Introduction:
What is Consumer Behavior?

MAR 3503
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Why study consumers?

• For consumers’ sakes:
  – To understand their preferences, desires, and needs
  – To help them make the best choices

• For marketers’ sakes:
  – To learn how to influence consumers
  – To understand consumers, marketers must learn not only what consumers want, but why they want it

What responses do consumers make?

• Cognitions (thoughts)
  – Product-related knowledge, beliefs, opinions, intentions, etc

• Affect (feelings)
  – Product-related emotions

• (Observable) Behaviors
  – Product-related decisions and actions
When can these responses be influenced?

- Pre-acquisition
- Acquisition
  - Whether, what, why, how, when, where, how much, how often, etc.
- Post-acquisition
  - Use
  - Disposal
  - Re-purchase

How do we understand these responses?

- A consumer’s responses to products and other objects are a function of both the person and the situation
  - Person:
    - Individual differences and personal factors
      - Motivation, needs, personality, demographics
  - Situation:
    - Environment
      - Friends, family, group norms, culture
  - Both together:
    - Basic human abilities, limitations, and tendencies
      - Perceptions, attention, memory, comprehension, categorization
      - Attitudes, attitude change
      - Decision making

Whom can we influence?

- Purchaser, of course
- “Influencers”
  - User
  - Information gatherer
  - Decider
So, a definition of “consumer behavior”

- The totality of consumers’ thoughts, feelings, and decisions about the consumption, acquisition, and disposition of goods, services, activities, and ideas

...but who cares?

- Marketing managers
- Policy makers
- Ethicists and consumer advocates
- Consumers!

Next time...

- How do we learn how consumers think and behave?