Exam #1 Review Sheet
MAR 3503
Consumer Behavior
Spring 2010

These questions should help you organize your thoughts and prepare for the exam. The questions on these pages are, in general, much broader than the questions you'll find on the exam. This means that the questions on the exam will include details not listed here. But, if you can give thorough, specific, and detailed answers to these questions, you'll be in good shape for the exam.

If you get “stuck” while you're studying these questions, I would be more than happy to point you in the right direction, at office hours, by appointment, or via email. But first, try to answer the questions yourself, and then tell me what you think the right answer might be. (So don’t just email me and say something like, “What’s the answer to #2b?”)

1. Intro and research methods
   a. What does the study of consumer behavior encompass? When marketers try to influence consumers, what are the three types of responses they can influence? Give an example of each. What does it mean that marketing must involve some reciprocal influence? Who besides marketing managers might want to understand consumer behavior?
   b. Which academic disciplines can contribute perspectives to the study of consumer behavior? What’s a question that each might answer?
   c. Distinguish between basic and applied research questions. Give an example of each.
   d. What is “descriptive” research? What are its benefits and drawbacks? What is an example of using observation to answer a research question? What are advantages and disadvantages to using observation? How might a focus group improve things? What are disadvantages of a focus group? What are some advantages and disadvantages of surveys and interviews?
   e. We need to be especially cautious when relying on surveys, interviews, and focus groups. First, we might not be able to count on introspection (people’s reports of what they like to do). Second, we might not be able to count on people giving accurate reports of their behaviors. Be sure you understand what those statements mean, and give a research example that supports each statement.
   f. What is “correlational” research? What is an example of a correlational research finding? What are benefits and drawbacks to correlational research? What is the third variable problem? Reverse causation?
   g. What are the hallmarks of an experiment? What are the benefits and drawbacks of “experimental” research? Give an example of an experiment, and identify the independent and the dependent variable. How do random assignment and manipulation of the independent variable allow you to infer causation in an experiment? Describe what it means to randomly assign people to groups, but also describe why this process allows you to infer causation.
h. What are some ethical concerns you might have while doing research? What should you watch out for when you are interpreting research?

i. What is the confirmation bias? What are two possible causes of confirmation bias?

2. Exposure and attention

a. What is exposure? What are some methods you can use to expose people to a product? What is the mere-exposure effect? Give an example of a study that demonstrates this effect. Give an example of a study that demonstrates that mere-exposure applies to people as well as things. Give an example that demonstrates how mere-exposure can be self-fulfilling.

b. What is selective attention? Why must attention, necessarily, be selective? What might be going on while we are attending to one stimulus?

c. What is a shadowing task? What do the results from shadowing tasks say about the stimuli that will (and will not) involuntarily capture our attention? What do they say about what happens when we don’t attend to something?

d. What role does motivation (an "individual" factor) play in attention? What is the cocktail party effect? Distinguish between perceptual vigilance and perceptual defense, and give an example of each.

e. What is the relationship between attention and arousal (an "individual" factor)?

f. What can be done to the stimulus itself (e.g., an ad) to increase its likelihood of capturing attention? (That is, what are "source factors" that make something attention getting? What is adaptation, and how you can combat it?

3. Perception and comprehension

a. What is the difference between sensation and perception?

b. What is the absolute threshold? How would you use the ascending and descending methods of limits to find someone’s absolute threshold?

c. How did research on the effects of subliminal perception get its start? What are the limits on its effects? Describe a study that shows how motivation is necessary for it to influence behavior. Describe a study that shows how subliminal priming can influence our perception of brands.

d. What are the Gestalt organizing principles of perception? Give examples of each. How do these principles illustrate that perception is active? What is naïve realism?

e. What is perceptual confirmation? Give an example of a product that was affected more by perceptions than by “reality.” Describe a study that demonstrates how our perception and our physical bodies interact. Describe a study that shows how expectations can influence perception.

f. How are categorization and schemas linked to each other? What happens if something is mis-categorized?

g. We often need to make inferences to successfully navigate our conversations and interactions. Why? What are some ways in which marketers exploit our tendencies to draw such inferences?

4. Memory

a. What are the three basic types of memory processes? What are the types of memories that can be stored?

b. What is sensory memory? What is it like, and what is it used for?
c. How might information be encoded in short-term memory? What must be done to maintain that information in STM? What, in general, is the capacity of STM, and how can that capacity be increased through chunking?
d. What is the serial position curve? Draw one, indicating the primacy and recency effects. How does the serial position curve illustrate the operation of both short-term and long-term memory?
e. What are the seven sins of memory?
f. How is long-term memory organized? How do we best get information into long-term memory? Give an example of how priming, through spreading activation, can make certain knowledge more accessible than before.
g. What is encoding specificity, and how does it relate to the idea of context dependence in memory? Give an example that demonstrates context dependence.
h. What are two kinds of absent mindedness? How does divided attention lead to absent mindedness? What are two kinds of memory failures that lead to absent mindedness? What cues are helpful to overcome it?
i. What is retroactive interference? Proactive interference? Part-list cueing?
j. Why are names so easily forgotten? What is the tip of the tongue effect? What underlies it?
k. What are Deese lists? How do schemas lead to misattribution?
l. What would someone mean by saying that memory is constructive? Give an example that shows that memory is constructive. What is an example of how bias shapes memory?
m. What are three reasons why memories persist? What are the two processes underlying ironic memory persistence? Also, don’t think of a white bear!

5. Attitudes
   a. What is an attitude? What are its components? Give an example of each component.
   b. Distinguish between the standard (high-involvement) hierarchy of attitude formation and the low-involvement hierarchy. How do the experiential and behavior-based hierarchies differ from the low- and high-involvement hierarchies?
   c. What are the different functions an attitude could serve? Why might someone say that almost all attitudes serve the knowledge function? Why might it help to know the function that an attitude serves?
   d. What is an automatic attitude? How do congruent and incongruent movements help demonstrate that they exist? How does the IAT measure automatic attitudes?
   e. Why is bad stronger than good?
   f. How strongly are implicit and explicit attitudes related to each other? Which attitudes predict which kinds of behavior?
   g. What is some evidence that suggests that attitudes do not always predict behavior? What are some problems with how attitudes and behavior are measured that prevent attitudes from predicting behavior? What are other reasons why attitudes and behavior don’t necessarily correspond?

6. Cognitive dissonance and self-perception theory
a. What is cognitive dissonance theory? What are the three steps in Festinger’s theory?
b. Give an example of post-choice dissonance reduction. Give an example that demonstrates that post-choice dissonance reduction happens largely automatically rather than consciously. Give an example that demonstrates how universal the phenomenon is.
c. How does effort justification lead to dissonance reduction? How do low-introductory prices lead to cognitive dissonance?
d. Give an example of how induced compliance can lead to attitude change. How does the size of the reward/threat influence attitude change? Give an example that shows induced compliance can change your attitude not just toward a target object, but the world more generally.
e. Describe Bem’s self-perception theory. How is the two-factor theory of emotion relevant to self-perception?
f. Give an example of misattribution of irrelevant arousal. Give an example of misattribution of relevant arousal.
g. How can we reconcile cognitive dissonance theory and self-perception theory? Give an example of an experiment than can only be explained by cognitive dissonance theory. Give an example of an experiment that can only be explained by self-perception theory.

7. Persuasion
   a. Why doesn’t a straightforward model of persuasion truly capture the phenomenon? Give an example of a study where an untrustworthy person can actually be quite persuasive.
   b. What are the two routes to persuasion, and how do they differ? How are they an example of a dual-process theory?
   c. What are the two factors that determine which route a persuasive message will take? How does issue involvement interact with argument strength? How does mood interact with argument strength? When will a dislikeable source be persuasive? When will a celebrity endorser be especially persuasive? When might a large number of arguments actually be unpersuasive?
   d. Attitudes formed via which route last longer? Are more predictive of behavior?

8. Compliance
   a. How does reciprocity influence compliance? What is the reciprocal concessions (door-in-the-face) paradigm? Describe two versions of the study that ruled out the perceptual contrast counterexplanation. Describe a version of the study that ruled out that people just don’t like to say no.
   b. What is the foot-in-the-door technique? How does it relate to self-perception theory?
   c. Give an example of how compliance can be increased via social modeling.
   d. Why are scarce items seen to be more valuable? What is reactance theory? What is an example of reactance theory? How does the "but wait, there’s more" technique work?
9. Conformity
   a. What is conformity? How did Sherif's study on the autokinetic effect demonstrate conformity? How did it demonstrate how norms are passed down?
   b. Describe Asch's study. What are three reasons why his paradigm was so effective?
   c. What are two common reasons for conforming?
   d. What is behavioral mimicry? What seems to be its purpose? Describe a study that demonstrates how mimicry is used to repair a relationship. What is a real-life benefit of mimicry?
   e. What is groupthink? What are several antecedents and symptoms of groupthink?
   f. What is pluralistic ignorance? Why is it ironic? Describe an experimental example of pluralistic ignorance, and how it can be reduced.
   g. How does pluralistic ignorance lead to diffusion of responsibility?

10. Obedience
   a. Describe Milgram's experiment. Under which conditions do you get the most obedience? Under which conditions do you get the least obedience?
   b. Why is the experiment an example of ineffective disobedience, rather than blind obedience? How does the slippery slope apply to this experiment? What is an example of this type of obedience in the real world?
   c. What are the two attributes that define power? What kind of power does the Milgram experiment demonstrate?
   d. How do respect and prominence affect status, and how does the teasing study demonstrate such differences?
   e. How does conspicuous consumption interact with status? What does this say about how difficult it might be to change consumer habits?

11. Why We Make Mistakes (Hallinan)
   a. Chapter 1
      i. How does handedness demonstrate that perception is active?
      ii. What is the “quiet eye period”?
      iii. What is change blindness? Describe an experiment that demonstrates it. How does film continuity reveal it as well? How does stereotyping influence change blindness?
      iv. What is the quitting threshold? How is it affected by how common or rare a perceived object is?
   b. Chapter 2
      i. Why are names and surface details so difficult to remember?
   c. Chapter 5
i. How does multitasking really work? Why does this make completing multiple tasks at once so difficult? What are some downstream consequences of multitasking?

ii. Why are cellphones and GPS units dangerous even when used “hands free”?

d. Chapter 8

i. How do maps and geography demonstrate our predilection for tidiness? How does “The War of the Ghosts” demonstrate the same?

ii. Are all inaccuracies in conversation intentional lies? What other processes might be involved, on the part of both speaker and listener?

e. Chapter 11

i. Are experts accurately confident? What are common traits of experts—what makes a person an expert?

ii. Why might people prefer to not follow directions? Why does this same tendency blind people to obvious solutions to old problems?

12. Mindless Eating (Wansink)

a. Chapter 1

i. How do portion sizes influence how much a person eats? Describe an experiment that demonstrates this effect.

ii. How do expectations influence our enjoyment of food, and how much we eat? Describe an experiment that demonstrates this effect.

iii. What is the “mindless margin”? How might it be effective to prevent weight gain or even improve weight loss? What is the 20% rule?

b. Chapter 2

i. How do the remnants of our meals affect how much we eat? How does the apparent size of our food alter our eating habits? Describe a finding that demonstrates this idea. How does the bottomless soup bowl demonstrate how we eat with our eyes?

ii. How might “seeing” before and while you eat help improve eating habits?

c. Chapter 3

i. How does packaging influence eating? How does this relate to the idea that perception is active? What is one other reason why this might happen?

ii. What is the Horizontal-Vertical Illusion? What is the Size-Contrast Illusion? Why might this be a problem more in modern society?

iii. How does variety influence consumption?

13. Influence (Cialdini) stolen from the ends of each chapter—thanks, Cialdini!

a. Chapter 1

i. What are fixed-action patterns among animals? How are they similar to some types of human functioning? How are they different?

ii. What makes automatic responding in humans so attractive? So dangerous?

b. Chapter 2

i. What is the rule for reciprocity? Why is it so powerful in our society?
ii. Which are the three features of the reciprocity rule that make so exploitable by compliance professionals?

iii. Describe how the Regan study illustrates each of the three exploitable features of the rule.

iv. How does the rejection-the-retreat technique (the door in the face technique) use the pressure for reciprocation to increase compliance?

v. Why should the rejection-then-retreat technique increase a compliant person’s willingness to (a) carry out an agreement and (b) volunteer to do future favors?

c. Chapter 3

i. Why do we want to look and be consistent in most situations?

ii. Why do we find even rigid, stubborn consistency desirable in most situations?

iii. Which four factors cause a commitment to affect a person’s self-image and consequent future actions?

iv. What makes written commitments so effective?

v. What is the relationship between the compliance tactic of low-ball ing and the term “growing its own legs”?

d. Chapter 4

i. Describe the principle of social proof and how it can explain the effect of canned laughter on an audience’s reaction to comedy material.

ii. In the Festinger, Riecken, and Schae ter study of the end-of-the-world cult, group members pushed to win converts only after their doomsday predictions proved false. Why?

iii. Which two factors maximize the influence of social proof on an individual? What was it about the Jonestown, Guyana, situation that allowed these two factors to operate forcefully?

iv. What is pluralistic ignorance? How does it influence bystander intervention?

v. Which naturally occurring conditions of city life reduce the chance of bystander intervention in an emergency?

vi. What is the Werther effect? How does it explain the puzzling relationship between highly publicized suicide stories and startling increases in the number of airplane and automobile fatalities following publication of the stories?

e. Chapter 5

i. To what does the term halo effect refer? How can it help explain the relationship between a person’s physical attractiveness and that person’s general attractiveness in the eyes of others?

ii. We tend to like people who say they like us (that is, who give us compliments). We also tend to like the people who say they are like us (that is, similar to us). In the latter case, what is the evidence that we tend to say yes to similar others in an automatic fashion?
iii. A series of studies on the creation and reduction of hostility between groups was conducted at boys' camps. After hostility was generated, which procedures successfully reduced the hostility? Which were unsuccessful?

iv. To what does the tendency to bask in reflected glory refer? Under which condition and for which kind of person is this tendency most likely to appear?

f. Chapter 6

i. What, in your opinion, is Milgram's most persuasive evidence for his argument that the willingness of subjects in his experiments to harm another results from a strong tendency to obey authority figures?

ii. What does the research indicate about our ability to recognize the influence of authority pressures on our actions? Cite evidence to support your position.

iii. Which are the three most influential symbols of authority, according to the research discussed in the chapter? Give examples from your own experience of the way you have seen at least two of these symbols work.

g. Chapter 7

i. What is the relationship between the scarcity principle and Brehm's theory of psychological reactance?

ii. What makes the terrible twos and the teenage years especially susceptible to reactance effects?

iii. How might modern social science explain the deaths of Shakespeare's famous characters, Romeo and Juliet?

iv. What are the standard reactions of a potential audience to banned information?

v. What does the chocolate chip cookies study by Worchel, Lee, and Adewole (1975) indicate about the circumstances that maximize the effects of the scarcity principle?