

## CHAPTER 11

### Influence of Culture on Consumer Behavior

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to understand:

1. What culture is and how it impacts consumer behaviors.
2. How culture acts as an “invisible hand” that guides consumption-related attitudes, values and behavior.
3. How culture sets standards for what satisfies consumers’ needs.
4. How culture is learned and expressed in language, symbols, and rituals.
5. How consumers are always adapting to culture-related experiences.
6. How the impact of culture on consumer behavior is measured.
7. How core cultural values impact American consumers.
8. How the American culture became a “shopping culture.”

#### CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study of culture is the study of all aspects of a society. It is the language, knowledge, laws, and customs that give society its distinctive character and personality. In the context of consumer behavior, culture is defined as the sum total of learned beliefs, values, and customs that serve to regulate the consumer behavior of members of a particular society. Beliefs and values are guides for consumer behavior; customs are unusual and accepted ways of behaving.

The impact of culture is so natural and ingrained that its influence on behavior is rarely noted. Yet, culture offers order, direction, and guidance to members of society in all phases of human problem solving. Culture is dynamic, and gradually and continually evolves to meet the needs of society.

Culture is learned as part of social experience. Children acquire from their environment a set of beliefs, values, and customs that constitute culture (i.e., they are encultured). These are acquired through formal learning, informal learning, and technical learning. Advertising enhances formal learning by reinforcing desired modes of behavior and expectations; it enhances informal learning by providing models for behavior.

Culture is communicated to members of the society through a common language and through commonly shared symbols. Because the human mind has the ability to absorb and process symbolic communication, marketers can successfully promote both tangible and intangible products and product concepts to consumers through mass media.

All the elements of the marketing mix serve to communicate symbolically with the audience. Products project an image of their own; so does promotion. Price and retail outlets symbolically convey images concerning the quality of the product.

The elements of culture are transmitted by three pervasive social situations: the family, the church, and the school. A fourth social institution that plays a major role in the transmission of culture is the mass media, both through editorial content and through advertising.

A wide range of measurement techniques are used to study culture. The range includes projective techniques, attitude measurement methods, field observation, participant observation, content analysis, and value measurement survey techniques.

A number of core values of the American people are relevant to the study of consumer behavior. These include achievement and success, activity, efficiency and practicality, progress, material comfort, individualism, freedom, conformity, humanitarianism, youthfulness, and fitness and health.

Because each of these values varies in importance to the members of our society, each provides an effective basis for segmenting consumer markets.

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

1. The study of culture is a challenging undertaking because its primary focus is on the broadest component of social behavior in an entire society.
2. In contrast to the psychologist, who is principally concerned with the study of individual behavior, or the sociologist, who is concerned with the study of groups, the anthropologist is primarily interested in identifying the very fabric of society itself.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Figure #11.1 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### WHAT IS CULTURE?

1. Given the broad and pervasive nature of **culture**, its study generally requires a detailed examination of the character of the total society, including such factors as language, knowledge, laws, religions, food customs, music, art, technology, work patterns, products, and other artifacts that give a society its distinctive flavor.
2. In a sense, culture is a society's personality. For this reason, it is not easy to define its boundaries.
3. **Culture** is the sum total of learned beliefs, values, and customs that serve to direct the consumer behavior of members of a particular society.
4. Beliefs consist of the very large number of mental or verbal statements that reflect a person's particular knowledge and assessment of something.

5. Values also are beliefs, however, values differ from other beliefs because they must meet the following criteria:
  - a) They are relatively few in number.
  - b) They serve as a guide for culturally appropriate behavior.
  - c) They are enduring or difficult to change.
  - d) They are not tied to specific objects or situations.
  - e) They are widely accepted by the members of a society.
6. In a broad sense, both values and beliefs are mental images that affect a wide range of specific attitudes that, in turn, influence the way a person is likely to respond in a specific situation.
7. **Customs** are overt modes of behavior that constitute culturally approved or acceptable ways of behaving in specific situations.
  - a) Customs consist of everyday or routine behavior.
  - b) Although beliefs and values are guides for behavior, customs are usual and acceptable ways of behaving.
  - c) An understanding of various cultures can help marketers predict consumer acceptance of their products.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Term culture Here; Use Learning Objective #11.1 Here; Use Discussion Question #1 Here; Use Exercise #3 Here\*\*\*\*\***

## **THE INVISIBLE HAND OF CULTURE**

1. The impact of culture is so natural and automatic that its influence on behavior is usually taken for granted.
2. Often, it is only when we are exposed to people with different cultural values or customs that we become aware of how culture has molded our own behavior.
3. Consumers both view themselves in the context of their culture and react to their environment based upon the cultural framework that they bring to that experience. Each individual perceives the world through his or her own cultural lens.
4. Culture can exist and sometimes reveal itself at different perceived or subjective levels.
5. Those interested in consumer behavior would be most concerned with three “levels of subjective culture:
  - a) Supranational level – reflects the underlying dimensions of culture that impact multiple cultures or different societies.
  - b) National level factors – such as shared core values, customs, personalities, and predispositional factors that tend to capture the essence of the “national character” of the citizens of a particular country.
  - c) Group Level factors – are concerned with various subdivisions of a country or society. They might include subcultures’ difference, and membership and reference group differences.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.2 Here, Use Table #11.1 Here; Use Figures #11.2 And #11.3 Here\*\*\*\*\***

## CULTURE SATISFIES NEEDS

1. Culture exists to satisfy the needs of people within a society.
  - a) It offers order, direction, and guidance in all phases of human problem solving by providing “tried and true” methods of satisfying physiological, personal, and social needs.
  - b) Similarly, culture also provides insights as to suitable dress for specific occasions (e.g., what to wear around the house, what to wear to school, what to wear to work, what to wear to church, what to wear at a fast food restaurant, or a movie theater).
2. Cultural beliefs, values, and customs continue to be followed as long as they yield satisfaction.
3. In a cultural context, when a product is no longer acceptable because it’s related value or custom does not adequately satisfy human needs, it must be modified.
4. Culture gradually evolves to meet the needs of society.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.3 Here; Use Figure #11.4 Here; Use Discussion Question #1 Here; Use Exercise #3 Here\*\*\*\*\***

## CULTURE IS LEARNED

1. At an early age we begin to acquire from our social environment a set of beliefs, values, and customs that make up our culture.
2. For children, the learning of these acceptable cultural values and customs is reinforced by the process of playing with their toys.
  - a) As children play, they act out and rehearse important cultural lessons and situations.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.4 Here\*\*\*\*\***

### How Culture Is Learned

1. There are three distinct forms of learning:
  - a) Formal learning—adults and older siblings teach a young family member “how to behave.”
  - b) Informal learning—a child learns primarily by imitating the behavior of selected others.
  - c) Technical learning—teachers instruct the child in an educational environment as to what, how, and why it should be done.
2. Advertising and marketing communications can influence all three types of cultural learning..
  - a) It most influences informal learning by providing models of behavior to imitate.
  - b) This is especially true for visible or conspicuous products that are evaluated in public settings, where peer influence is likely to play an important role.
3. The repetition of advertising messages creates and reinforces cultural beliefs and values.
4. Cultural meaning moves from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods and from there to the individual consumer by means of various consumption-related vehicles (e.g., advertising or observing or imitating others’ behavior.)

\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #2 Here \*\*\*\*\*

### **Does Advertising Reflect Culture?**

1. Many marketers and advertisers share the view that advertising mirrors the values and needs of society, and therefore the claims and/or appeal contained in ads reflect the behavior or aspirations of potential customers.
2. A study conducted in New Zealand came to a different conclusion, stating that many of the changes in advertising styles or appeal that occur over time may primarily be the result of “an internally (industry) driven ‘fashion’ and/or ‘investment’ cycle,” rather than the commonly held notion that “advertising is society driven.”

3.

### **Enculturation and Acculturation**

1. The learning of one’s own culture is known as **enculturation**.
2. The learning of a new or foreign culture is known as **acculturation**.
3. A consumer can be a “foreigner” in his or her own country.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Terms acculturation and enculturation Here \*\*\*\*\*

### **Language and Symbols**

1. To acquire a common culture, the members of a society must be able to communicate with each other through a common language.
  - a) Without a common language, shared meaning could not exist and true communication would not take place.
2. Basically, the symbolic nature of human language sets it apart from all other animal communication.
3. A **symbol** is used to convey desired product images or characteristics.
4. A symbol is anything that stands for something else.
  - a) Symbols can be verbal or nonverbal.
  - b) Symbols may have several, even contradictory, meanings.
  - c) Marketers use symbols to convey desired product images or characteristics.
5. Price and channels of distribution are also significant symbols of the marketer and the marketer’s product.
  - a) The type of store where the product is sold is also an important symbol of quality.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Term symbol Here; Use Exercise #1 and #4 Here; Use Figure #11-5 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### **Brands as Symbols**

1. Brands are symbols of the popular culture as well as expressions of management or ad agency strategy.

## **Ritual**

1. A **ritual** is a type of symbolic activity consisting of a series of steps occurring in a fixed sequence and repeated over time.
2. Rituals extend over the human life cycle from birth to death.
  - a) They can be public or private, elaborate, religious, or civil ceremonies, or they can be mundane.
  - b) It is often formal and scripted—i.e., proper conduct is prescribed.
3. Important to marketers, rituals tend to be replete with ritual artifacts (products) that are associated with, or somehow enhance, performance of the ritual.
4. Ritualistic behavior is any behavior that is made into a ritual.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Term ritual Here; Use Tables #11.2 and #11.3 Here; Use Exercise #2 Here\*\*\*\*\***

## **Culture Is Shared**

1. To be considered a cultural characteristic, a particular belief, value, or practice must be shared by a significant portion of the society.
2. Culture is often viewed as group **customs** that link together members of society.
3. Various social institutions transmit the elements of culture and make sharing of culture a reality.
  - a) Family—the primary agent for enculturation – passing along of basic cultural beliefs, values, and customs to society’s newest members.
    - i) A vital part of the enculturation role of the family is the consumer socialization of the young.
  - b) Educational institutions—charged with imparting basic learning skills, history, patriotism, citizenship, and the technical training needed to prepare people for significant roles within society.
  - c) Houses of worship—provide religious consciousness, spiritual guidance, and moral training.
  - d) Mass media—is a fourth and often overlooked transmitter of culture.
    - i) It disseminates information about products, ideas, and causes.
    - ii) We have daily exposure to advertising, and through those ads, receive cultural information.
  - e) Virtual communities – is a fifth and somewhat more recent social institution for sharing cultural values.
    - i) It has been estimated that over 40 million consumers, worldwide, participate in such communities.

## **CULTURE IS DYNAMIC**

1. Culture continually evolves; therefore, the marketer must carefully monitor the sociocultural environment in order to market an existing product more effectively or to develop promising new products.

- a) This is not easy because many factors are likely to produce cultural changes within a given society.
2. The changing nature of culture means that marketers have to consistently reconsider:
  - a) *Why* consumers are now doing what they do?
  - b) *Who* are the purchasers and the users of their products?
  - c) *When* they do their shopping?
  - d) *How* and *where* they can be reached by the media?
  - e) *What* new product and service needs are emerging?
3. Marketers who monitor cultural changes often find new opportunities to increase corporate profitability.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.5 Here; Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

## THE MEASUREMENT OF CULTURE

1. There are a variety of measures of culture: projective tests, attitude measurement techniques, content analysis, consumer fieldwork, and value measurement instruments.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.6 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### Content Analysis

1. **Content analysis** focuses on the content of verbal, written, and pictorial communications.
  - a) It is a relatively objective means for determining social and cultural changes have occurred in a specific society or as a way of contrasting aspects of two different societies.
  - b) It is useful to marketers and public policy makers interested in comparing advertising claims of competitors within a specific industry, as well as for evaluating the nature of advertising claims targeted to specific audiences. .

\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Term content analysis Here; Use Exercise #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### Consumer Fieldwork

1. When examining a specific society, anthropologists frequently immerse themselves in the environment under study through **consumer fieldwork**.
2. Researchers are likely to select a small sample of people from a particular society and carefully observe their behavior.
3. Based on their observations, researchers draw conclusions about the values, beliefs, and customs of the society under investigation.
4. **Field observation** has a number of distinct characteristics:
  - a) It takes place within a natural environment.
  - b) It is performed sometimes without the subjects' awareness.
  - c) It focuses on observation of behavior.

5. Instead of just observing behavior, researchers sometimes become **participant-observers**.
  - a) They become active members of the environment they are studying.
6. In addition to fieldwork methods, depth interviews and focus-group sessions are also quite often employed by marketers to get a first look at an emerging social or cultural change.
7. In the relatively informal atmosphere of focus group discussions, consumers are apt to reveal attitudes or behavior that may signal a shift in values that, in turn, may affect the long-run market acceptance of a product or service.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Terms consumer fieldwork, field observation, and participant-observers Here\*\*\*\*\***

### Value Measurement Survey Instruments

1. Anthropologists have traditionally observed behavior and inferred dominant or underlying values.
  - a) Recently there has been a gradual shift to directly measuring values by means of survey research.
2. Value instruments ask people how they feel about such basic personal and social concepts as freedom, comfort, national security, and peace.
3. A variety of popular value instruments have been used in research:
  - a) The Rokeach Value Survey
  - b) List of Values (Lov)
  - c) Values and Lifestyles—VALS
4. The **Rokeach Value Survey** is a self-administered value inventory, which is divided into two parts.
  - a) Part one consists of 18 terminal value items, designed to measure the relative importance of end-states of existence (personal goals).
  - b) Part two consists of 18 instrumental value items, designed to measure the basic approaches an individual might take to reach end-state values.
5. The LOV is a related instrument.
  - a) Its scale asks consumers to identify their two most important values from a nine-value list.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Term Rokeach Value Survey Here; Use Discussion Question #3 Here\*\*\*\*\***

### AMERICAN CORE VALUES

1. Identification of **core values** is a very difficult task for several reasons.
  - a) The United States is a very diverse country consisting of a variety of **subcultures**, each of which interprets and responds to society's basic beliefs and values in its own specific way.
  - b) Also, rapid technological change has occurred in the United States, and in itself makes it difficult to monitor changes in cultural values.
  - c) Finally, the existence of contradictory values in American society is somewhat confusing.



2. When selecting specific core values researchers are guided by three criteria:
  - a) The value must be pervasive—accepted and used by a significant portion of the American people
  - b) The value must be enduring—influencing the actions of Americans over an extended period of time
  - c) The value must be consumer-related—providing insights that help marketing people understand the consumption actions of the American people.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Key Terms core values and subcultures Here; Use Learning Objective #11.7 Here; Use Discussion Question #4 Here; Use Exercise #3 Here\*\*\*\*\***

### Achievement and Success

1. These values have historical roots in the traditional Protestant work ethic, which considers work to be wholesome, spiritually rewarding, and an appropriate end in itself.
  - a) Furthermore, research shows the achievement orientation is closely associated with the technical development and economic growth of the American society.
2. Individuals who consider a sense of accomplishment to be an important personal value tend to be achievers who strive hard for success.
  - a) Although closely related, achievement and success are different.
    - i) *Achievement* is its own direct reward—it is satisfying to the achiever.
    - ii) *Success* implies an extrinsic reward—financial or status improvements.
    - iii) It is the widespread embracing of achievement and success that has led to the great success and progress of the United States.
    - iv) Both achievement and success influence consumption. They often serve as social and moral justification for the acquisition of goods and services.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\***

### Activity

1. Americans feel is it important to be *active* or *involved*.
2. Keeping busy is widely accepted as a healthy and even necessary part of the American lifestyle.
  - a) This can have both a positive and negative effect on products.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\***

### Efficiency and Practicality

1. In terms of **efficiency**, Americans admire anything that saves time and effort.
2. In terms of **practicality**, Americans are generally receptive to any new product that makes tasks easier and can help solve problems.
3. Americans also attach great importance to time and punctuality.

4. Americans seem to be convinced that “time waits for no one,” which is reflected in their habitual attention to being prompt.
5. Americans place a great deal of importance on getting there first; on the value of time itself; on the notion that time is money; on the importance of not wasting time; and on identifying “more” time.
6. The frequency with which Americans look at their watches and the importance attached to having an accurate timepiece tend to support the American value of punctuality.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### Progress

1. **Progress** is linked to the values reviewed earlier and the central belief that people can always improve themselves—that tomorrow will be better than today.
2. Progress often means the acceptance of change—new products or services designed to fulfill previously under- or unsatisfied needs.

\*\*\*\*\* Use Discussion Question #4 Here; Use Figure #11-6 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### Material Comfort

1. To most Americans, **material comfort** signifies the attainment of the good life.
2. It is a *relative* view; satisfaction with the amount of material goods comes in terms of how they compare to others.
3. Material comfort has often been associated with “bigger quantities of things” or “more of something.”
4. Recently, however, there has been a noticeable shift away from such a “more is better” viewpoint to a “better is better” vision—one that stresses better quality and better design.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### Individualism

1. Americans want to be themselves.
  - a) Self-reliance, self-interest, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-fulfillment are all expressions of individualism.
2. Striving for individualism seems to be linked to the rejection of dependency; that is, it is better to rely on oneself than on others.
3. Consumer appeals frequently take the form of reinforcing the consumers’ sense of identity with products that both reflect and emphasize that identity.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Table #11.4 Here; Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

**Freedom**

1. To the marketer, **freedom of choice** means the opportunity to choose from a wide range of alternatives.
2. This preference is reflected in the large number of competitive brands and product variations that can be found on the shelves of the modern supermarket or department store.
3. There are decision-making situations when consumers are faced with too many choices.

**\*\*\*\*\* Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\***

**External Conformity**

1. **External conformity** is a necessary process by which the individual adapts to society.
2. Conformity takes the form of standardized goods and services.
3. The availability of a wide choice of standardized products allows the consumer to be:
  - a) Individualistic—selecting products that close friends do not have.
  - b) Conforming—purchasing products similar to those their friends do have.
    - i) There is a ping-pong relationship between these two values.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\***

**Humanitarianism**

1. Americans tend to be charitable and willing to come to the aid of people less fortunate.
2. Consumer researchers have validated two scales that deal with attitudes toward helping others and attitudes toward charitable organizations.
3. Beyond charitable giving, other social issues have an impact on both what consumers buy and where they invest.
4. Many companies try to appeal to consumers by emphasizing their concern for environmental and social issues.

**\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here; Use Table #11.5 Here\*\*\*\*\***

**Youthfulness**

1. Americans tend to place an almost sacred value on youthfulness.
2. This emphasis is a reflection of America's preoccupation with technological development, and "new" and "improved."
3. Youthfulness should not be confused with youth, which describes an age grouping.
  - a) Youthfulness is looking and acting young regardless of chronological age; it is a state of mind and a state of being.
4. A great deal of advertising is directed to creating a sense of urgency about retaining one's youth and fearing aging.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### **Fitness and Health**

1. Americans' preoccupation with *fitness and health* has emerged as a core value.
2. This value has manifested itself in a number of ways, including tennis, racquetball, biking, and jogging, and the continued increases in sales of vitamins.
3. Fitness and health are becoming lifestyle choices for many consumers.
4. Although there is no denying the fitness and healthy living trend in American society, there is evidence that consumers find it difficult "to be good" in terms of their personal health.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Discussion Question #4 Here; Use Figure #11.7 Here; Use Exercise #3 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### **Core Values Are Not Only An American Phenomenon**

1. Cultural values are not all unique or originally American.
  - a) Some were borrowed, particularly from European society.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Table #11.6 Here\*\*\*\*\*

### **TOWARD A SHOPPING CULTURE**

1. It appears that the role that shopping plays in the American life has been elevated to the point that the American culture has become a shopping culture.
2. One authority has even noted that shopping has remade our culture and now defines the way we understand the world around us—shopping is what we do to create value in our lives.
3. Making this possible is the reality that great shopping experiences are no longer just for the rich, as consumers from all walks of life can enjoy the low prices found in discount stores.
4. Much of this "shop 'till you drop" mentality has propelled shopping to the "All American" past time.
  - a) This obsession is driving increasing numbers of Americans to be in credit card debt.

\*\*\*\*\*Use Learning Objective #11.8 Here\*\*\*\*\*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Distinguish among beliefs, values, and customs. Illustrate how the clothing a person wears at different times or for different occasions is influenced by customs.**

**Beliefs** consist of the very large number of mental or verbal statements that reflect a person's particular knowledge and assessment of something. **Values** are also beliefs, however, values differ from other beliefs because they must meet certain criteria: (a) they are relatively few in number, (b) they serve as a guide for culturally appropriate behavior, (c) they are enduring or difficult to change, (d) they are not tied to specific objects or situations, and (e) they are widely accepted by the members of a society. **Customs** are overt modes of behavior that constitute culturally approved or acceptable ways of behaving in specific situations. Students' answers on clothing will vary based on their experiences. Listen for sexist or ethnic stereotyping as students share their opinions.

2. **A manufacturer of fat-free granola bars is considering targeting school-age children by positioning its product as a healthy, nutritious snack food. How can an understanding of the three forms of cultural learning be used in developing an effective strategy to target the intended market?**

Anthropologists have identified three distinct forms of cultural learning; **formal learning**, in which adults and older siblings teach a young family member how to behave; **informal learning**, in which a child learns primarily by imitating the behavior of selected others such as family, friends, TV heroes; and **technical learning**, in which teachers instruct the child in an educational environment about what should be done, how it should be done, and why it should be done. A marketer might target the child's parents with informative/educational advertising so that they would tell their child the food is acceptable. They might use superhero role models from TV programs, enjoying the snack food and showing how it helps them defeat the bad guys. The marketer might use scenario or slice-of-life commercials to show the child how to use the product.

3. **The Citrus Growers of America are planning a promotional campaign to encourage the drinking of orange and grapefruit juices in situations where many consumers normally consume soft drinks. Using the Rokeach Value Survey (researcher identify) "family security" (providing for loved ones) as promising "terminal value" and "honest" (trustworthy or believable) as a likely "instrumental value" to stress in their future advertising campaign for citrus juices as an alternative to soft drinks. What are the implications of these values for an advertising campaign designed to increase the consumption of citrus juices?**

Terminal values are designed to measure the relative importance of end states of existence or personal goals. Instrumental values measure basic approaches (means) an individual might take to reach end-state values. Advertisers need to emphasize, by using symbols, that serving citrus drinks are a way to best provide for loved ones. They need to do so in an honest, trustworthy and believable way.

The instructor should stress that there are links between cultural, consumption-specific, and product-specific values. The attitudes and values toward soft drinks and citrus juices are culturally derived, and given the popularity and diverse usage of soft drinks, the Citrus Growers of America are going to have difficulty luring consumers away from them. The Citrus Growers of America organization must convey the notion that the product-specific values of drinking citrus juices are congruent with consumption-specific and cultural values. Thus, the association should consider the links between culture and consumption of juices and soft drinks. Some of these possible links are:

<u>Cultural Values</u>	<u>Consumption-Specific Values</u>	<u>Product-Specific Values</u>
*An exciting and active life	*physical health *well being	*natural drink *the vitamins in the juice *nutritional content
*Freedom	*self identity *nonconformity	*be different from the crowd *citrus juices are not only for breakfast
*Pleasure	*enjoying life	*refreshing taste *cool
*Friendship	*being with others	*drink juices with others

- 4. For each of the following products and activities listed below:**
- Identify the core values most relevant to their purchase and use.**
  - Determine whether these values encourage or discourage use or ownership.**
  - Determine whether these core values are shifting, and if so, in what direction. The products and activities are:**
    - Donating money to charities**
    - Donating blood**
    - Compact disc players**
    - Telephone answering machines**
    - Toothpaste**
    - Diet soft drinks**
    - Foreign travel**
    - Suntan lotion**
    - Cellular phones**
    - Interactive TV home-shopping services**
    - Fat-free foods**
    - Products in recyclable packaging**

The following chart can be used as a guide for the classroom discussion. Instructors are encouraged to add products and services to the list, and invite students to do the same.

<u>Product or Activity</u>	<u>Core Value(s)</u>	<u>Encourages or Discourages</u>	<u>Direction of Shift</u>
Donating money	Humanitarianism	Encourages	No shift

to charities			
Donating blood	Humanitarianism	Encourages	No shift
Compact disc players	Efficiency, Practicality Material Comfort	Encourages	No shift
Phone answering machine	Efficiency, Practicality	Encourages	Up
Toothpaste	External Conformity	Encourages	No shift
Diet soft drink	Fitness and Health; External Conformity	Encourages	Up
Foreign travel	Individualism; Freedom	Encourages Encourages	No shift Up
Suntan lotions	Youthfulness; Fitness and Health	Encourages Encourages	Up Up
Cellular phones	Efficiency, Practicality	Encourages	Up
Interactive TV home shopping	Efficiency, Practicality Progress	Encourages	Up
Fat-free foods	Fitness and Health	Encourages	Up
Recyclable packaging	Ecological concern	Encourages	Up

## **EXERCISES**

- 1. Identify a singer or singing group whose music you like and discuss the symbolic function of the clothes that person (or group) wears.**

### Instructor's Discussion

This exercise will illustrate how nonverbal symbols communicate cultural values. Depending on your current taste in music you might want to pick a couple of students to be the monitors of the accuracy of the students' analysis. Or, videotape selected presentations on MTV or the like, show the clips in class, and have the students comment.

- 2. Think of various routines in your everyday life (such as grooming or food preparation). Identify one ritual and describe it. In your view, is this ritual shared by others? If so, to what extent? What are the implications of your ritualistic behavior to the marketer(s) of the product(s) you use during your routine?**

### Instructor's Discussion

Prepare to share a couple of your own or family rituals to prime the pump. Students' responses will vary based on their backgrounds. This can be an exercise that provides students insights into how others live.

3. a. **Summarize an episode of a weekly television series that you watched recently. Describe how the program transmitted cultural beliefs, values, and customs.**
- b. **Select and describe three commercials that were broadcast during the program mentioned in 3a. Do these commercials create or reflect cultural values? Explain your answer.**

#### Instructor's Discussion

In advance of the class, the professor should assign a TV program that all students must watch and analyze. The discussion of the programs' content and commercials provides an excellent illustration of utilizing content analysis to explore cultural beliefs, values, and customs.

- 4 a. **Find two different advertisements for deodorants in two magazines that are targeted to different audiences. Content-analyze the written and pictorial aspects of each ad, utilizing any core values discussed in this chapter. How are these values portrayed to the target audiences?**
- b. **Identify symbols used in these ads and discuss their effectiveness in conveying the desired product image or characteristics.**

#### Instructor's Discussion

This exercise provides students with an opportunity to identify the presence of cultural values in advertising and analyze the ways that manufacturers of various brands within the same product category often employ different cultural values in their promotional efforts.

### **S.T.A.R. PROJECTS**

#### **Ethical Issues in Consumer Behavior**

##### ***S.T.A.R. Project #1***

Do a search of popular magazines that carry a number of clothing and consumer products ads. Select magazines that are clearly targeting an Anglo market, an African-American market, and a Hispanic market. Compare the ads in the different magazines for similarities and differences. How are the beliefs, values, and customs of the three American-cultural groups different and/or similar? What different symbols are used to convey messages within the different magazines? Are the predominant color schemes different? Once the preceding analysis is completed, comment on any ethical issues that you have observed during your research. Write a short paper that summarizes your findings.



### Instructor's Discussion

This exercise asks students to review contemporary magazines and use these publications to observe cultural differences between the three primary ethnic subcultures in our society. Pick the best of the short papers and discuss the results with the class. Especially focus on any discovered ethical issues.

#### ***S.T.A.R. Project #2***

Review the material found in the chapter and in Table 11-6 on American Core Values. As you read about the general features and relevance to consumer behavior of the American Core Values, consider the ethical responsibility that marketers must have when directing promotional efforts toward these values. Write a short paper that expresses what you perceive these ethical responsibilities to be. You may pick a particular company or product to use as an example or may discuss the issues generally. Be sure to consider using illustrations (advertisements) of your thoughts or position.

### Instructor's Discussion

The primary purpose of this exercise is to get students to review material in the chapter on American Core Values. The exercise will give them the opportunity to once again review the material found in Table 11-6. Additionally, the exercise asks students to consider the values in light of ethical responsibility. For example, individualism (free speech) may give one the right of expression but it does not guarantee racism, bigotry, or harmful actions toward others. Or consider that although material comfort is great, everyone cannot afford this. What problems might be encountered by those that feel slighted by promotions that stress material acquisition?

### Small Group Projects

#### ***S.T.A.R. Project #3***

The learning of one's own culture is called enculturation. How do we learn this culture? Members of society learn a great deal through communication in a common language. Your group's assignment is to examine three different age groups with respect to communication. Examine children (aged 5–8), teens (aged 13–16), and young adults (aged 19–22) with respect to their slang language and symbols that convey messages. Devise a table that describes at least ten (10) language or symbols for communication illustrations for each group. Write a short paper that discusses what you have done and conclusions on the differences and similarities found. Present the information in class.

### Instructor's Discussion

This exercise asks students to review three stages that they should have some familiarity with because each has been through these stages or is currently in the last stage. Slang language is an interesting cultural expression because it not only identifies age groups but ethnic formations as well. Put the best of these lists on the board and discuss how marketers might use this information.

***S.T.A.R. Project #4***

“We all live in tribes.” Well, maybe not all of us, but those on the hit CBS TV series *Survivor* certainly do (see [www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com)). Your group’s assignment is to examine tribal (ritual) behavior and its impact on consumer behavior. Begin the assignment by examining the *Survivor* TV show’s history found on the CBS Web site. Next, do secondary research on tribal behavior (rituals). For example, review rituals in the military, sports, fraternities, sororities, clubs, and organizations and how these rituals are transferred to consumptive behavior. Once this has been completed, write a short position paper that summarizes your findings and indicates what you have learned about the relationship between tribal (ritual) behavior and consumer behavior.

**Instructor’s Discussion**

Most students really enjoy considering tribes and rituals. After reviewing the material in the chapter, most will have a good basis on which to build this project. By going to the CBS Web site, students can trace the history of the *Survivor* series by going to the “select a show” feature and scrolling to the *Survivor* series.

**Using the Internet to Study Consumer Behavior*****S.T.A.R. Project #5***

Advertising symbols are important ways that companies communicate with consumers. We all know the logos for Kellogg’s, Chevrolet, and IBM. Your assignment in this question is to play a symbols game and see how you score. Mr. Joey Katzen has developed an excellent symbols recognition game to be found at [www.joeykatzen.com/alpha](http://www.joeykatzen.com/alpha). The *Retail Alphabet Game* takes letters (symbols) from well-known retail names or phrases and asks you to identify them. This trivia game helps us to understand how important symbols and names are to the marketing and communication effort. Play the game and tell us how you scored. What did you miss? What did you get right? What conclusions can you draw about your ability to recognize symbols? Write a short paper that expresses your thoughts.

**Instructor’s Discussion**

The game is fun and informative. The students can play historical versions of the game at no cost. Mr. Katzen only charges for the most recent version. The Web site is also an excellent download site. Have fun with this one.

***S.T.A.R. Project #6***

One of the easiest ways to examine one’s values is to observe how they dress. Specifically, jewelry says a lot about the man or woman. Your assignment is to find four (4) wrist watch Web sites and review the products found on these Web sites. Taking the American Core Values discussed in the chapter (see Table 11-6), write a short paper about how the companies you investigated appeal to American Core Values. Be sure to include examples to illustrate your feelings. Lastly, comment on how the opening Web pages of the sampled sites set the stage for value transmission to the consumer. What specific devices are used by the site marketers?

### Instructor's Discussion

Students will find several illustrations in the chapter that can be used to begin the search (such as Citizen and Rolex). Students should next carefully examine Table 11-6 and the values included. Does the wrist watch appeal to the efficiency and practicality value or the individualism value? Be sure that students are clear as to their conclusions. This subject is an easy one to discuss in class. Try pulling up several Web sites to illustrate.

### CASE COMMENTS

#### **Case One: Tweeting and Facebooking in the United Arab Emirates**

A report in June 2009 from market research Nielsen Online found that Facebook users spent 13.9 billion minutes on the site in April, up from 1.7 billion a year ago. According to the news agency Reuters, Twitter usage appears to be growing. The micro-blogging site experienced an astounding 3,712 per cent growth since April 2008. Nielsen's report follows earlier research from comScore which said that Facebook out performed MySpace outside the U.S. Social networking in the Middle East and Africa regions saw a 66 per cent growth rate. Research seems to suggest that more women use Facebook, regardless of age. Secondly, the site continues to see more growth with users over age 26, with the majority of the growth coming from users 35 to 44 years of age. According to Facebook's own figures, the number of registered members in the UAE is around 196,880. Of this total 121,840 are women.

#### **Case Two: Privacy: A New Facet of American Culture?**

Certainly, the question could be argued either way. The chapter states that culture is dynamic and this could be perceived to be a change in the American culture. On the other hand, Americans have always considered their personal information to be just that—personal, and so this may be just the application of an existing cultural value to a different medium.