CONSUMER BEHAVIOR





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CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Throughout the long days devoted to developing this text, my family provided me with encouragement and much assistance in this effort. In so doing, they made room in their lives for me to work and gave up much of the time I might have shared with them. With much love and great appreciation I dedicate this book to Barbara, and to Billy, Alexandria, and James.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William L. Wilkie is Graduate Research Professor of Marketing at the University of Florida. There he teaches popular undergraduate and graduate courses in consumer behavior and consults for businesses and government agencies on consumer behavior topics. Dr. Wilkie has served as President of the Association for Consumer Research, an international professional group with members in 26 nations around the world. He has also served as a member of the editorial boards of the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, and Journal of Public Policy and Marketing. Dr. Wilkie's research in marketing and consumer behavior has received a number of awards and recognitions. He has been recognized as one of the most-cited authors in the field of marketing; one of his articles has been named a "Citation Classic in the Social Sciences" by the Institute for Scientific Information. He is currently serving as a member of the American Marketing Association's Task Force on the Development of Marketing Thought and is a member of the Academic Advisory Council of the Marketing Science Institute.

Dr. Wilkie holds a B.B.A. degree from the University of Notre Dame, where he majored in marketing and minored in management science. He holds M.B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Stanford University, where he was also a fellow in the year-long Stanford-Sloan Executive Development Program. Prior to joining the University of Florida, he served as an in-house consultant to the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, D.C., as a research professor at the Marketing Science Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and as a faculty member at Purdue University and Harvard University. He now lives in Gainesville, Florida with his wife, Barbara; three children, Billy, Allie, and Jimmy; and three dogs, Duke, Baron, and Blaze.

PREFACE -

This book is governed by my belief that consumer behavior is a fascinating topic. It is about people and the way we live. It is about consumers buying and marketers selling. It is about many forms of influence, from the subtle shaping of our culture, through the social forces from our family, friends, and peers, to the persuasive attempts from advertising and salespersons. It is about what we know (and what we don't know), what we like (and what we avoid). It is about the detailed choices we make, and the ways in which we allocate our resources (since our desires tend to exceed our dollars available). It is about the benefits we seek through our purchases, and the satisfactions we obtain through our consumption of products and services.

For all these reasons, consumer behavior is important. It plays a significant role in our lives, from literally sustaining life itself (foods, medicines . . .), to providing comfort and convenience (electricity, clothing, cars . . .), to enriching our leisure and social lives (perfumes, education, entertainment . . .). Moreover, because it is an activity in which we all engage, consumer behavior has *huge* economic impacts in our society. When consumer purchasing is high, jobs are created and profits encourage more business investments. For any particular firm, customer patronage is the key determinant of success or failure.

In addition to being important, consumer behavior is also a most interesting phenomenon. Why are people attracted to some products but not to others? Why do some consumers never buy certain products while others consume them regularly? Why do some consumers spend frugally while others run up large debts? What role does the marketing system play in all of this behavior? Is influencing consumer behavior an easy task for a marketer, or is it actually quite difficult? What are some of the "rules of thumb" that marketers use when interacting with consumers? How does advertising really work? These questions can go on and on, of course, but they represent only a few dimensions of what is truly a fascinating field.

My Goals for the Book

As a student, I came to appreciate those occasions when a book would capture my interest and stimulate me to think more about a particular idea or theory. I especially ap-

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preciated those books that were able to provide me with useful frameworks to help guide my further thinking—frameworks that would reveal how the basic elements related to one another, and what implications these basic relations might have. When I decided to write this textbook, my goal was to produce this type of book for others to read and enjoy. As a professor, however, I also wanted the book to contain the best and latest concepts, findings, and applications. And, to the extent possible, I wished to see the book make a useful contribution to knowledge in the field as well as to the knowledge of its individual readers.

In this book, therefore, you will find a number of interesting and useful frameworks. These frameworks tie concepts together and bring them to the level of the real world that we experience in our lives as marketers and/or consumers. In some chapters I was able to use frameworks that are already widely accepted within the field, while in other chapters new frameworks were developed especially for this text.

Another basic element of this text is its reliance on the importance of *perspective*, or the view we choose to take of a particular topic. Just as a person looks different from the back than from the front, and different still if viewed from the side, so too will a topic appear different depending on the perspective we use in analyzing it. Recognizing this, the book contains several chapters that directly discuss key perspectives on consumer behavior. Even though each of these is familiar to us, they have typically not been highlighted in this manner. Part One employs an academic perspective (Chapter 1), a marketer perspective (Chapter 2), a consumer perspective (Chapter 3), and an individual-level perspective (Chapter 4). In addition, for those who wish to investigate other perspectives, Part Four provides optional discussions of a public policy perspective (Chapter 21), a consumer-market perspective (Chapter 22), and theoretical background discussions of culture and social class (Chapter 23) and of socialization and social influences (Chapter 24). Parts Two (External Influences on Consumer Behavior) and Three (Internal Processes of Consumer Behavior) address the mainstream topics in the field. Each notes the issue of differing perspectives where pertinent.

The Stylc of This Book

In accord with my goals, the style of this book attempts to capture the innate excitement of consumer behavior while also delivering the best of theory and applications. It seeks to stimulate a personal interest in reading the material and thinking more about it, simply because the topics are interesting. It provides many examples of the real world of marketing and consumer behavior; in addition to adding interest, these examples indicate the differing ways in which concepts relate to reality. Occasionally it asks the reader to hazard a prediction of how a study turned out or to suggest another way to resolve a realistic marketing problem.

Also in accord with my goals, great attention was paid to effectively communicating the material to the reader. In the process of writing the book, several focus groups of readers were conducted for each individual chapter; within each group session the topics, examples, and explanations were discussed and critiqued in detail. Following each session, the chapter was revised to clarify, sharpen, and streamline the discussions and examples. The entire text was then course-tested at several universities to obtain further reactions and introduce further revisions. At this point I am able to report that almost all of the consumer behavior students who have read this text are

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enthusiastic about it; they report that they find the book to be stimulating, to provide clear explanations, and to be a pleasure to read.

With respect to contents, in striving to present the best of theory and concepts, this text adopts the approach of stressing the basic issues in each area. Students and professors who wish to go beyond these basics in any given area will find that a strong foundation has been laid for this effort and that extensive reference notes have been provided. Students and professors who wish to move on to the next topic will find that they can do so without being diverted. In a sense, then, this book has been written for several levels of reader involvement and to support different forms of teaching orientations. The text is thus suitable for both undergraduate and graduate courses, as a function of the degree and form of additional materials that are seen to be appropriate. Sufficient background on research approaches is provided that advanced readings can be assigned to extend text discussions. Sufficient marketing decision—orientation is included that cases can be assigned to extend the application of concepts to the reality of a marketing manager's role. Given the interesting nature of the topics, moreover, a class discussion format is easily supported, as are lectures to explain and extend topic coverage.

By far the majority of consumer behavior courses are presently taught within marketing departments of business schools. This book maintains this general orientation and has been designed to be successful in this setting. There is no reason, however, that students with other majors should not be able to enjoy and use it effectively as well (students without a basic background in Marketing should pay careful attention to Chapter 2, however, to obtain the rudiments of this significant perspective).

Acknowledgments

This project has taken a long time to complete, and over the years many people have helped in its development and refinement. Graduate students at the University of Florida, especially Henry Morehead, Melanie Albert, Alain D'Astous, Carolyn Simmons, Amardeep Assar, William Baker, Kunal Basu, Amitava Chattopadhyay, Alan Dick, Douglas Hausknecht, Howard Marmorstein, Darrell Miller, Prakash Nedungadi, and Jane Petty, all offered useful insights at various stages of this project. My daily work activities were much assisted by the pleasant personalities of Jody Imperi, Carrie Patterson, Astrid Barranco, Yvette Ellison, Connie Kaminski, and Leslie McGlynn. Rich Esposito, Marketing and Economics Editor at John Wiley, tracked (stalked?) the progress of the manuscript through one missed deadline after another, offering advice regarding its positioning and completion, and supporting the development of a fine supplemental package to assist in its instructional mission. Barbara Heaney, Sally Ann Bailey, Jan Lavin, Debora Fratello, and Richard Viest comprised a most pleasant and talented editorial and production team which I interacted at John Wiley.

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William L. Wilkie Gainesville, Florida January 1986



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