

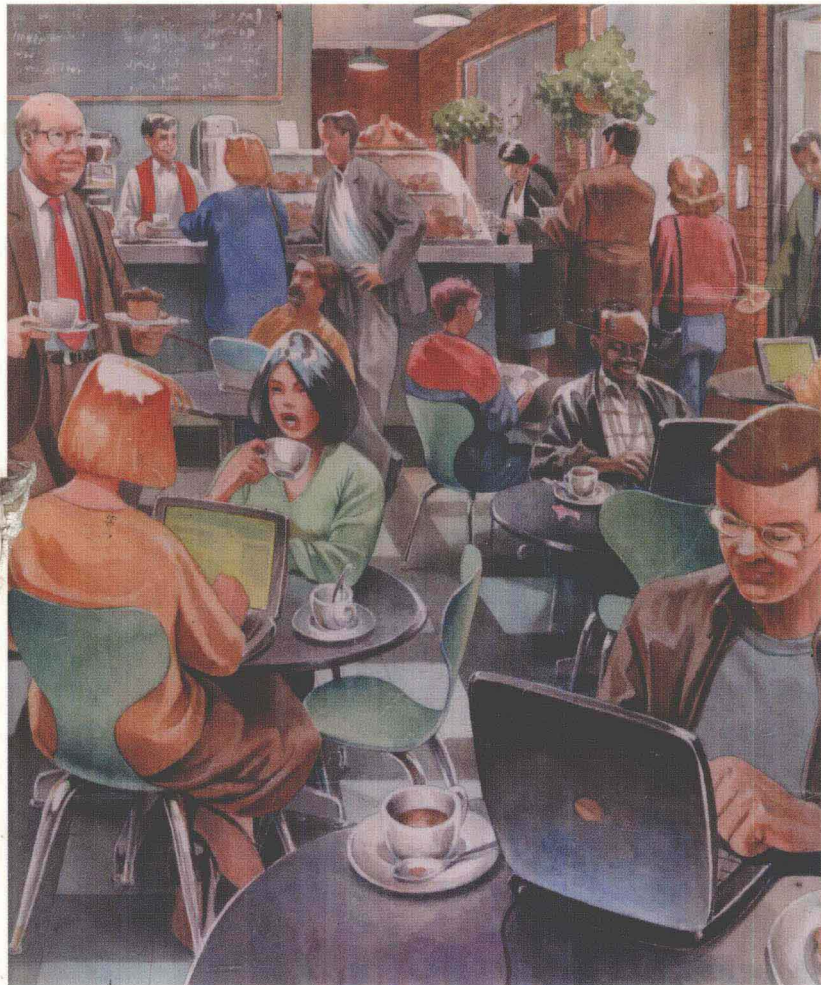
F I F T H

E D I T I O N

B *consumer* BEHAVIOR



buying,
having,
and
being



MICHAEL R. SOLOMON

FIFTH EDITION

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

BUYING, HAVING, AND BEING

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PREFACE

I love to people-watch, don't you? People shopping, people flirting, people parading. . . . Consumer behavior is the study of people and the products that help to shape their identities. Because I'm a consumer myself, I have a selfish interest in learning more about how this process works—and so do you.

In many courses, students are merely passive observers, learning about topics that affect them indirectly if at all. Not everyone is a plasma physicist, a medieval French scholar, or even an industrial marketer. But we are all consumers. Many of the topics dealt with in this book have both professional and personal relevance to the reader, whether he or she is a student, professor, or marketing practitioner. Nearly everyone can relate to the trials and tribulations associated with last-minute shopping, primping for a big night out, agonizing over an expensive purchase decision, fantasizing about a week in the Caribbean, celebrating a holiday, or commemorating a landmark event, such as a graduation, getting a driver's license, or (dreaming about) winning the lottery.

In this edition I have tried to introduce you to the latest and best thinking by some very bright scientists who develop models and studies of consumer behavior. But, that's not enough. Consumer behavior is an applied science, so we must never lose sight of the role of "horse sense" when we try to apply our findings to life in the real world. That's why you'll find a lot of practical examples to back up these fancy theories. That's also why you'll find a new feature I'm very excited about. It's called "Reality Check," and boy, did I have fun creating it. I was helped by a great panel of college students from around the world. Each was chosen by their professor to represent their universities on the panel, and they did their schools proud. Their comments help to flesh out the material by providing a valuable perspective on ethical and strategic issues discussed in the text. You'll find their take on these questions in every chapter. See whether you agree with them.

Beyond Canned Peas: Buying, Having, and Being

As this book's subtitle suggests, my vision of consumer behavior goes well beyond studying the act of buying—having and being are just as important if not more so. Consumer behavior is more than buying things, such as a can of peas; it also embraces the study of how having (or not having) things affects our lives and how our possessions influence the way we feel about ourselves and about each

other—our state of being. I developed the models of consumer behavior that appear at the beginning of text sections to underscore the complex—and often inseparable—interrelationships between the individual consumer and his or her social realities.

In addition to understanding why people buy things, we also try to appreciate how products, services, and consumption activities contribute to the broader social world we experience. Whether shopping, cooking, cleaning, playing basketball, hanging out at the beach, or even looking at ourselves in the mirror, our lives are touched by the marketing system. As if these experiences were not complex enough, the task of understanding the consumer multiplies geometrically when a multicultural perspective is taken. The American experience is important, but it's far from the whole story. This book also considers the many other consumers around the world whose diverse experiences with buying, having, and being are equally vital to understand. In addition to the numerous examples of marketing and consumer practices relating to consumers and companies outside the United States that appear throughout the book, chapters contain boxes called "Multicultural Dimensions" that highlight cultural differences in consumer behavior.

Digital Consumer Behavior: A Virtual Community

As more of us go online everyday, there's no doubt the world is changing—and consumer behavior is evolving faster than you can say World Wide Web. This fifth edition highlights and celebrates the brave new world of digital consumer behavior. Consumers and producers are brought together electronically in ways we have never before experienced. Rapid transmission of information is altering the speed at which new trends develop and the direction in which they travel—especially since the virtual world lets consumers participate in the creation and dissemination of new products.

One of the most exciting aspects of the new digital world is that consumers can interact directly with other people who live around the block or around the world. As a result, the meaning of community is being radically redefined. It's no longer enough to acknowledge that consumers like to talk to each other about products. Now we share opinions and get the buzz about new movies, CDs, cars, clothes—you name it—in electronic communities that may include a housewife in Alabama, a disabled senior citizen in Alaska, or a teen loaded with body piercings in Amsterdam.

We have just begun to explore the ramifications for consumer behavior when a Web surfer can project her own picture onto a Web site to get a virtual makeover or a corporate purchasing agent can solicit bids for a new piece of equipment from vendors around the world in minutes. These new ways of interacting in the marketplace create bountiful opportunities for businesspeople and consumers alike. You will find illustrations of the changing digital world sprinkled liberally throughout this edition. In addition, each chapter features boxes called "Net Profit" that point to specific examples of the Net's potential to improve the way business is conducted.

But, is the digital world always a rosy place? As in the "real world," unfortunately the answer is no. The potential to exploit consumers, whether by invading their privacy, preying on the curiosity of children, or just plain providing false product information, is always there. That's why you'll also find boxes called

“The Tangled Web” that point out some of the abuses of this fascinating new medium. Still, I can’t imagine a world without the Web, and I hope you’ll enjoy the ways it’s changing our field. When it comes to the new virtual world of consumer behavior, you’re either on the train or under it.

Consumer Research Is a Big Tent

Like most of the readers of this book, the field of consumer behavior is young, dynamic, and in flux. It is constantly being cross-fertilized by perspectives from many different disciplines—the field is a big tent that invites many diverse views to enter. I have tried to express the field’s staggering diversity in these pages. Consumer researchers represent virtually every social science discipline, plus a few from the physical sciences and the arts for good measure. From this melting pot has come a healthy “stew” of research perspectives, viewpoints regarding appropriate research methods, and even deeply held beliefs about what are and what are not appropriate issues for consumer researchers to study in the first place.

The book also emphasizes the importance of understanding consumers in formulating marketing strategy. Many (if not most) of the fundamental concepts in marketing are based on the practitioner’s ability to know people. After all, if we don’t understand why people behave as they do, how can we identify their needs? If we can’t identify their needs, how can we satisfy their needs? If we can’t satisfy people’s needs, we don’t have a marketing concept, so we might as well fold our tents and go home! To illustrate the potential of consumer research to inform marketing strategy, the text contains numerous examples of specific applications of consumer behavior concepts by marketing practitioners as well as examples of windows of opportunity in which such concepts could be used (perhaps by alert strategists after taking this course!). Many of these possibilities are highlighted in special features called “Marketing Opportunities.”

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

A strategic focus is great, but this book does not assume that everything marketers do is in the best interests of consumers or of their environment. Likewise, as consumers we do many things that are not positive either. People are plagued by addictions, status envy, ethnocentrism, racism, sexism, and many other “isms.” Regrettably, there are times when marketing activities—deliberately or not—encourage or exploit these human flaws. This book deals with the totality of consumer behavior, warts and all. Marketing mistakes or ethically suspect activities are also highlighted in special features labeled “Marketing Pitfalls.”

On the other hand, marketers have helped to create many wonderful (or at least unusual) things, such as holidays, comic books, techno music, Beanie Babies, and the many stylistic options available to us in the domains of clothing, home design, the arts and cuisine. I have also taken pains to acknowledge the sizable impact of marketing on popular culture. Indeed, the final section of this book reflects very recent work in the field that scrutinizes, criticizes, and sometimes celebrates consumers in their everyday worlds. I hope you will enjoy reading about such wonderful things as much as I enjoyed writing about them.

Ancillary Materials Available

Adopters of the fifth edition will be provided with a useful set of resources, many of which are new to this edition. The improvements to the teaching package include full Web support for professor and students through our My PHLIP Web site (www.prenhall.com/myphlip) and Course Compass, a complete online course management system, a new video library, a set of overhead transparencies featuring advertisements, and a video featuring recent broadcast commercials from around the world. In addition, the following items comprise the support package for *Consumer Behavior*, Fifth Edition.

Instructor's Manual

This manual includes chapter summaries, chapter outline with annotations for video cases and internet exercises, answers to end-of-chapter discussion questions, field projects, and notes for PowerPoint transparencies and ad transparencies.

Test Item File and PH Test Generator

For each chapter, a file of 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions, ranked by difficulty, and a complete test generation system for Windows environments.

PowerPoint Lecture Slides

For each chapter, 25-40 slides which outline the key topics in the chapter, including print ads. A subset of 150 of these slides are available in acetate form as *transparencies* to accompany the fifth edition.

Cases in Consumer Behavior by Martha McEnally, Volumes I & II

In two volumes of ten cases each, these case selections vary in length and cover a variety of industries and types of consumer buying situations. Either of both modules can be shrinkwrapped free with the text—ask your sales representative for the appropriate ISBN code for ordering.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the many helpful comments on how to improve the fifth edition that were provided by my peer reviewers. Special thanks go to the following people: Cynthia Webster, Mississippi State University; Amy Rummel, Alfred University; and Sylvia D. Clark, St. John's University.

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M.R.S.
Auburn, Alabama
March 2001

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael R. Solomon, Ph.D., is Human Sciences Professor of Consumer Behavior in the Department of Consumer Affairs, College of Human Sciences, at Auburn University. Prior to joining Auburn in 1995, he was Chairman of the Department of Marketing in the School of Business at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. He earned B.A. degrees in Psychology and Sociology magna cum laude at Brandeis University in 1977, and a Ph.D. in Social Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1981. He received the Cutty Sark Men's Fashion Award for his research on the psychological aspects of clothing. In 1996 he was awarded the Fulbright/FLAD Chair in Market Globalization by the U.S. Fulbright Commission and the Government of Portugal.

Prof. Solomon's primary research interests include consumer behavior and lifestyle issues, online research methodologies, the symbolic aspects of products, the psychology of fashion, decoration, and image, and services marketing. He has published numerous articles on these and related topics in academic journals, and he has delivered invited lectures on these subjects in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Australia, and Latin America. His research has been funded by the American Academy of Advertising, the American Marketing Association, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. He currently sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* and the *Journal of Retailing*, and he serves on the Board of Governors of the Academy of Marketing Science. Prof. Solomon was ranked as one of the fifteen most widely cited scholars in the academic behavioral sciences/fashion literature, and as one of the ten most productive researchers in the field of advertising and marketing communications.

In addition to his academic activities, Prof. Solomon is a frequent contributor to mass media. His feature articles have appeared in such magazines as *Psychology Today*, *Gentleman's Quarterly*, and *Savvy*. He has been quoted in numerous national magazines and newspapers, including *Allure*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, *Mirabella*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *Self*, *USA Today*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. He has been interviewed numerous times on radio and television, including appearances on *Today*, *Good Morning America*, CNBC, Channel One, *Inside Edition*, *Newsweek on the Air*, and National Public Radio. Prof. Solomon serves as an advisor to numerous companies on issues related to consumer behavior, services marketing, retailing, and advertising. He frequently addresses business groups on strategic issues related to consumer behavior. Prof. Solomon currently lives in Auburn, Alabama, with his wife, Gail, their three children, Amanda, Zachary, and Alexandra—and Chloe, their golden retriever.



SECTION

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THE TRUE COLOR
OF BENETTON.

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CONSUMERS IN THE MARKETPLACE

This introductory section provides an overview of the field of consumer behavior. Chapter 1 looks at how the field of marketing is influenced by the actions of consumers and also at how we as consumers are influenced by marketers. It describes the discipline of consumer behavior and some of the different approaches to understanding what makes consumers tick. It also highlights the importance of the study of consumer behavior to such public policy issues as addiction and environmentalism.



Section Outline

Chapter 1
An Introduction to Consumer Behavior