and help it come to terms with its history. “[Hans Mommsen] and his young protégé Manfred Grieger had a budget of some two million dollar, a large staff, and access to the huge VW archives. Porsche, however, would not allow access to its corporate archive, which

---

30 ibid., 211.
contained much of the material on the wartime roles of Ferdinand ad Ferry Porsche."\textsuperscript{31}

By including this in his book, Patton posted contradiction to Chris Barber’s rendition of the great Porsche dynasty. By the time the book, \textit{Das Volkswagenwerk un seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich} (Translated: \textit{The Volkswagen Factory and its Workers During the Third Reich}), was published in 1998, the new VW CEO Ferdinand Karl Piëch (grandson of Ferdinand Porsche) was not pleased with how his family was covered. He has so far refused to provide the funds Dr. Mommsen said VW had promised to translate the book into English. Mommsen noted that ‘Piëch is the kind of man who sees conspiracies.’\textsuperscript{32}

The past is inescapable at the factory, where Nazi era plaques and corner stones are rampant. Phil Patton’s book drove further questions of what moral responsibility the Volkswagen has for the ruthless exploitation of millions of slave laborers. Any questions in this sphere seem all the more relevant as they would impact on a public debate in Europe and the United States on whether former Volkswagen slave laborers are entitled to compensation payments.

Another variation to writing on the Volkswagen and it’s history is John Muir’s \textit{How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: The manual of step-by-step procedures for the compleat idiot}. Muir’s book on fixing the Beetle and other VW variations is regarded as the expert text in the field as far as air-cooled VW’s---enthusiastically known as “The VW Bible.” Much of the book lacked the focus into making this work a comprehensive guide and spends more energy silly stories and extracurricular comic strips/artwork. Muir’s book is not to be depended on to cover all owners’ needs. Muir, a long-haired

\textsuperscript{31} ibid., 213.

\textsuperscript{32} ibid., 213.
Hippie and former mechanic published his first addition in 1969. As men landed on the moon and Volkswagen Buses traveled to Woodstock Muir’s book gained popularity with his “chatty” how-to explanations and cartoon like diagrams. Dependant on the situation, Muir’s book could be a technical guide in the garage, or a Zen-like read in a library where the Volkswagen is personified. He began his book with a novelty idea: “Come to kindly terms with you ass for it bears you.” This idea sets the stage for the humor that was to follow.

“Your Volkswagen is not a donkey but the communication considerations are similar. Your car is constantly telling your senses where it’s at: what it’s doing and what it needs. I don’t speak ‘donkey,’ but I am fairly conversant in ‘Volkswagen’ and will help you learn the basic vocabulary of this language so your Bug...can become an extension of your own sensory equipment. Talk to the car, then shut up and listen.

Feel with your car...seek its operations out and perform them with love.”

The concept of writing about the Beetle as a karma-driven being went beyond “Herbie the Lovebug” and instead formulated a hippie philosophy. To simply compare this book with other technical manuals would be to ignore the most important feature of this book, which was its ability to empower the reader. It presumed that the purchaser has no technical aptitude and started them gently down the road to proficiency and self-confidence. Muir realized that once an owner discovered that they could indeed perform

a repair competently, they felt that there were other things that could be done if you apply the same confidence, common sense, and ingenuity. Muir wrote that “you must do this work with love or you will fail. You do not have to think, but you must love.” Unlike other Volkswagen literature Muir focused on life and about the relationship we have to our possessions and to our work. Years later these are still wise words, and to find them in an automotive manual is rather astonishing.

The last style of Volkswagen writing to be looked at is in the realm of nostalgia. Beetles were so widespread in America that people either owned a Volkswagen or knew somebody who had one. Michael Rosen’s *My Bug* presents more than one hundred stories, anecdotes, and reminisces. The book’s illustrations, cartoons, and personal photographs support the golden days of “Beetlemania.” Some of the stories involve experiences that only Beetle owners/riders could truly appreciate. Water splashing up through the holes rusted in the floorboards, trying to jump the car’s dead battery after removing the rear seat, and ice-covered windshields inside the car at the first signs of winter. “Having read hundreds of individual accounts of this car and its drivers convinces me that ‘Beetle People’ have shared something like a symbiotic relationship with this vehicle.”

*My Bug* is written more as an oral history of the Beetle. It simultaneously investigated who the drivers of this icon were, and how they felt about their car. Beetle owners refer to their cars as they would a dog or cat. Rosen’s collection persuades readers to contemplate the Beetle as an animate object, and as a member of the family. Beetle owner were loyal to their cars and even went as far as naming them. The

---

34 ibid., 7.
famous VW ad paralleled this idea when it stated “Our Beetle’s a member of the family who just happens to sleep in the garage.” Beetle people personalized their cars with paint, stickers, and accessories. They traveled in them, found love in them, broke down in them, and even gave birth in them. They were some people’s first car, or a second-hand car inherited from a neighbor. “This quirky, egalitarian car as not simply a means of transportation---it was meaning itself.”

Buddy Hacket’s character in Herbie the Love Bug ties Michael Rosen and John Muir’s idea of love and identity into a simple concept, “Take a car. Most guys will spend more time and money on a car in a week then they do on their wife and kids in a year. Pretty soon, you known what? The machine starts to think it is somebody!” The Volkswagen Beetle defined a generation.

The Volkswagen Beetle was a success story since its inception in 1938. The Beetle has been the longest production run of any single car design ever, with over 21 million being produced since its creation. The car has come to symbolize not just an era, but a lifestyle, starting a trend which has changed the face of the automobile industry around the world. Literally, the Volkswagen Beetle became a way of life for millions of people who owed their previously unknown mobility to this legendary car. The Beetle acted as an ambassador of peace all over the world - with a puttering sound that you can’t mistake, and at the same time an appeal that was unmatched. The car came to represent everything about that particular generation---flower power, bellbottoms, hippie culture and freedom. The Beetle’s unique and quirky designs diffused its popularity throughout

36 ibid., 12.

the world with the help of cutting edge advertising and acceptance to try something new. From a symbol of all-American simplicity and durability in the 1950s, the Beetle came to embody the counterculture of the 1960s. Standing apart from its tail-finned counterparts, Beetles all over America showed people art, nature, friendship and camaraderie, fads, and a newfound expression in mobility. Starting in 1965 and continuing on to today, Volkswagen writing and readership continues to take on different forms. Depending on a consumer’s personality, needs and wants, a variety of VW books offer up famously said quotes, statistics, diary entries, minutes taken during meetings, schematics, illustrations, photographs, interviews, and personal stories. For this reason, each Volkswagen book is like a Beetle itself, a similar shell from the outside, with modification allocated to allow sufficient room to tell its own story, while trying to demonstrate why the Volkswagen Beetle is the car everyone loves to learn about.
PART II

The Volkswagen Beetle more than any other car alerted a weary American automobile industry to a significant shift in buyers’ desires and proclaimed the dawning age of the “compact car.” The Bug appealed strongly to American drivers long before the price of gasoline and other practical factors discouraged them from buying larger American models. Although some imports, especially sports cars, made their way into showrooms, the Volkswagen Beetle was the first to account for a large portion of the U.S. market. Swiftly rising in sales from the 1950s and into 60s it enjoyed great successes as not only an import car, but also a symbol for its owners a form of contempt for tradition and authority and/or economic logic. Previously mentioned in the historiographic analysis on the literature of this topic, information regarding the Volkswagen has been contributed to by hobbyists and technical writers, and welcomes itself to a wide range of narrative forms. However, there remains a need for an assessment of American drivers’ motives in buying Volkswagens in the 1960s beyond simple pricing tactics, and the role in which marketing strategies led to not only increased sales but also a new style of advertisements in a supportive American consumer market. The Volkswagen phenomenon was an important link rather than an isolated fad which solidified the Beetle’s place in the American culture of the 1950s and 1960s. More importantly, the new Volkswagen Company enacted a formula to automotive success tried and tested under elements set by Henry Ford which had failed under the leadership of the Nazis. In the 1960s the Volkswagen Beetle manufacturing and advertising philosophies became one and the same, and have since been brand retro-fitted with modern day technology and
contradictions that are incapable of ever being resolved due in part to the nostalgia of owners’ past.

To examine the role of Volkswagens success in America an analysis of its failures in Germany prior and during World War II (WWII) must be made. The Volkswagen was promoted in Germany as the chief example of a group of “people’s products,” focused on the nationalism of the fatherland as a method of sales over the realistic need of prepared consumption. U.S. mass motorization affected the Volkswagen in two major ways. The first was symbolic and ideological. The Nazi views on American mass production and motorization were that of a simple equation and belief founded in that “if you build it, they will come.” The second is more concrete and practical. Germany believed that if it imitated American car culture and production techniques/methods and efficiency that a market place would become present as readily as it had in American society. There was no doubt that Hitler was a motorcar enthusiast. For him, the number of cars and miles of road were a measure of one’s nation’s cultural standards. Hitler’s goal was then to “restore to the German people the position in the world to which its race, character, and history give it an inalienable right. Beyond even this, Hitler wanted to win recognition from the German population as car manufacturing was considered a means to achieve economic rebirth and overcome unemployment.”

German economists and political leaders, however, failed to address what was needed to promote sales of the Volkswagen--prerequisites of a mass market. Henry Ford, who used the assembly and interchangeable parts to create an affordable car and market for Americans formulated

---

the relationship between mass production and mass consumption in an article written for Encyclopedia Britannica: “The necessary, precedent condition of mass production is a capacity, latent or developed, of mass consumption, the ability of [a nation and people] to absorb large production. The two together, and in the latter, may be traced the reasons for the former.” 39 It was in this respect, namely in the inability to generate mass consumption, that Hitler’s Volkswagen missed the American model and that of Ford’s success.

Hitler’s ambitious goals to produce the enormous number of cars and low prices involved Ferdinand Porsche as lead designer and the German Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF) as the candidate company to manufacture the “Volksauto.” In 1936, Hitler claimed at an auto show in Berlin that he would bring the project “to a successful conclusion…with ruthless determination.” 40 Hitler and his leaders continued to inflate projected production figures from 300,000 per year to 500,000 per year to a propaganda inflated 1.5 million cars, greater than Ford’s output. One report on the Volkswagenwerk’s cornerstone ceremony assembled a fair number of superlatives. Germany would have the world’s best highways, be the world’s leading country in automobile racing, and construct the world’s largest and most modern car plant. 41

The question still remained, however, as to who had the ability to buy the Volkswagen. In 1937, the German Bureau of Statistics estimated that “80 percent of


40 Schrittmacher der Wirtschaft, Volume 16: (1936). Translated.

existing cars were used for trade and professional purposes. Only 1.1 percent of car buyers were workers and that the total car market according to Hitler’s plans would have to increase by 1.6 million cars."⁴² Nonetheless, Nazi leaders insisted that the Volkswagen was for the broad masses and would benefit the people of Germany on an immense scale. To further entice them, the price for the car was announced. Hitler has promised a price below 1,000 Reichmarks (RM), however, after the design of the car was decided, the prototypes were built and tested, and production was planned, it became clear that the car could never be manufactured at this price. Nevertheless, DAF-leader Robert Ley announced that the Volkswagen in the summer of 1938 would be at a price of 990RM.⁴³ One commentator remarked that this was $200 less than the cheapest Ford car.⁴⁴ The announcement stirred in not only newspaper articles and magazines, but in Germans hearts and minds alike. The public began to clamor for the “People’s Car.” It seemed that at the time the Beetle would become a sensation and triumph.

Once more taking cues from Ford, in August 1938, the DAF started a savings plan (or Sparkarte—savings card) for the Volkswagen. In the past Ford has successfully set up a weekly purchase plan which allowed buyers to pay out of savings from a household’s budget. In similarity, Germans, with weekly payments of 5RM over a period of four and a half years, one could acquire the car. In an attempt to further sales, brochures were created to advertise the coming of the KdF (Kraft durch Freude = Strength through Joy)-Type I car or Volkswagen. In an early 1939 sales pamphlet

⁴² Wochenbericht des Instituts für Konjunkturforschung. (1936), 1-6. Translated.

⁴³ Das Archiv: 53. (1938), 26. Translated

potential clientele could see to see an image of the Beetle on the cover, as well as a swastika wrapped in a mechanical gear (cog wheel). Within its front cover was a note from the Fuhrer to his people: "As long as the automobile remains the means of transportation of the privileged few, it will continue to be something that divided the economic classes. Therefore, the automobile must become the means of transportation for all classes of people." The pamphlet, like modern day automotive booklets went on to discuss technical particulars: engine, brakes, suspension, tire size, curb weight, and paint colors. In addition, pictures were either drawn or taken of the inside of the car so potential buyers could see the inside was very roomy ("INNEN fehr geraumig") and had been designed to fit the needs of the people. Other pages showed staged pictures of Germans enjoying their KfF-car in a variety of scenarios. On the 29th page of the pamphlet it begs to set the optimistic tone for all Germans: "Enthusiasm, wherever the KdF-car turns up! No matter where the Volkswagen goes, as soon as it is recognized one sees smiling faces, and as the car stops large crowds gather around it. Everyone admires the 'wonder car.' They are all crazy about the pleasing, racy lines and the solid construction. Over half of customers who order a car earn less than RM 300. They are saving for a masterwork. Production starts in Fall 1939!"

As mass-produced cars had done in the United States, the Nazis presented the Volkswagen as a car for the people, but also as a means to revolutionize free time and leisure. The German auto would allow them time to travel and seek vacation services.

46 ibid., 29
Pictures of the tentatively labeled KdF-Wagens showed the vehicle in attractive vacation surroundings, the passengers happily gazing at the landscapes of Germany and other lands. Germany began to develop plans for parking lots and garages throughout Germany, and started compiling lodging lists for the travelers. Further plans for an Autobahnen, or nationally coordinated motorway system, began to take shape and were hoped to develop into pleasure and sightseeing roads with ample roadhouses and lodging\textsuperscript{47}. If the German Volkswagen plans had succeeded, the character of the automobile in Germany would have completely transformed. The KdF-Wagen was supposed to shift the German car from the business to private sector, from an investment to a consumer good. The United States was not mentioned in the Nazi vision, neither was Ford Motor Company, however, it is obvious that there were similarities with the manufacture and use and potential marketing of the VW compared to all U.S. automobiles. Although in theory the Nazi propaganda departments made targeted advertising campaigns, successfully produced consumer interpretations and symbols of the car as being affordable and nationalistic, the Nazi project's results were disappointing because although people were willing to buy the cars, they, too, were unable to afford them. In order to win the support of the people the Nazis generated a product and resource that was sought after, however, the Germans failed to produce a sound economic base for their Volkswagen. Germany was not comparable to the market that Henry Ford was a part of in the 1920s. The people of America were a consumer market that had money to spend. The Nazi policies of propaganda could not support Hitler’s illusionary

politics. He focused too much on the auto’s price and promises as a means to spur a consumer society. Failing to adhere to the components aforementioned by Henry Ford, mass production can only be effective when paired with a consumer society, low prices, and high wages. It was not until the Federal Republic of Germany that a consumer society became a reality in the economic context of an open and free world market, by then the Volkswagen Beetle was a household name and a fixture on the highways of in the United States.

During the 1960s the United States was experiencing its longest uninterrupted period of economic expansion in history. After World War II the efficiency and productivity of the US economy improved noticeably. As the 1960 presidential election campaign got under way John F. Kennedy promised “to get America moving again.” At home and abroad American business was growing. The domestic economy was strong, unemployment was down, firms were increasingly productive, and technology was fueling constant innovation. Historians Louis Galambos and Joseph Pratt noted: “It was a good time to be in business in the United States, an era when American efficiency and entrepreneurship were the wonder of the world.”

In parts of Germany things were getting better. Thousands of Germans had saved million of Marks (RM) for their very own VW but the outbreak of war dashed the dreams that were once showcased in the promotional literature. At the end of the war the Volkswagen factory at Wolfsburg came

---


under the control of the British military control and Major Ivan Hurst was put in charge of the bombed-out plant. Starved of raw materials, he set up various barter deals and managed to get production of the Beetle going again. Anxious to capitalize on their efforts and new found business the British offered the factory to a number of car makers. Earnest Breech of the Ford Motor Company reported back to the U.S. headquarters, "Mr. Ford, I don’t think what we are being offered here is worth a damn." 50 After the German factory, salvaged cars and parts, and presses were found following the war mass productions of the Beetle came about at a small cost, but only after receiving help from the cooperative help from the British and American companies. Heniz Nordoff, a Detroit trained ex-director of Opel, General Motor’s German subsidiary, proved Mr. Breech wrong while under his leadership production at Wolfsburg rose drastically. A steady stream of Nordorff’s VWs began reaching the United States returning in the hands of GI’s. In 1949, the first VW’s were imported to the U.S. by an entrepreneur named Ben Pon. The cars sold with little success at first, partly due to the anti-German sentiment following the war. In 1953, after a couple of unsuccessful attempts to market their car in the United States, VW established a network of dealers that would enable an American foundation.

According to an interview with Ray Lewandowski, an ex-Volkswagen employee from the 1960s and 70s, one such dealer was located in Buffalo, New York. “Jim Kelly’s VW Inc. was named for owner, Jim Kelly, a Tank Commander in World War II. Jim had been to the Volkswagen factory prior to returning to the states. Mr. Kelly realized that

the automobile had a good thing going for it and founded his dealership”\textsuperscript{51} in 1959 in Buffalo at 3325 Genessee Street, the only one in Buffalo until Butler Volkswagen Inc. became its only rival.\textsuperscript{52} Another New York dealership was started by Andrew J. Kirch in Rochester, New York. “During World War II, he served with a military intelligence battalion in both the European and African Campaigns, and was decorated with the American Campaign Medal, the European, African, and the Middle Eastern Campaign Medal. In 1957 he and a partner acquired one of the first Volkswagen dealerships in the United States, F.A. Motors, Inc. which became one of the most successful Volkswagen dealerships in North America.”\textsuperscript{53} From the aftermath of World War II came entrepreneurship for veterans and second chances for the Beetle.

The mid-1950s was a time of significant social and consumer change. Attitudes, morals, entertainment and ideas led to the enjoyment of peacetime and a vibrant economy. By the end of the 1950s and early 1960s a period of non-conformity began to contradict the expected norm. Beatniks appeared on college campuses as did recreational and psychedelic drugs. “Baby boomers” came of age and embraced Volkswagens as a way to show rejection of what the materialism of older generations. Among innovation and invention, cars became more than a form of transportation. The 1950s American motors were a means of communicating status and, wealth, and comfort. The VW,


\textsuperscript{52} Volkswagen of America (VWoA). Volkswagen Distributors and Dealers in North and Central America. Printed by the VWoA.

\textsuperscript{53} “Andrew Kirtch.” http://www.stronghealth.com/services/childrens/centers/kirchbio.cfm
unfortunately was neither known for its looks or its technology, but was undeniably attractive to the growing number of drivers who were sick and tired of the larger and tailfin design excess of Detroit. Then suddenly, without any advertising, VWs started selling. The Beetle, with its simple, autobahn-friendly air-cooled engine, earned a reputation as a “tireless” performer that was reliable. Trendsetters, college professors, and people who value the quality of function over style, design and perceived image took one home. Then, in 1959, Volkswagen decided to hire and advertising agency that would help make automotive and advertising history.

A little known New York advertising agency, Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB), whose claim to fame was a few ads they had created for the opening of a VW dealer on Long Island, had a handful of unique ads won the Volkswagen account over more traditional ad agencies. A German Volkswagen and a Jewish agency didn’t seem like a good match considering history’s past, but this was not a conventional agency. Volkswagen sent German executive Carl Hahn, the man who was given the sole task of not promoting the Beetle, but instead charged with the task of resisting the advertising attacks of “The Big Three”—Ford, GM, and Chrysler. “Co-owner Bill Bernbach, along with art director Helmut Krone and copywriter Julian Koenig forged a new look and tone in car advertising.”54 The advertising of the 1950s was marked by an imagined expression of what car companies and their ad agencies thought the world, automobiles, and the people who owned and drove the specific brand should look like. Pictures had beautifully created environments, situations and venues. “Beautiful people doing

wonderful things in stylish urban landscapes or scenic rustic surroundings, and of course, all while next to the car in focus. There were no realistic photographs, only fanciful illustrations. In the foreground stood the car, complete with a suave and debonair drive and complimentary female or group of admirers in a seemingly fantasy reality." \(^55\) VW ads would need to be different to stand out.

Volkswagen considered itself to be essentially unknown in the 1960’s. Those who had heard about VW and their Beetle did so through word of mouth or studied an occasional one on the street. The American people had read about the company’s German roots in relatively few sources. The car was inspired by Hitler, founded to make cars for the German people, and used slave and concentration camp labor to build military vehicles during the Second World War. “I was wondering what the agency was doing and what Bernbach had going on in this head. The car really did have Nazi connotations to it, and I don’t think it was something we should have done. I still don’t to this day what went on his head when he accepted the account, in fact he worked very hard getting it.” \(^56\) The Germanic connection was not a minor obstacle to overcome, but DDB in a stroke of marketing genius sought to ignore it at all costs. Not one VW ad from DDB ever spoke of its German heritage, history and/or association. The new Volkswagen brand would always have to be carefully crafted, and in 1960 the DDB


advertising prints quickly found themselves in array print periodicals before American readers and consumers.

Carl Hahn believed that the ideas from the company had to come straight from the source. There shouldn’t be any drawing or paintings of the cars that tried to make them look glamorous. He also believed in the advertisers facing up to what people regarded as shortcomings of the Beetle. Hahn once laughingly said, “We believe that the car itself looks beautiful. The Beetle is just an acquired taste. Nobody likes Oysters the first time they try them.” 57 Therefore, to acquire a taste DDB went to the factory in Wolfsburg Germany. They spent days talking to engineers, production men, and workers on the assembly line. They watched the mass production that had originated in America breath life into the Volkswagens as they went from stamped steel to new born bug driving off the line. The agency immersed itself in the making of the Bug which helped them develop their themes that distinguished the car. They saw quality the quality of materials, and the rigorous system of inspection, and impressive efficiency that resulted in a low priced automobile.

“Ned Doyle and Bill Bernbach took along with Helmut Krone and Julian Koenig—the people who worked on the account first. What rubbed off was a Volkswageny attitude. It seemed absurd to them at first that so much time was spent on inspectors and inspecting. It was also fascinating to find that the chief inspector reported to the President of the Company rather than the production manager. There are things you can deduce about a company that is run that way.” 58


The DDB agency saw the Volkswagen car for what it was: an honest, simple, reliable, and different mode of transportation. They had found themselves the perfect selling propositions.

Taking cues from executives like Carl Hahn and what they had seen at the factory, DDB started from scratch with “honest advertising.” The ads never called the Beetle “beautiful,” but instead urged others to look at the Beetle’s lines differently in stating that “Ugly is only so deep.” Volkswagen ads also never looked to attack the competition. What offenses they could make in words and visualizations could indeed attack the American Detroit companies, but in doing so could also directly offend Americans. Instead, they opted to focus on one point per advertisement and never attempted to cover the whole car or multiple elements. In addition, each point would have to be supported by words and details that would compliment it. For example, in 1961 Volkswagen ran an ad which showed no picture of the Beetle whatsoever. The space allocated for the photograph of the VW was left blank. Its plot line read, “No point showing you the ’62 Volkswagen. It still looks the same.” The point was made clearly that the Beetle’s design remained the same from year to year. This ad and others brought in inquiries from potential customers onto car lots. The advertisements attracted readers, treated them in an intelligent and frank way. “I bought a VW in the 1960s. The print ads were definitely an influence. I liked the honest simplicity of the Bug and the ads seemed to convey that.

59 ibid., 20.

Additionally I was a college student and didn't have much money. This was in the throes of the muscle car days and several of my friends had big fast American iron so buying a bug was a little different.”\textsuperscript{61} The DDB agency motivated people to purchase the Volkswagen because they reflected not only the quality of the car, but the good taste and feeling that, too, was built into the car. Columnist William D. Tyler had this to say about Volkswagen advertisements in a mid-1965 issue of \textit{Advertising Age}: “VW advertising is so much in a class by itself that it has almost removed itself from a consideration by people in advertising. By that I mean that whereas all other advertising is considered in a frame of comparative reference, Volkswagen is not. It stands alone, and this beyond critical comparisons. The excuse from excluding it from comparison with domestic car advertising is that our cars haven’t the unusual features to talk about, and thus shouldn’t be expected to live up the VW standard.”\textsuperscript{62} For the agency, and for the oncoming creative revolution, the Volkswagen campaign was a breakthrough.

One of the biggest assets of the DDB advertising was humor. Humor was seen as one of the best ways to hook readers into a conversation. Bob Levenson, DDB writer said, “The key to these ads is this person-to-person approach, one person talking to another person.”\textsuperscript{63} Humor was not seen in 1960 American advertisements. Most agencies seemed unwilling to risk trying with the belief that humorous copies would not sell. It seems that advertisements around the world achieved their jobs throughout the

\textsuperscript{61} (John Rutland, TheSamba Blog, comment posted November 13, 2009).

\textsuperscript{62} William Tyler, \textit{Advertising Age}. (1965).

years with a single-minded approach to product endorsements. The Doyle Dane Bernbach agency demonstrated that through skillful humor, well placed photography, and quietly read headlines that a new freshness make catch the favorable attention of readers.

"An advertising writer wants to grab the reader’s attention with his ad. He doesn’t want to confuse him with big words or fancy, complex sentences. He doesn’t have the time. He knows that thousands of other advertising copywriters are bombarding the reader with their messages every day, too. Therefore, he must use the same small words, the same sentence structure people use every day when they talk to other people. Sometimes the sentences aren’t even complete." \(^{64}\)

Volkswagen advertisements connected with consumers on an emotional level, but one that would have them looking for more. This was one thing, too, that made the Beetle so radically different. One example Beetle ad campaign depicted the elements of simplicity, humor and connection between car and consumer was the “The Funeral.” During a funeral procession, the voice of the deceased bequeaths his fortune. He leaves nothing to wife, sons, or business partners who were wasteful with their money. However, to a tearful young man in the Volkswagen at the end of the line the voiceover explains: “To my nephew Harold, who often said ‘a penny saved is a penny earned’ and ‘it surely pays to own a Volkswagen’, I leave my entire fortune of one hundred billion dollars.” \(^{65}\)

Proponents of humor in advertising argue that this style is a universal language that humanizes advertising, allowing the communicator to speak to the members of his audience on their own level. “Employing humor involves a risk: if humor does not come


off, it is a disaster; if it does, it can be very effective.” 66 Humor then, in order to be effective must be strategically planned, and needs to be used as a means and not an end itself. Humor can act as a persuasive element that can, in DDB’s case, become more influential than a serious version of the same appeal. “The presence of humor in an advertising appeal might be determined on the basis of whether puns, jokes, understatements, turns of phrases, satire, irony, slapstick or incongruity were used. Also, an examination of the responses elicited to an identifiable stimulus. Humor is operationally defined in terms of heightened arousal, smiles, and laughter exhibited by an audience in response to a particular message.” 67 The DDB agency supported the use of humorous print ads and commercials undoubtedly because they believed that humor would increase the probability of communication acceptance, suggesting that the humor found in their styling served not only as a way to promote the car to potential buyers, but also serve as a secondary reward for the audience. “Some dealers complained that did not say ‘Buy one today,’ but to that the agency answered back that every one of these ads said precisely that—without saying it once.” 68 Eventually dealers came to understand that with this style of advertising there was no real need to offer discounts on the cars, free trips, or any dishonesty in their salesmanship. VW dealers reported that they began to encounter positive echoing of the ads on salesroom floors. The print ads educated new


and current owners about the car, in effect turning them into their own car salesmen.

“Back in 1966 I bought a brand new Beetle so I was ‘one of those customers.’ Beyond the understanding of the car I knew from the clever ads I saw in print back then, my main incentive was that could buy a brand new car for fewer than two thousand dollars. My small military salary got me into the showroom, and I drove off as a happy customer.” 69

A research firm hired by Carl Hahn to interview existing Beetle owners came back with a highly favorable assessment expressed best in adjectives: “truthful, excellent, witty, to the point, effective, sophisticated, informative, unique and cute.” 70

Although at no point in the company’s history can one look at the VW sales curve and say with certainty that things improved once the DDB agency publications began, however, the simple fact is that in the 1960s craftsmanship of the Beetle continued to improve, as did the agencies advertising. The Volkswagen Beetle probably would have succeeded in any case because of the quality and price points of their products, but the ads helped accelerate their accomplishments. In addition, people actually read the ads for their cleverness and even began discussing them at cocktail party conversations. DDB employee John Noble recalled, “it got so that I didn’t want to tell anyone outside the agency I worked on the Volkswagen account. At parties they treated you as though you had written a great novel. I felt, enough already, let’s talk about something else.”71 It

69 (Alex Sunder. TheSamba Blog, comment posted November 11, 2009).

70 Frank Roesome, Think Small (Brattleboro: The Stephen Greene Press, 1970), 68.

seemed that the VW ads had a separate following from the intended exposure which hoped to promote the car.

Both in the past and in the modern age advertising is almost always imitated or spun-off. However, authors Goodrum and Dalrymple note that “true innovation is rare and invariably attracts a host of imitators. The exception to this rule is of course the campaign of Doyle Dane and Bernbach. Despite its great success, no other automobile advertiser has copied its literate, witty, and factual approach with as much success. The assets and attributes of the Beetle were simple: it was a durable little car that was inexpensive and represented a good value. The ads DDB created used these facts to create conversations with consumers that never used the words themselves, just the concepts. As Helmut Krone explained, the Beetle and its ads “[were] not inspired. It was a mathematical solution. I made everything that was big, small and everything that was small, big.”

Today, German automotive heritage has become the highly valued expression of excellence and quality in Volkswagen’s new marketing styling. This belief, coupled with Volkswagen’s brand extension, the use of an existing brand name to introduce a new product or service is an important marketing tactic. Many long abandoned brands have in the past ten years been revived and successfully re-launched. In the late 20th century marketing firms have begun using nostalgia type advertising. Materializations of our past evoke a powerful sense of the past and personal and communal feelings help bind consumers with their past. Old brands can even calm whole

---

72 ibid., 258.

groups of people in times of social and economic turbulence, such as divorce, retiring, aging, and the pace of modern society. In 1994 a New Volkswagen Beetle concept was created, production and sales in the American market starting in 1998. The New Beetle was supposed to draw in the Beetle owners from the 1960s and 70s. A combination of the traditional Beetle shape and state-of-the-art automotive technologies, the New Beetle quickly gained cult status. The following that the Beetle developed has previously been discussed in the prior historiographic analysis of VW literature, including many whose dedication is to people’s affectionate memories of their original Beetles. The New Beetle, like its original counterpart, pulled people into dealerships. “It was acting as a ‘halo car,’ with ‘rub-off’ on other cars and the whole brand. Newer marketing claimed a family resemblance between the Passat and the New Beetle to boost sales of other Volkswagen models. ‘There is a bit of Beetle in every Volkswagen’ was the hopeful appeal.74 In other specific ads for the New Beetle, newer advertising agencies decided to forgo their “Drivers Wanted” slogan aimed at twenty and thirty year olds and instead take inspiration from the old DDB ads. “Television and print ads employed the same generous ‘white space’ of the old print ads; many of the shots were almost empty, with just a few words and tiny images. The slogans practically wrote themselves. ‘More power, less flower.’ ‘0-60—YES.’ ‘If you sold your soul in the eighties, here’s your chance to buy it back.’ Reverse engineered from flying saucers.”75 The new ads were most certainly aimed at the forty and fifty year-olds who recalled the original car and all


75 ibid., 188.
the stories that went along with them. The cars design remained true to that of the old Bug, small changes and packages were added each year. New owners liked the safety features the New Beetle provides, as well creature comfort in dress up items like color options, flower vases, wheels, power options, and air bags. The car was also tagged as being “retro” among owners, a term of affection that some agreed with and others detested. One study of consumer reception to the New Beetle demonstrated bitter skeptics and opponents at dealerships.\textsuperscript{76} In summary, some saw the “new” Beetle as a Beetle in name only. Others went on further to say that the new Beetle had no authenticity, no direct lineage to the engineering genius of Porsche, and that any modern car company could produce style cues that suggested looking like a Beetle. The debates among consumers raise valid points about the management of brand essence. Part of the challenge of the New Beetle’s marketers is to shift the terms of comparison so that that the core values of the brand are maintained while their physical properties are radically altered.\textsuperscript{77} It is apparent that irresolvable contradiction and tension has manifested itself in with retro-branding. American consumers express the central paradox any company or product may have when trying to market a modern item under a retro-name. Along with the New Beetle other car companies have joined in on the bandwagon. In the past ten years the automotive market has become inundated with the new retro compact and minis: Cooper Mini, Ford Thunderbird and Mustang, Chevy Camaro, Dodge Challenger and Charger have gone from taking just the name of cars from yesteryear and have now applied styling elements that made automobiles the icons of the past. Like the Beetle,  


\textsuperscript{77} ibid.
consumers have both reasoning and justifications behind whether to embrace or denounce the more modern transportation versions.

The one thing that the New Beetle, original American Beetle, Nazi KdF-Wagen, and DDB advertising found commonality in is that a manufactured product can become a mobile entity. The Volkswagen Beetle has been a blending of ideas and ideals for seventy years, ironically starting as Hitler’s “strength through joy” car for the German people and transforming into the American people’s “Love Bug.” The Volkswagen has, and continues to satisfy the needs and wants of their owners. The print and television marketing of the past claimed that the Beetle had many uses and versatilities. People of different cultures, genders, ages, and socioeconomic levels found a place for the Bug in their life, and the car allowed them to carry out various roles. What owners received in return was an object that would help create stories that would last a lifetime, and become a part of a collective memory of a nation.
PART III

The third portion of my thesis, a culmination of both my historiography and my original research, will help create publishable teaching materials modeled after those style guides and suggestions made by the Organization of American Historians (OAH) and encompass best practices for teaching social studies content. The overall implications of my research led me to create lessons that focus on two aspects of Volkswagen’s history that have program parallels to the New York State Core Curriculum. Each lesson can be used in historical curriculums to teach societal needs and wants, political leadership, and economic motivations of a given people within a nation.

In the first of two lessons, students will have the ability to analyze the elements of Volkswagen advertising under the direction of the Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) agency in comparison to the other domestic auto advertising of the time. Students will identify the major figures involved in Volkswagen advertising, interpret primary documents, and analyze successful advertising elements. From there students will have the ability compare and contrast the variations of domestic and Volkswagen automotive presentations leading to a synthesis of information learned by creating an advertisement of their own. These objectives will be achieved through the use of specialized readings, primary source advertisements, comprehension organizers, Venn diagrams, and skeleton advertisement modeling.

The second aspect of history for students to focus on revolves around the results of the Treaty of Versailles, the rise of Hitler amid the *Dolchstosslegenden* philosophy, and the role Nazi nationalism played in the formation of the KdF Wagen. Students will
analyze the social, political, and economic effects of World War I on the world, but more notably in Germany. Students will explore the stipulations that the Treaty of Versailles imposed on Germany and judge Germany’s reaction to the terms. Students will evaluate whether the Treaty contributed to the rise to power of the Nazi Party and Hitler in Germany and substantiate whether the terms of the Treaty were fair. Lastly, a historical investigation into the role Germany’s nationalism played in the creation of the Volkswagen will be launched. These objectives will be achieved through the use of specialized readings that promote active reading strategies as well as serve as a method for both student comprehension and reflection. Students will analyze charts and graphs while answering comprehension questions scaffolded from levels of Bloom’s taxonomy. Students will synthesize the information learned throughout the lesson into a written performance of understanding and end with comprehension activities known as “Story Mapping: History Frames.”

The inclusive impact this project will have is twofold. First off, it will enable fellow educators the opportunity to supplement the Volkswagen’s historical elements into their curriculum. The hope is that the new information and strategies will differentiate for the needs of multiple learners and engage students in a meaningful way. Secondly, students will have the opportunity to engage in history and research while creating products that focus on multiple intelligences as well as targeted critical thinking skills. This project will provide fellow educators and enthusiasts alike teaching tools that use current research combined with material and focuses included in the New York State and National Council for the Social Studies standards. Both the topic history and contemporary teaching methods should not only focus on student centered learning, it
should also foster pride of ownership of students' in their work. In the end, student created products and performances of understanding will assess multiple aspects of the Social Studies curriculum.

**Lesson 1:**

**Historical Background for Teachers:**

A steady stream of Volkswagens (VWs) had been reaching the United States ever since the end of the Second World War, in the hands of returning GI's. In 1953, after a couple of unsuccessful attempts to market their car in the U.S., Volkswagen established a network of independent dealers. Sales rose dramatically by word of mouth alone, and the Beetles entered onto the highways of America with domestic rivals.

The VWs looked attractive to the growing number of drivers who were sick and tired of the American car companies' larger, gas-guzzling vehicles whose designs changed annually for obsolescence's sake. With the dollar strong on the world market, and with a foothold in America, the Volkswagen Company was quick to take advantage of the market share.

VW decided to appoint an advertising agency when it realized that the company's annual sales were close to the limit that could be sold on owner recommendation and dealer promotion alone. The Doyle, Dane and Bernbach (DDB) agency had gained a reputation for unusual and eye catching work for Polaroid and Levi jeans, and coupled with the agency's integrity, was awarded the Volkswagen's account.
Along with art director Helmut Krone and copywriter Julian Koenig, the DDB agency created a look and tone of voice that was totally unheard of, particularly in advertising. There was no aspirational background, no debonair drivers, and no admiring females. The overall impression gave the overall impression straight-forwardness and disarming honesty.

VW dealers reported that customers arrived in their showrooms with the headline of the latest DDB ad on their lips, and extra sales began the VW’s rise in American car culture.

**Time Frame**

- The entire lesson may be taught over a span of two 42 minute class periods.

**Objectives**

The following student objectives are addressed in this lesson:

- Students will identify the major figures involved in Volkswagen advertising.
- Students will interpret primary documents.
- Students will analyze successful advertising elements.
- Students will evaluate automotive advertising forms.
- Students will compare and contrast variations of automotive advertising.
- Students will synthesize information learned in a creation of their own advertisement.
NYS Standard(s)

- History of the United States and New York - Key Idea 4: Analyze the development of American culture, explaining how the ideas, values, beliefs and traditions have changes over time and how they unite all Americans

NCSS Standards:

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups and Institutions
7. Production, Consumption, Distribution

Curriculum Background

Activities that are presented here can be incorporated into the existing curriculum to enhance current lesson plans. This lesson can fit in a U.S. history curriculum in the Post-WWII years, most notably the 1950s, the social counterculture of the 1960s, and also the economic developments of the 1970s in response to the oil crisis. The lesson can also be used in a Sociology setting focusing on the needs and wants of people and the role of advertising in societal developments and can also become co-curricular within the Arts curriculum.
Lesson Preparation

1. Students will need to complete a reading on the history of Volkswagen advertising and the role it played in the United States.

Choices of readings are as follows and can be adapted for student needs:


2. Students will need access to 1960s automobile advertisements from both Volkswagen and other domestic companies.

- Apply a correct query into the Google Image search engine for appropriate advertisements

- Locate period correct magazines via garage sales or swap meets and take the advertisements out of them.

3. Students will need the handouts discussed in **Procedure/Teaching Strategies** which are provided with this lesson plan.

**Procedure/Teaching Strategies**

1. Students will receive a selected reading of the background of the Volkswagen's advertising history. The reading can be adapted to the lesson’s needs, time constraints, and student ability levels. Students will be asked to read the selection both silently and independently.

2. In order to comprehend the reading students will be asked to fill out a comprehension graphic organizer (Handout A) that asks simple open ended questions: Who, What, Where, When, and Why? It is assumed that the teacher will have initially demonstrated this strategy in detail to allow for students to understand the process being used.

3. Once students complete their readings and organizer a class organizer can then be filled out. Three sections (classroom organizer) will need to be available to the teacher/students. As a class on the overhead, ELMO, white/chalk board or chart paper, the students will add their ideas into the left section labeled “VW Advertising history” and generate a class “who, what, where, when and why.” Students will be asked to add to their own graphic organizer as peers share out their findings.

4. Students will independently fill out a Venn Diagram (Handout B) as a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the ads (Handouts C) of VW and domestic motor companies in the 1950s and 1960s.
5. Students will share out their ideas again as a class. This time the teacher should fill out the middle section of their classroom organizer. Students and their teacher will discuss the similarities and differences between the advertisement styles, messages, etc.

6. Students will fill out a Comparison Matrix graphic organizer focusing on Volkswagen advertisements and classify the essential characteristics of three Volkswagen advertisement (Handout D).

7. Students will share out their ideas again as a class. This time the teacher should fill out the right section of their classroom organizer. Students and their teacher will generate and discuss the fundamental characteristics of the Volkswagen advertisements.

8. Students will be given a skeleton Volkswagen advertisement (Handout E) and asked to complete the picture, headline, and promotional writing using the actual advertisements as models and their graphic organizers.
**HANDOUT A**

Name: ____________________________ Period # ________

**Directions:** During/After you read about the background of the Volkswagen’s advertising history please fill in the following graphic organizer in bulleted form. Be prepared to share out your ideas with the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHERE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**HANDOUT B**

Name: ___________________________                  Period # _______

**Directions:** Please fill out the Venn diagram as a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the advertisements of Volkswagen (VW) and domestic motor companies in the 1950s and 1960s in bulleted form. **Hint:** Look at words, colors, images, background, symbols, people, etc. Be prepared to share out your ideas with the class.

[Diagram of Venn diagram with areas labeled: VOLKSWAGEN ADVERTISING and OTHER AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISING]
So you've made up your mind that wagons can't be beautiful to look at and exciting to drive?

Meet the mind changer.

If freight's all you want to haul, we suggest a truck. But if you carry a mixed load of people and packages (like a Little League shortstop and utility outfielder plus a week's groceries), you need a Pontiac Safari. Reasons? Many:

- 101.2 cubic feet of cargo space with all but the front seat down;
- famous Wide-Track ride and roadability;
- and sprightly performance with a strong dash of economy. The looks alone should win your wife's heart. Outside: smooth, flowing Pontiac lines (crisp as a hardtop);
- Inside: handsome Moiralede upholstery that stands up to the patter and batter of tiny feet.
- Safari comes with two sets of keys but, even so, you may have a hard time getting it away from your spouse. Better be up early in the morning. Let your Pontiac dealer show you a '66 Safari, and you'll see why Pontiac copied Motor Trend magazine's "Car of the Year" award. By the way, take the wife along with you so she can choose the color. . . . that's the least you can do.

Pontiac '65 / YEAR OF THE QUICK WIDE TRACKS
Call out the reserves with a touch of your toe!

Ford gives you up to 225 horsepower for INSTANT GO WHEN INSTANTS COUNT!

NOW you can get even more of the lightning that's made Ford V-8 the world's favorite "eight."

The 225-h.p. Thunderbird Special V-8, biggest, performingest engine in its class, is available in most Fords! Or you can have the 202-h.p. V-8—the standard "8" in Fairlanes and Station Wagons, optional in other models. All Fords offer the Mileage Maker Six. These engines pass in a wink with "whoosh" in reserve, you'll know you're safer.

And all Fords have the extra safety of Lifeguard Design—the beauty of Thunderbird styling.

FORD V-8
World's largest-selling "eight"
FLEET!

METEOR MAKES DRIVING COME ALIVE WITH NEW LIGHTNING 260 V-8

For 1963, Meteor is the hot brand. Meteor is the sparkling new arrival in the low-price field. Meteor is the line where every model is a beauty. Each is available with a spirited new Lightning 260 V-8 engine. Each is low in price...surprisingly low for a car with so much room, quality and power. Low on upkeep, too. For Meteor has every service-saver found in cars costing hundreds of dollars more. They greatly reduce ownership costs for oil, brake adjustments, anti-freeze, lubrication, and other routine maintenance. There are four frisky new sedans to choose from. Three new wagons. Two new hardtops, including the sporty S-33 bucket-seater shown. Try the breezy feeling that's swept into the low-priced field. Try the '63 Mercury Meteor.
presenting the

**Star Chief Custom Convertible**

If you think this long, low creation is America’s handsomest car, you’ll find plenty of support among connoisseurs of such things.

_But performance is its forte... performance that creates for this great car a class all its own! Under that sleek hoodline is the 227-h.p. Strato-Streak V-8 (there’s 12 more horsepower with low extra-cost dual exhausts)!_ Pontiac’s oil-smooth Strato-Flight Hydra-Matic® completes the most thrilling power team on the highway.

For those who demand the first word in glamour and the last word in go—look no further, here is your car—the magnificent Star Chief Custom Convertible by Pontiac. *An extra-cost option*
Tied down by today's car prices?
The Good Guys to the rescue with their "White Hat" Special.

What's a 'White Hat' Special? It's a dazzling new Dodge Coronet 440—with the special features you have wanted at a special low package price!

Listen to the list: your choice of a white or black vinyl top or a standard roof; deluxe wheel covers; white sidewall tires; bumper guards; front and rear; deluxe steering wheel; fender-mounted turn signals; Your choice of a 2-door hardtop (shown here) or a 4-door model! Colors? Choose again from a rainbow of nineteen!

Air conditioning and V8 power? The Good Guys can make 'em yours for a breeze! Also ask about the 'White Hat' Special on Charger! Try a 'White Hat' Special on for size! What more fitting way to join the Dodge Rebellion.

The Dodge Rebellion wants you!
Think small.

Our little car isn't so much of a novelty any more. A couple of dozen college kids don't try to squeeze inside it. The guy at the gas station doesn't ask where the gas goes. Nobody even stale at our shape. In fact, some people who drive our little

- Never don't even think 32 miles to the gallon is going any great guns.
- Or using five pints of oil instead of five quarts.
- Or never needing anti-freeze.
- Or racking up 40,000 miles on a set of tires.

That's because once you get used to some of our economies, you don't even think about them any more. Except when you squeeze into a small parking spot. Or renew your small insurance. Or pay a small repair bill. Or trade in your old VW for a new one.

Think it over.
That's how many times we inspect a Volkswagen.

These are some of the 417 we inspect every car that comes through our factory.
It's easy to tell the no's from the yes's.
One no, one yes, every time.

We pay 3,032 men just to look for things to say no to.
And they do.
A visitor from Brazil once asked us what we were going to do about a roof that came through with a dent in it.
Dents are easy to hammer out.
So we didn't think they were a problem.

We washed the body down to a metal lamp and threw it out in the shop aisle.
We shop VWs for little things that you may never notice yourself.

The first of the lining in the roof.
The finish in a door panel.
In the final inspection alone, one VW has to get through 342 points without one.

One out of 50 doesn't make it.
But you wouldn't notice the ones that get away.
Will we ever kill the bug?

Never.
How could we?
We brought the Volkswagen into the world, and gave it the best years of our life.
When people laughed at its looks, we helped it make friends all over the world.
8 million of them.

And we promised them that this was one car that would never go out of style (much less out of sight).
We won’t deny that the bug’s been changed. But not so you’d notice.
The 5,000-odd changes we’ve made since 1946 don’t do a thing to the VW except make it work better and longer.
A few persist feel we kill the bug each time we improve it. But we have no choice.
We’ve got to keep killing the bug every chance we get.
That’s the only sure way to keep it from dying.
After we paint the car we paint the paint.

You should see what we do to a Volkswagen even before we paint it. We bathe it in steam, we bathe it in alkali, we bathe it in phosphate. Then we bathe it in a neutralizing solution. If it got any cleaner, there wouldn't be much left to paint. Then we dunk the whole thing into a vat of slate gray primer until every square inch of metal is covered inside and out. Only one domestic car maker does this. And his cars sell for 3 or 4 times as much as a Volkswagen.

We think that the best way to make an economy car is expensively. After the dunking, we bake it and sand it by hand. Then we paint it. Then we bake it again, and sand it again by hand. Then we paint it again. And bake it again. And sand it again by hand. So after 3 times, you'd think we wouldn't bother to paint it again and bake it again. Right? Wrong.
Pick the right day to test drive a VW and you'll have the road to yourself.

Back when the weather was good, everybody was inviting you to come in and test drive their new whatever.

But now that the weather isn’t so good (and a test drive is really a test!), the invitations have dropped off sharply.

Now maybe you can spare a little time to try out the new Volkswagen.

Not right this minute. Wait for a nice lousy day. The next time it’s snowing or slushing or something like that, drive down to your VW dealer. (If you can make it in your car.)

He’ll be happy to take you out and show you how a Volkswagen works when hardly anything else does.

How the weight of the motor on the rear wheels makes the VW dig in and go, in the snow or the mud, or even on ice.

As you pass all the stranded cars that passed their test drives in balmy days, he'll tell you about the VW's other cold-weather comforts.

The air-cooled motor. It doesn't freeze over, so it doesn't need anti-freeze or a winter thermostat.

And if you have to leave the car out on a cold wet night, it's got four coats of paint and a sealed bottom to keep it cozy.

You've even got an edge with a Volkswagen if the worst happens and you get stuck.

What could be easier to push?
Every now and then a VW runs into a little trouble at the factory.

That hunk of junk was well on its way to being a Volkswagen, when it ran into a stone wall: a bunch of hard-nosed inspectors who pull enough parts off the line every day to make the equivalent of 20 cars. Or 2 freight cars full of scrap.

There are thousands of inspectors who literally pick every Volkswagen to pieces, every step of the way. If there's a little scratch in a fender, it gets scratched. If there's a little nick in a bumper, it gets bumped.

Wherever ten people are doing something, there's an inspector to undo it. For the paint job alone, no less than 8 inspectors check every VW.

All that inspection doesn't mean the work isn't done carefully. The men who make the VW make it very well. The inspectors just make it perfect.
### COMPARISON MATRIX FOR VOLKSWAGEN ADVERTISEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>VW ADVERTISEMENTS TO BE COMPARED</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Presentation of Car/Background/Setting</td>
<td>Similarities</td>
<td>Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Catch Line</td>
<td>Similarities</td>
<td>Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Written Component</td>
<td>Similarities</td>
<td>Similarities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Idea reader is left with</td>
<td>Similarities</td>
<td>Differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 2:

Historical Background for Teachers:

The Paris Peace Conference (1919) was attended by leaders of 32 countries, representing about 75% of the world’s population in order to craft the Treaty of Versailles. However, negotiations were dominated by the five major powers responsible for defeating the Central Powers: the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Important figures in these negotiations included Georges Clemenceau (France) David Lloyd George (Britain), Vittorio Orlando (Italy), and Woodrow Wilson (United States).

The main terms of the Versailles Treaty were included the surrender of all German colonies as League of Nations mandates; German reparations; a ban on the union of Germany and Austria; an acceptance of Germany’s guilt in causing the war; provisions for the trial of the former Kaiser and other war leaders; limitation of Germany’s army with no conscription, no tanks, no heavy artillery, no poison-gas supplies, no aircraft and no airships; the limitation of the German Navy in addition to no submarines. Germany signed the Versailles Treaty under protest. The United States Congress refused to ratify the treaty over the fears of being drawn into future foreign affairs and conflicts.

Time Frame

- The entire lesson may be taught over a span of three to four 42 minute class periods.
Objectives

The following student objectives are addressed in this lesson:

- Students will analyze the social, political, and economic effects of World War I on the world
- Students will analyze the terms that the Treaty of Versailles imposed on Germany
- Students will judge Germany’s reaction to the Treaty of Versailles
- Students will substantiate whether the terms of the Treaty were fair
- Students will evaluate whether the Treaty contributed to the rise to power of the Nazi Party and Hitler in Germany
- Students will analyze the role Germany’s nationalism played in the creation of the Volkswagen.

NYS Standard(s)

- History of the United States and New York - Key Idea 2: Important ideas, social and cultural values, beliefs, and traditions from New York State and United States history illustrate the connections and interactions of people and events across time and from a variety of perspectives.
- History of the United States and New York - Key Idea 4: The skills of historical analysis include the ability to: explain the significance of historical evidence; weigh the importance, reliability, and validity of evidence; understand the concept of multiple causation; understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments.
NCSS Standards:

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
7. Production, Consumption, Distribution
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

Curriculum Background

By studying a variety of primary sources and supporting documents concerning the post-war peace process, students will develop a context for evaluating whether the treaty was fair, and considering some of the complex questions this issue raises about the historical causality and responsibility for the future state of Germany and the development of the Volkswagen. The lesson fits within a larger unit on World War I, and some prior knowledge of the causes and events of the war is assumed.
Lesson Preparation

1. Students will need to complete:

Choices of readings/organizers/worksheets are as follows and can be adapted for student needs:

- 14 Points and The Treaty of Versailles Reading with Active Reading Column
- Graphic organizers for 14 Points and The Treaty of Versailles Reading
- Results of World War One –Loses Chart, Hitler’s April 17, 1923 speech, Extension questions, Writing Piece
- *Dolchstosslegenden* ("Stabbed in the Back Legends") Reading with Active Reading Column
- The KdF Car (Volkswagen) Reading
- Story Mapping: History Frame

3. Students will need the handouts discussed in Procedure/Teaching Strategies which are provided with this lesson plan.

Procedure/Teaching Strategies

1. Students will complete the readings for both the 14 points and Treaty of Versailles (Handout F) independently. A column was supplied on the right for students’ (notes/questions) as an active reading strategy. The column will serve as a method for both student comprehension and reflection.
2. Students will then fill-out the descriptive graphic organizers (Handout G) using their notes sheets to consolidate the information into a more simplified format. They should check their graphic organizers against their seatmate for consistency.

3. Students will analyze the “Results of War: Loses” chart and “Hitler’s April 17, 1923 speech” and answer the reflection questions in complete sentences (Handout H).

*Some prior knowledge of the war is assumed at this point in the unit.*

4. Students will synthesize the information learned throughout the lesson into a written performance of understanding (Handout I). Students will use the space provided to them to answer the following question in paragraph form:

- To what extent was the world impacted socially, politically, and economically by World War I (WWI).

*Students must include at least 3 pieces of evidence in their response*

**A classroom/district appropriate paragraph/writing rubric should be supplied to students**

5. Knowing the effects of the Treaty of Versailles and feelings regarding the War Guilt clause, students will begin to look at the rise of German nationalism by investigating both the Dolchstosslegenden “Stabbed in the Back Legends” (Handout J) and the reading “The KdF Car (Volkswagen) (Handout K).

6. Students will complete a Story Mapping: History Frame on both readings.
### The 14 Points

**Woodrow Wilson**, the President of the United States of America had been genuinely stunned by the savagery of the Great War. He could not understand how an advanced civilization could have reduced itself so that it had created so much devastation. In America, there was a growing desire for the government to adopt a *policy of isolation* and leave Europe to its own plans. Wilson believed that Germany should be punished, but in a way that would lead to European reconciliation as opposed to revenge. He had already written about what he believed the world should be like in his *“Fourteen Points”*. The main points in this document were:

1. No more secret treaties—stop secret alliance making
2. Countries must seek to reduce their weapons and their armed forces—reduce militarism
3. National self-determination should allow people of the same nationality to govern themselves and one nationality should not have the power to govern another—limit imperialism
4. All countries should belong to the League of Nations.

**The League had weaknesses:**

The country, whose president, Woodrow Wilson, had dreamt up the idea of the League refused to join it. As America was the world’s most powerful nation, this was a serious blow to the prestige [status] of the League. In the end America goal to have an isolationist policy throughout the world was achieved—the world’s greatest superpower “went to sleep”.

Germany was not allowed to join the League in 1919. As Germany had started the war, according to the Treaty of Versailles, one of her punishments was that she was not considered to be a member of the international community and, therefore, she was not invited to join. Russia was also not allowed to join because it had a communist government that generated fear in western Europe, and in 1918, the Russian royal family—the Romanovs—were murdered. Such a country could not be allowed to take its place in the peacemaking League.

Therefore, two of the world’s most powerful nations played no part in supporting the League. The two most powerful members were then Britain and France. Both had suffered financially and militarily during the war, and neither was enthusiastic to get involved in disputes that did not affect Western-Europe.

Therefore, the League had a fine ideal—to end war for good. However, if an aggressor nation was determined enough to ignore the League’s verbal warnings, all the League could do was enforce economic sanctions [boycotts] and hope that these worked as it had no chance or enforcing its decisions using military might.
The Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was the peace settlement signed after World War One ended in 1918. The treaty was signed at the vast Versailles Palace near Paris (hence its title) between Germany and the Allies. Leaders of 32 nations, representing about 75% of the world's population, attended. However, negotiations were dominated by the five major powers responsible for defeating the Central Powers: the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Important figures in these negotiations included Georges Clemenceau (France) David Lloyd George (Britain), Vittorio Orlando (Italy), and Woodrow Wilson (United States). The Versailles Palace was considered the most appropriate venue simply because of its size ---many hundreds of people were involved in the process and the final signing ceremony in the Hall of Mirrors could accommodate hundreds of dignitaries [public figures].

Many wanted Germany smashed!!!

The main terms of the Versailles Treaty were:

- The League of Nations was created (taken from the ideas of President Woodrow Wilson’s 14 points.)
- Land had to be handed over the Poland, France, Belgium and Denmark. All overseas colonies were to be handed over to the League.
- All land taken from Russia had to be handed back to Russia.
- Germany’s army had to be reduced to 100,000 men.
- Germany’s navy was reduced to 6 battleships with no submarines.
- No air force was allowed in Germany.
- Germany was forbidden to unite with Austria.
- Germany had to admit that the war was their fault---“War Guilt Clause”---and pay reparations (reimburse countries for war damages.)

A mood of anger throughout Germany as it was felt that as a nation Germany had been unfairly treated.

Throughout the 1920’s, in nearly all parts of the Treaty, the terms were carried out. It was after 1933 that there was a systematic breaking of the terms when the Nazis came to power and Adolf Hitler had new plans for Germany.
Handout G

The End of World War I
November 11, 1918 Armistice signed to end the fighting
The eleventh hour of the 11th day of the 11th month

The 14 Points:
4 Main Ideas from the Reading

Treaty of Versailles:
6 Main Ideas from the Reading

85
### Results of World War I: Losses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Powers</th>
<th>Total Mobilization</th>
<th>Total Casualties (killed, wounded, prisoners, missing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
<td>7,142,558 (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria-Hungary</td>
<td>7,800,000</td>
<td>7,020,000 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>2,850,000</td>
<td>975,000 (34.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>266,919 (22%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allies</th>
<th>Total Mobilization</th>
<th>Total Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
<td>9,150,000 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Empire</td>
<td>8,904,467</td>
<td>3,190,235 (35.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>8,410,000</td>
<td>6,160,200 (73.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5,615,000</td>
<td>2,197,000 (39.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>4,355,000</td>
<td>364,900 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>1,210 (.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Explain how the percentages are connected to trench warfare and industrialization (mechanized warfare):

2. Why did the United States suffer so few casualties compared to its other allies?
Speech on the Treaty of Versailles (April 17, 1923)

By: Adolf Hitler

With the armistice begins the humiliation of Germany. If the Republic on the day of its foundation had appealed to the country: Germans, stand together! Up and resist the foe! The Fatherland, the Republic expects of you that you fight to your last breath, then millions who are now enemies of the Republic would be fanatical Republicans. Today they are the foes of the Republic not because it is a Republic but because this Republic was founded at the moment when Germany was humiliated, because it so discredited the new flag that men's eyes must turn regretfully toward the old flag.

So long as this Treaty stands there can be no resurrection of the German people; no social reform of any kind is possible! The Treaty was made in order to bring 20 million Germans to their deaths and to ruin the German nation. But those who made the Treaty cannot set it aside. As its foundation our Movement formulated three demands:

1. Setting aside of the Peace Treaty.
2. Unification of all Germans.

Our movement could formulate these demands, since it was not our Movement which caused the War, it has not made the Republic, it did not sign the Peace Treaty. There is thus one thing which is the first task of this Movement: it desires to make the German once more National, that his Fatherland shall stand for him above everything else. It desires to teach our people to understand afresh the truth of the old saying: He who will not be a hammer must be an anvil. An anvil we are today, and that anvil will be beaten until out of the anvil we fashion once more a hammer, a German sword!


3. Predict how the German casualties of WWI and Treaty of Versailles punishments can be connected to the rise of Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler:
4. Use the charts below to write a conclusion underneath each result:

**Economic Results:**
- Trade between countries suffered
  **Conclusion:**
- Cost over $350 Billion Dollars
  **Conclusion:**
- Communists take over Russia; becomes Soviet Union
  **Conclusion:**

**Political Results:**
- Land changed ownership between countries
  **Conclusion:**
- New Dictators:
  - Hitler = Germany
  - Mussolini = Italy
  - Stalin = Soviet Union
  **Conclusion:**
- United States emerges as a leading world power
  **Conclusion:**
HANDOUT I

Paragraph Writing - Costs of WWI
Use the space provided to answer the following question in paragraph form. Please include at least 3 pieces of evidence in your response

• To what extent was the world impacted socially, politically, and economically by World War I (WWI).
The emergence of two “stereotypes” occurred during the demobilization and transition in November-December 1918 of Germany. On the one hand the returning German troops were welcomed home with slogans about being “undefeated in the field”—a notion brought to national prominence by Friedrich Ebert in his December 10, 1918 speech to the returning troops at Brandenburg Gate in Berlin (214)*:

“Be welcomed wholeheartedly, soldier-comrades, worker-comrades, citizens [Kameraden, Genossen, Bürger]. No enemy overcame you. Only when the opponent’s superiority in people and materiel became ever more oppressive did we give up the fight. And especially in the face of your heroism it was our duty not to demand senseless additional sacrifices from you. ... With heads held high you can return.”

On the other hand conservatives, nationalists and ex-military leaders began to speak critically about the post-war peace and viewed Weimar politicians, communists, and Jews with suspicion. It was claimed that they had not supported the war and had played a role in selling out Germany to its enemies. These “November Criminals,” or those who seemed to benefit from the newly formed Weimar Republic, were seen to have “stabbed [Germany] in the back” on the home front, by criticizing German nationalism, instigating (starting) unrest and strikes in the critical military industries, or profiteering (taking advantage in order to make a profit). In essence, the accusation was that the accused committed treason against the “benevolent and righteous” common cause.

Contributing to the Dolchstosslegenden were failures blamed on strikes in the arms industry at a critical moments of offensive, leaving soldiers without an adequate supply of materiel. Hitler in his ultranationalist words promised to rearm his county and remilitarize, to reclaim German territory, and regain prominence among the European and world powers after such a humiliating defeat and peace. To the German people, Hitler’s Nazi ideologies and those of Dolchstosslegenden gave rise to Nazi ideologies and a resounding nationalism.

Background: After the Treaty of Versailles humiliations and *Dolchstosslegendens*, Germany was in a recession just like America after World War I (WWI). Adolf Hitler rose to power and saw what a boost to America’s economy the Model T Ford was. Hitler looked to establish the framework for a modern industrialized Germany, and in conjunction with the rise in the Fatherland’s nationalism, included an introduction of a people’s car for cheap transportation for the masses. A government transportation panel came up with a wish list of features and various manufacturers submitted prototypes. The Volkswagen became a centerpiece of Nazism’s claims to benefit ordinary Germans. Hitler proposed to build a cheap car that almost anyone could afford. He gave it the name “KdF Wagen,” the abbreviation for “Kraft durch Freude” (Strength through Joy).

“The best possible way to bring the German people back into work is to set German economic life once more in motion through great monumental works... This is not merely the hour in which we begin the building of the greatest network of roads in the world, this hour is at the same time a milestone on the road towards the building up of the community of the German people.” --Adolf Hitler--

This chapter on the beginnings of the Volkswagen is taken from a translated German book celebrating the achievements of “Kraft durch Freude.” The enormous expansion of the German high system, particularly *Autobahn* system, which like the growth in automobile manufacturing came from the Führer’s orders.

The History: After World War I the German automobile industry was barely able to produce enough of its own models in a reasonably timely fashion, even when fully using all its labor, plants, and machines. It was thus no surprise that early in 1937 the Führer gave the order to use all the means of his organization of millions of workers to realize his dream. As early as 1934, he had talked with the most famous German automotive engineer Dr. Porsche about carrying out his thinking, and given him the commission to undertake the construction of the German Volkswagen.
For years, one had heard little about the project until the Führer’s speech at the Automobile Exhibition in 1938 revealed the happy secret. Among other things, Adolf Hitler said:

“Over the past four years, and with continual improvements, we have developed the Volkswagen, which we are convinced not only can be sold at the price we want, but also can be manufactured in ways that use a minimum of workers to produce the maximum amount. The model that has resulted from years of work by Dr. Porsche will undergo testing this year. It will enable millions of new customers with limited incomes to afford a car. We owe the best cars in the world to our directors, engineers, craftsmen, workers, and salesmen. Today, I am convinced that in a short time we will also build the least expensive cars.”*

In a small miracle, an attractive car made of steel, powered by a 25 horsepower engine, and with enough room for four, even five, people, underwent hard testing. In 150,000 kilometers of test drives, it proved that it could easily maintain a speed of 100 kilometers per hour on the Autobahn. The test cars performed so well that it even astonished those who built them. Hardly any repairs were needed. In the mountains, the Volkswagen left larger cars behind, and also handled poor roads well. The right model had been developed. Now it was a matter of mass producing the car so that those with limited incomes could buy it, and of developing a means of financing it for them.

The realization of his dream seemed certain, and so everyone understood it when the Führer recognized the achievements of the German free time organization by naming the car in his speech the “KdF Wagen,” a people’s car in the truest sense of the word. A storm of applause erupted as Adolf Hitler took a seat in a test car. The son of the designer took his seat behind the wheel and drove the Führer through the enthusiastic crowd of people.
The KdF Wagen factory was being built in stages. Production began late in the summer of 1938. By the beginning of the last quarter of 1938, 150,000 people had already ordered the car and are waiting eagerly for delivery. They would begin receiving their cars early in 1940. After the first stage of construction was completed, two shifts were set to build 450,000 cars a year. That number was to rise to 1,350,000 KdF cars a year when the third stage was completed. Even in its first stage, the factory exceeds anything seen before in Europe. When its third stage was set to be finished, it would significantly surpass Ford as the largest car manufacturing plant in the world.

Transportation was a measure of a rising standard of living. Long ago, many people could not afford railway tickets. Hitler realized that rail travel was something everyone could now afford, just as they can afford streetcars and busses. He remembered that not long ago, millions of Germans with low pay could not afford the high price of a bicycle.

Millions of people in Germany saw a car as something only the rich can afford. Cars would no longer the privilege of a particular class, or of well-paid people.

Hundreds of thousands of people’s comrades, above all those who live in big cities and in drab industrial areas and who lead a joyless, colorless life, would now be able to reach the beauties of nature on weekends or after work with their families. They would find pleasure and relaxation. They would feel more like free and independent people. To own a car meant to live twice as much!

STORY MAPPING: HISTORY FRAME

TITLE OF EVENT:
Dolchstosslegenden
"Stabbed in the Back Legends"

PARTICIPANTS / KEY PLAYERS:

PROBLEMS AND/OR GOALS:

TIME:

LOCATION:

OUTCOMES / RESOLUTIONS / FUTURE PROBLEMS:

KEY EVENTS:

SUMMARIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS HISTORICAL STORY:

94
STORY MAPPING: HISTORY FRAME

TITLE OF EVENT:
Dolchstosslegenden
“Stabbed in the Back Legends”

PROBLEMS AND/OR GOALS:

PARTICIPANTS / KEY PLAYERS:

TIME:

LOCATION:

OUTCOMES / RESOLUTIONS / FUTURE PROBLEMS

KEY EVENTS

SUMMARIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS HISTORICAL STORY
According to the summarizing strategy developed by Brown, Campione, and Day (1981), students need to follow a set of rules or steps in the formation of a summary. The strategies selected in step two specifically of the first lesson ask students to complete a story frame like application. The open ended questions of “who, what, where, when, why and how” are designed to highlight the essential to know information in a Narrative Frame style from the selected reading. Researchers Valerie Anderson and Suzanne Hidi have indicated that “to effectively summarize, students must delete some information, and keep some information. By analyzing the text at a deeper level and by having an awareness of the explicit structure of the information will aid in the summarizing information.”

Students will not only have the prior knowledge needed to apply to the next lesson component, but will also be taught the importance of summarization. In order to enhance students’ understanding of and ability to use the knowledge they acquired from the reading, the third step of the first lesson presents students guidance in targeting essential knowledge together. The classroom discussion and class graphic organizer will not only aid as a method if instruction, but will also serve to engage students. Therefore, the learning of academic content by encouraging verbal should help aid in the desired outcome for students, and allow students the ability to learn to discuss historical topics more effectively.

In the fourth component of the first lesson students will use a Venn Diagram as a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the advertisements of Volkswagen and

---

79 ibid., 30.
domestic motor companies in the 1950s and 1960s. The Venn Diagram provides students with a visual display of the similarities and differences between the two advertisements. “There are strong research bases supporting the effectiveness of having students identify similarities and differences without direct input from the teacher.” By allowing students to independently work through the task first a teacher would expect to stimulate differences in students’ thinking, however, by refocusing them as a class and generating a class list together with a teacher’s guidance it will also help them focus their selections and clarify misconceptions. When a teacher has the opportunity to collaborate with students on activities they may also suggest to students a wide variety of perspectives and ways to approach the newly acquired knowledge.

The Comparison Matrix offered in step six of the first lesson “provides for a more detailed approach to relationships and divergences” (Marzano 19). It offers the students an effective visual aid, features a simple and exact structure. A comparison matrix outlines the most typical features of an item, without drawing a conclusion directly, but by simplifying the process of analysis. With the help of the organizer, students can make in-depth comparisons, confronting multiple objects and their aspects all at once. Consequently, the use of this visual teaching method contributes to the development of analytical skills among students. While the students work with the comparison matrix the teacher should consider the following two points. First, it is important to make sure that all of the compared items are known to the students; otherwise it will be difficult to outline the items’ characteristics. Secondly, if students have not worked with a

---

80 ibid., 16.
comparison matrix before, pre-teaching and modeling should be used, or the level of sophistication in the matrix needs to be scaled to an appropriate level.

In the last step in the first lesson students are asked to complete a performance of understanding. Richard J. Stiggins states that “performance assessments call upon the [student] to demonstrate specific skills and competencies, that is, to apply the skills and knowledge they have mastered.” Authentic assessments often ask students to analyze, synthesize and apply what they have learned in a substantial manner, and students create new meaning in the process as well. The performance assessment will allow more student choice and construction in determining what is presented as evidence of proficiency. Even when students cannot choose their own topics or formats, such is the case with Volkswagen advertising; there are usually multiple acceptable routes towards constructing a product or performance.

In the first step of the second lesson the teacher will ask their students to actively read in a column provided on the right of the text. Active reading is a process of constructing meaning that involves various levels of interaction between reader and text. “When students at all levels of reading proficiency turn their attention to a particular piece of text, it is important that they get the right scaffolding to think and discuss, for example summarizing, justifying answers, and making connections.”


requires that a teacher explicitly model effective thinking skills, questioning strategies, and procedures to foster confidence and independence in their students. Writing notes and questions “help students proceed from understanding goals to demonstrating understanding. As a result, if we have engaged our students well in [active reading], then we have also prepared them well.”83 Reading literacy encompasses more than just basic or functional literacy. Students need help in knowing when to read, how to read, and how to reflect on what has been read. The strategies should also transfer to a variety of texts and for a variety of purposes; reading for literary experience, reading for information, and reading to perform a task.

In the second step of the first lesson students are asked to complete two graphic organizers that target specific information from the previous reading from step one. Graphic organizers help students to highlight essential content information and vocabulary. Organizers also help students generate graphic representations of this information. “When content is illustrated with diagrams, the information can be maintained by students over a period of time. Organizers portray knowledge in a meaningful way which helps bring clarity to ideas as connections are made.”84 Having a way to organize ideas, facts, and concepts graphically facilitates effective student learning. Many students are visual learners, thus, a visual approach to brainstorming or


organizing information is essential. Graphic organizers appear to be a valued approach to utilize in teaching and learning. Students are required to think in multiple directions when using graphic organizers which make learning an active and meaningful process.

In the third part of lesson two students are asked to draw conclusions from chart data, categorized evidence, and then make a prediction from a primary source. The data charts and categorized evidence act as tools for organizing information, much like previously mentioned graphic organizers. In addition, by engaging students with primary sources promotes inquiry, and assesses how students apply critical thinking and analysis skills to primary sources. By considering the implications (both intellectual and ethical) of ideas and comparing these ideas to their own, students define their critical thinking skills and deepen their collective understanding of the material they discuss. “This higher standard of reading requires many skills, including comprehension, reflection, the ability to distinguish facts from argument, and the ability to weigh evidence and make conclusions.”85 Students today must read very different types of materials, including charts and graphs, and historical documents.

In the fourth part of lesson two students are asked to compose a written response to a prompt. Writing is another form of student thinking. When students write in they must think critically about the events and issues they are studying. Reading carefully, thinking about text, discussing it, and, finally, writing one’s extended thought about it

---

opens students’ minds to the world of ideas in a text. Students become better readers, thinkers, and learners in a discipline by processing their ideas through writing. Equally important, students need to learn how writing is used within a discipline. Utilizing many different kinds of writing assignments gives students practice with a variety of disciplinary forms and conventions. When writing to demonstrate knowledge, students show what they have learned by synthesizing information and explaining their understanding of concepts and ideas.

In the final components of lesson two students are asked to analyze the effects of the Treaty of Versailles and World War One on German nationalism, which in turn gave rise to the Volkswagen. As previously noted, information is more easily learned and understood with visual organizers. Once students acquire the basic, yet solid foundation of a concept, then future content can be addressed at higher cognitive levels leading students to become more strategic learners. Research shows that graphic organizers are key to assisting students to improve academic performance. In creating an organizer, pertinent aspects of a concept or topic are arranged into a pattern using labels. David Ausubel believed that "the manner in which knowledge is represented can influence learning. The appropriate organizer can help students form relationships between previously acquired knowledge and new concepts. Learning takes place when the cognitive structure expands with the new knowledge." Graphic organizers clarify learning and organize information which leads to


87 Ausubel, David. The psychology of meaningful verbal learning. (New York:Grune & Stratton, 1963), 83.
students being active in acquisition of conceptual knowledge. Teachers also use this resource to develop lessons and link new concepts with existing knowledge during a lesson leading to meaningful learning. The students’ ability to organize and structure content can also be assessed at the conclusion of a lesson.

Ultimately, graphic organizers allow for more than just content acquisition. Students learn processing skills, patterns for organizing information, critical thinking skills, and communication skills. Graphic organizers make learning active, which makes it meaningful, and hence leads to the ultimate goal of effective learning for students.