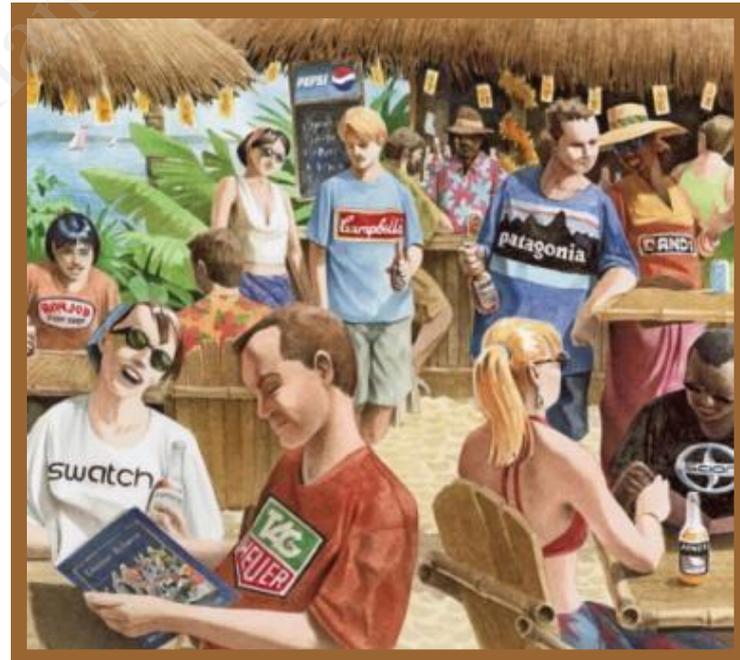


Chapter 11

Cultural Influences on Consumer Behavior

**CONSUMER
BEHAVIOR, 8e**
Michael Solomon



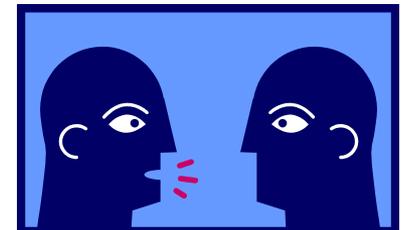
Understanding Culture

- **Culture: the accumulation of shared meanings, rituals, norms, and traditions among members**
- **Culture is the lens through which we view products**
 - **One's culture determines product priorities and mandates a product's success/failure**



Discussion

- ***If your culture were a person, how would you describe its personality traits?***
- ***Now, select another culture you're familiar with. How would those personality traits differ from your own?***



Understanding Culture (cont.)

- **Products can reflect underlying cultural processes of a particular period:**
 - **The TV dinner for the United States**
 - **Cosmetics made of natural materials without animal testing**
 - **Pastel carrying cases for condoms**
- **Cultural system function areas:**
 - **Ecology: the way a system adapts to its habitat**
 - **Social structure: the way in which social life is maintained**
 - **Ideology: mental characteristics of a people and the way in which they relate to each other**

Understanding Culture (cont.)

**Power
Distance**



Way members perceive differences in power when they form interpersonal relationships

**Uncertainty
Avoidance**



Degree to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations

**Masculine
versus
Feminine**



Degree to which sex roles are clearly delineated

**Individualism
versus
Collectivism**



Extent to which culture values the welfare of the individual versus that of the group

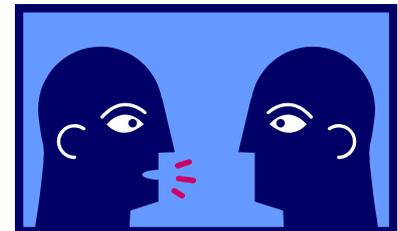
Understanding Culture (cont.)

Norms: rules dictating what is right or wrong

- **Enacted norms: explicitly decided on (e.g., green light equals “go”)**
- **Crescive norms: embedded in a culture and include:**
 - **Customs: norms handed down from the past that control basic behavior**
 - **Mores: custom with a strong moral overtone**
 - **Conventions: norms regarding the conduct of everyday life**
- **All three crescive norms combine to define a culturally appropriate behavior**

Discussion

- *When you go out on a first date, identify the set of crescive norms that are operating.*
- *Describe specific behaviors each person performs that make it clear he or she is on a first date.*
- *What products and services are affected by these norms?*



Myths and Rituals

- Every culture develops practices that help members make sense of the world
- Other cultures' myths/rituals can seem bizarre
- “Magical” products and interest in occult tend to be popular when members of a society feel overwhelmed and powerless
 - Example: Luckysurf.com free lottery site



↑ Click photo for
Luckysurf.com

Myths

Myth: a story containing symbolic elements that represent the shared emotions/ideals of a culture

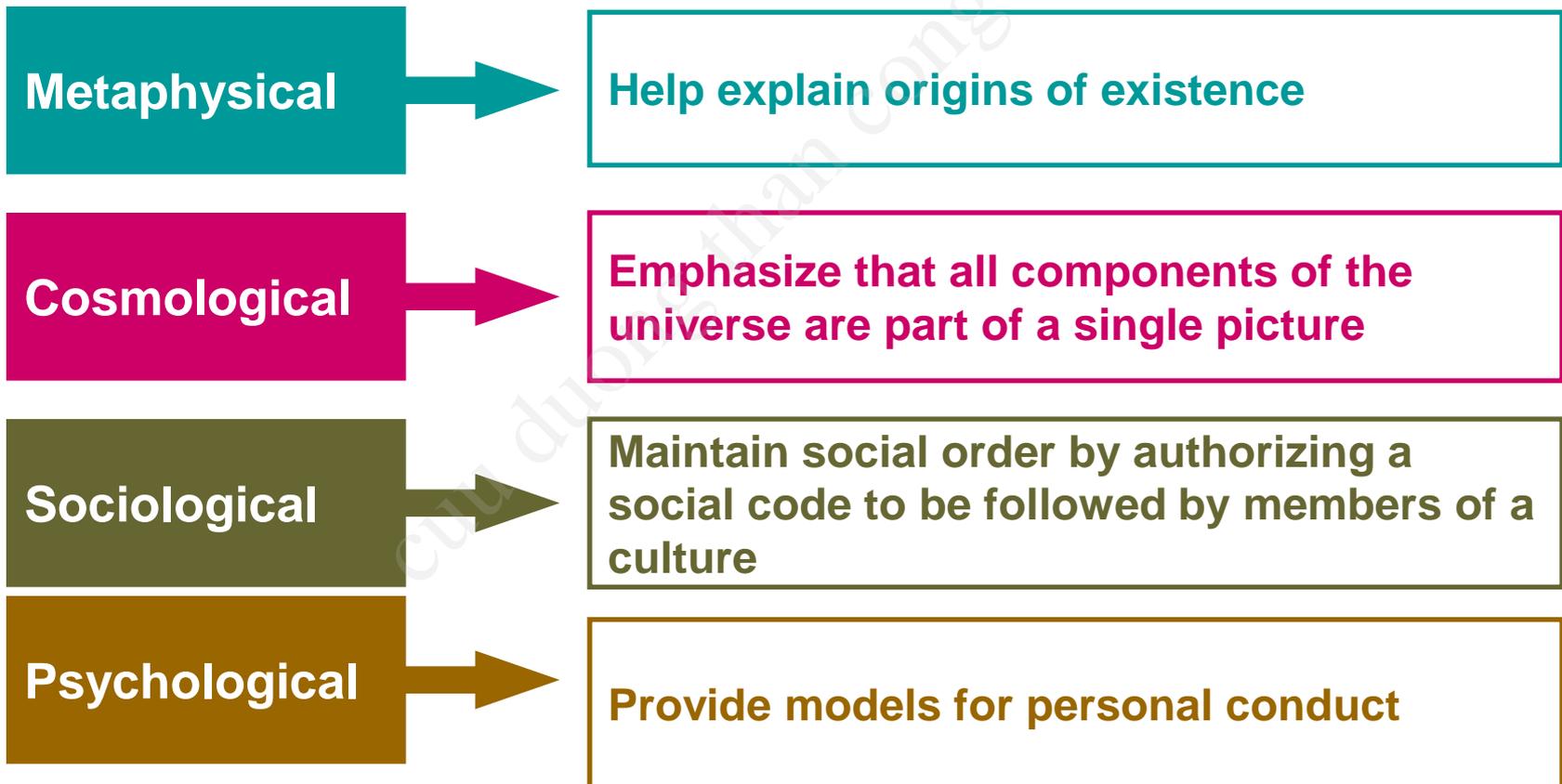
- **Conflict between opposing forces**
- **Outcome is moral guide for people**
- **Reduces anxiety**

Marketers create own myths:

- **McDonald's golden arches = sanctuary to Americans around the world**
- **Startup myths for Nike, Apple Computer**

Functions and Structure of Myths

- **Myths serve four interrelated functions in a culture:**



Myths Abound in Modern Popular Culture

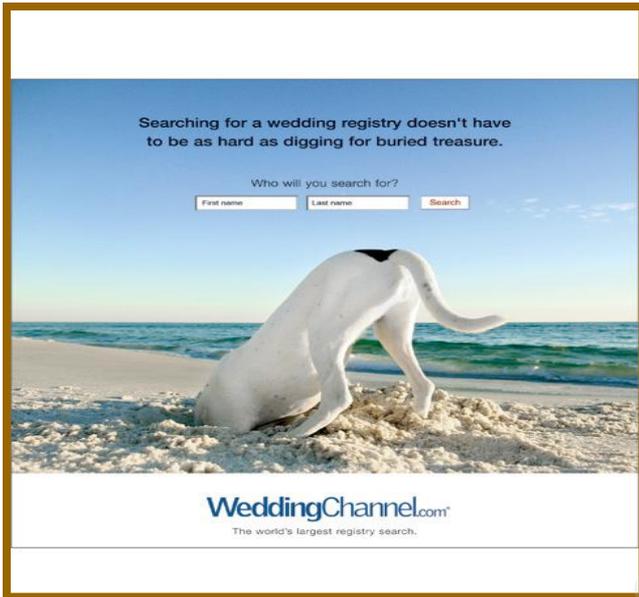
- Myths are often found in comic books, movies, holidays, and commercials
- Consumer fairy tales: Disney weddings
- Monomyths: a myth that is common to many cultures (e.g., Spiderman and Superman)
- Many movies/commercials present characters and plot structures that follow mythic patterns
 - *Gone With the Wind*
 - *E.T.: The Extraterrestrial*
 - *Star Trek*

Rituals

- **Rituals: sets of multiple, symbolic behaviors that occur in a fixed sequence and that tend to be repeated periodically**
- **Many consumer activities are ritualistic**
 - **Trips to Starbucks**
 - **“Pulling” the perfect pint of Guinness**
- **College campus rituals**
 - **Tailgating at football games**



Rituals (cont.)



↑ Click photo for
Weddingchannel.com

- **Businesses supply ritual artifacts (items needed to perform rituals) to consumers**
 - **Wedding rice, birthday candles, diplomas, online gift registries**
- **Consumers often employ a ritual script**
 - **Graduation programs, etiquette books**

Types of Ritual Experience

Primary Behavior Source	Ritual Type	Examples
Cosmology	Religious	Baptism, meditation
Cultural Values	Rites of passage Cultural	Graduation, holidays, Super Bowl
Group Learning	Civic	Parades, elections
	Group	Fraternity initiation, office luncheons
	Family	Mealtimes, bedtimes, Christmas
Individual Aims and Emotions	Personal	Grooming, household rituals

Grooming Rituals

All consumers have private grooming rituals

- **Aid transition from private to public self (or back again)**
- **Inspires confidence, cleanses body of dirt**
- **Before-and-after phenomenon**

Private/public and work/leisure personal rituals

- **Beauty rituals reflect transformation from natural state to social world or vice versa**



Gift-Giving Rituals

- **Gift-giving ritual: consumers procure the perfect object, meticulously remove price tag, carefully wrap it, then deliver it to recipient**
- **Gift giving is a form of:**
 - **Economic exchange**
 - **Symbolic exchange**
 - **Social expression**
- **Every culture prescribes certain occasions and ceremonies for giving gifts**



Gift-Giving Rituals (cont.)

- **Stages of gift-giving ritual**
 - **Gestation: giver is motivated by an event to procure a gift**
 - **Structural event: prescribed by culture (e.g., Christmas)**
 - **Emergent event: more personal**
 - **Presentation: process of gift exchange when recipient responds to gift and donor evaluates response**
 - **Reformulation: giver and receiver adjust the bond between them**

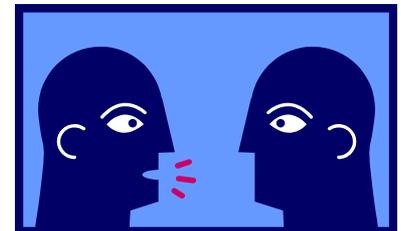
Gift-Giving Rituals (cont.)



- **Japanese gift-giving rituals**
 - **Symbolic meaning of gift: duty to others in social group**
 - ***Giri*: giving is moral imperative**
 - ***Kosai*: reciprocal gift-giving obligations to relatives/friends**
- **Self-gifts**
 - **Socially acceptable way to reward ourselves**

Discussion

- *Have you ever given yourself a gift?*
- *If so, why did you do it and how did you decide what to get?*



Holiday Rituals

- **Holidays are based on a myth with a character at center of story**
 - **Consumers perform rituals unique to those occasions**
- **Marketers find ways to encourage gift giving**
- **Businesses invent new occasions to capitalize on need for cards/ritual artifacts**
 - **Secretaries' Day and Grandparents' Day**
- **Retailers elevate minor holidays to major ones to provide merchandising opportunities**
 - **Cinco de Mayo**

Christmas

- **Myths/rituals: Santa's adventures and mistletoe**
- **Began as a publicly rowdy celebration**
- **Santa = champion of materialism**
 - **Appears in stores and shopping malls**
 - **Socializes children to expect a reward when they are good (we get what we deserve)**



Halloween

- **Its rituals are unusual:**
 - **Involves nonfamily members**
 - **Celebrates evil and death**
 - **Encourages “tricks” for treats**
- **Halloween is an antifestival: distorts symbols associated with other holidays**
 - **Witch = inverted mother figure; resurrection of ghosts; evil jack-o-lantern**
 - **We act out uncharacteristic behaviors and try on new roles**
- **Second most popular party night for adults**



Rites of Passage

- **Rites of passage: special times marked by a change in social status**
 - **Puberty, death, divorce, dating, bar/bat mitzvah**
- **Practices vary across cultures but are rich in symbolic value**
 - **Funeral rituals negotiate social identities of deceased through expression of material/symbolic wealth**

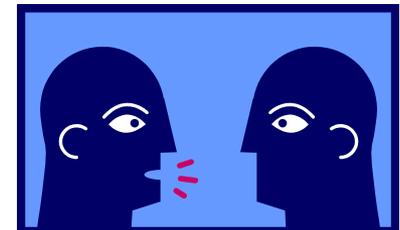
Rites of Passage (cont.)

Three phases:

- **Separation:** individual is detached from his original group
 - **Example:** college freshman leaves home
- **Liminality:** person is literally between statuses
 - **New freshman** tries to figure out status during orientation week
- **Aggregation:** person re-enters society after rite of passage is complete
 - **Student** returns home for winter break as college “veteran”

Discussion

- ***Describe the three stages of the rite of passage associated with graduating from college***
- ***“Fraternity hazing is just a natural rite of passage that should not be prohibited by universities.” Do you agree?***



Sacred and Profane Consumption



- **Sacred consumption:** involves objects and events that are set apart from normal activities that are treated with respect or awe
- **Profane consumption:** involves consumer objects and events that are ordinary and not special

Sacred Places

- **Sacred places: religious/mystical and country heritage, such as Stonehenge, Mecca, Ground Zero in New York City**
- **Property of contamination: something sacred happened there, so it takes on sacred qualities**
- **Some profane (ordinary) places are imbued with sacred qualities: Graumann's Chinese Theater in Home is sacred in many cultures**



Sacred People and Sacred Events

- **Sacred people: we idolize certain people and set them apart from masses**
 - **Movie stars, rock stars, royalty (Princess Diana)**
- **Sacred events: public events, sports (Olympics), tourism**
- **Souvenirs: local products, pictorial images, “piece of the rock,” literal representations of the site, markers**

Age Subcultures

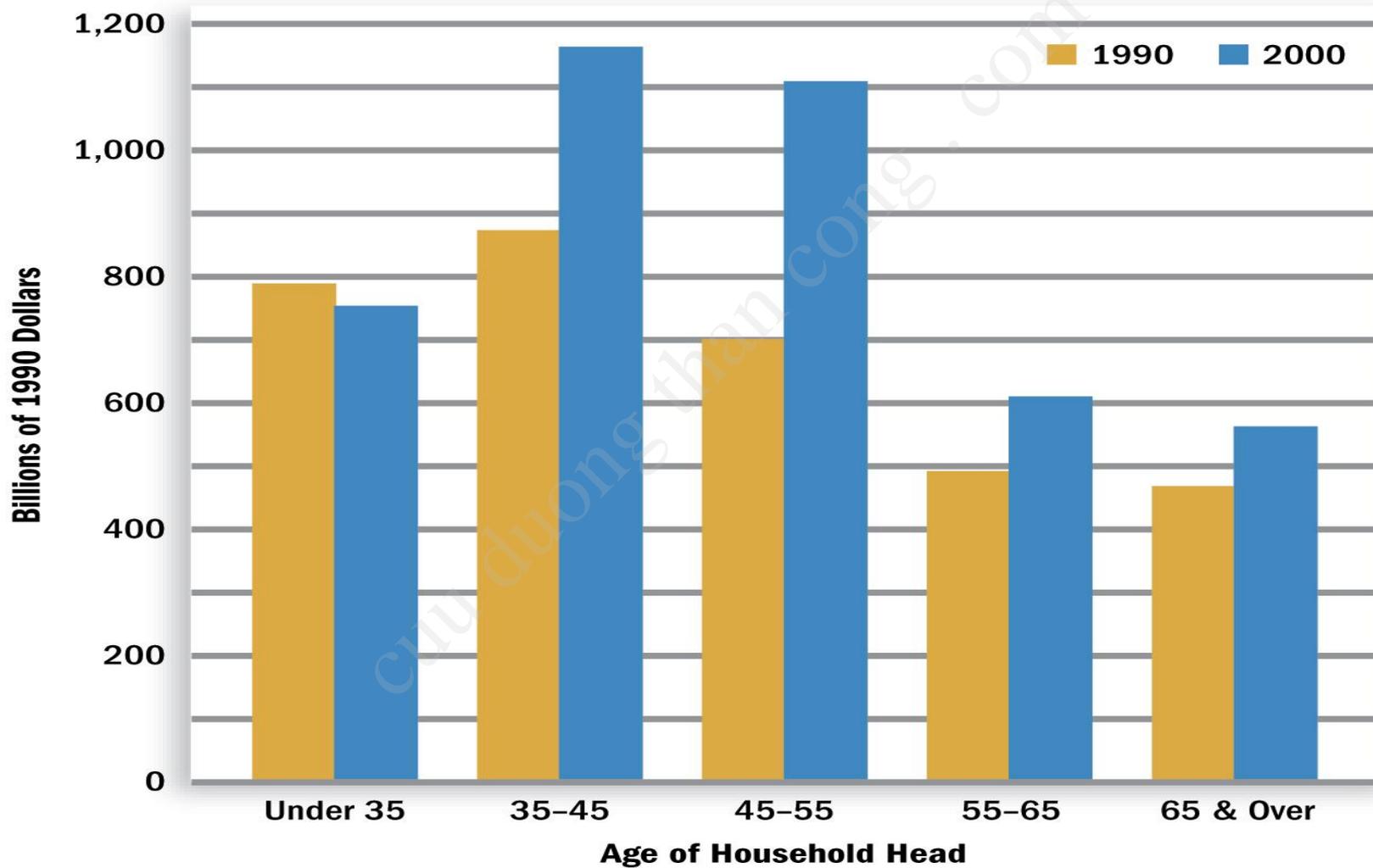
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Age and Consumer Identity

- **A consumer's age exerts a significant influence on his/her identity**
 - **We have things in common and speak in a common language with others of our own age**
- **Age cohort (“my generation”)**
 - **Marketers target specific age cohorts**
 - **Feelings of nostalgia**
 - **Our possessions let us identify with others of a certain age/life stage**

Household Income by Age

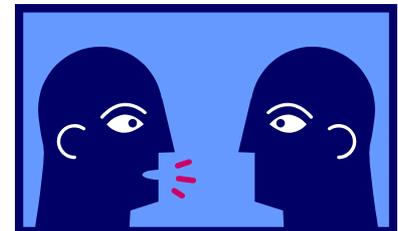


Nostalgia Scale

Scale Items
They don't make 'em like they used to.
Things used to be better in the good old days.
Products are getting shoddier and shoddier.
Technological change will ensure a brighter future (reverse coded).
History involves a steady improvement in human welfare (reverse coded).
We are experiencing a decline in the quality of life.
Steady growth in GNP has brought increased human happiness (reverse coded).
Modern business constantly builds a better tomorrow (reverse coded).

Discussion

- ***What are some possible marketing opportunities present at reunions?***
- ***What effects might attending such an event have on consumers' self-esteem, body image, and so on?***



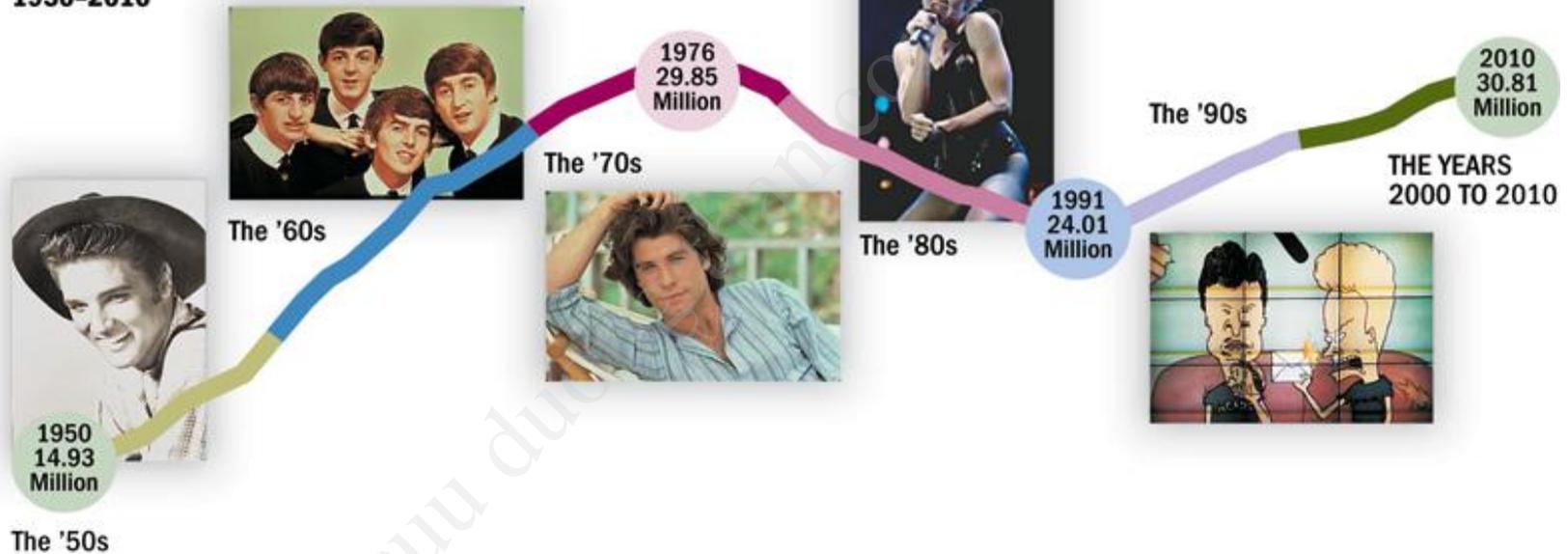
The Youth Market

- “Teenage” first used to describe youth generation in 1950s
- Youth market often represents rebellion
- Generation Y: people born between 1977 and 1994



The U. S. Teen Population

U.S. RESIDENT POPULATION,
13 TO 19 YEARS OLD,
1950-2010



Teen Values, Conflicts, and Desires

Four basic conflicts common among all teens:

- **Autonomy versus belonging: break from family but attach to peers**
- **Rebellion versus conformity: rebel against social standards but want to be accepted by society**
- **Idealism versus pragmatism: view adults as hypocrites and see themselves as sincere**
- **Narcissism versus intimacy: obsessed with own needs but want to connect with others**

Tweens

Children aged 8 to 14

- Spend \$14 billion a year on clothes, CDs, movies (“feel good” products)
- Exhibit characteristics of both children and adolescents
- Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen brand
- Victoria Secret’s *Pink* lingerie line for younger girls (“Team Pink”)

Click photo to view →
Quicktime video on
Wild Planet and
Marketing to kids



Getting to Know Gen Y



**“Echo Boomers” =
“millennials” = Gen Yers:
members of the generation
born from about 1980
onward.**

- **Make up one-third of U.S. population**
- **Spend \$170 billion a year**
- **First to grow up with computers in their homes, in a 500-channel TV universe**

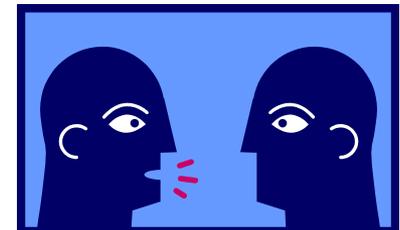
Getting to Know Gen Y (cont.)

- **Multitaskers with cell phones, music downloads, IM on Internet**
- **Most diverse generation ever**
- **Many raised by single parent and/or working mother**
- **Gen Yers value fitting in/teamwork**
 - **Reject violence, tobacco, alcohol, teen pregnancy**
 - **Trust government and parents**



Discussion

- ***“Kids these days seem content to just hang out, surf the Net, IM with their friends, and watch mindless TV shows all day.”***
 - ***How accurate is this statement?***
- ***This chapter describes members of Gen Y as much more traditional and team-oriented than their older brothers and sisters***
 - ***Do you agree?***



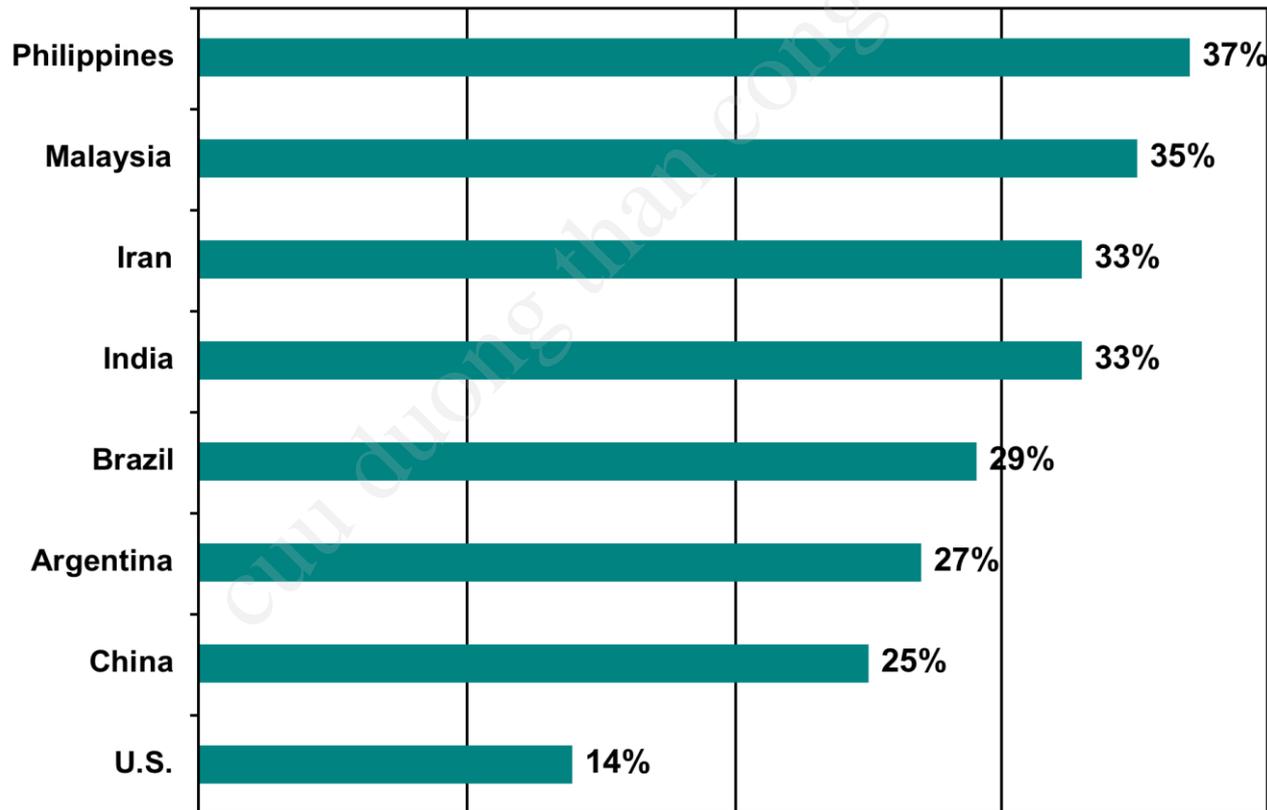
Marketing to Gen Y

- Most of \$100 billion that global youth market spends goes toward “feel good” products
- High birth rates = large proportion of young in population
- Gen Yers are much less brand loyal



Marketing to Gen Y (cont.)

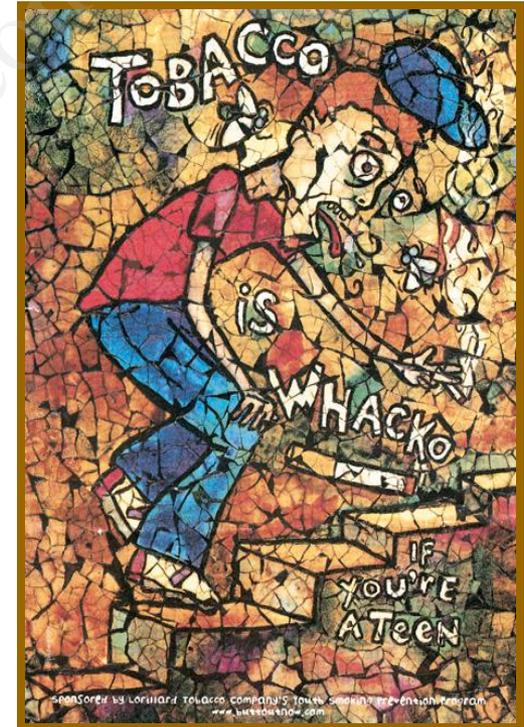
- Percent of population that is age 14 or younger, by country:



Hoang Duc Lim, 2009

Speaking to Teens in Their Language

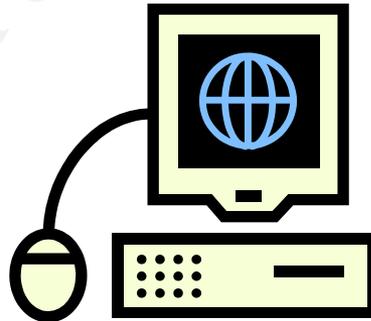
- **Teens are more TV “savvy”**
 - **Must see messages as authentic**
- **Marketing rules of engagement**
 - **Don’t talk down**
 - **Don’t try to be what you’re not. Stay true to your brand image**
 - **Entertain; make it interactive and keep the sell short**
 - **Show that you know what they’re going through, but keep it light**



Youth Tribes

Products/trappings reinforce the notion of belonging and the group bond

- **French in-line roller skaters**
- **And 1**
- **Tribes in Japan**
 - **“Technocultural suppleness”**



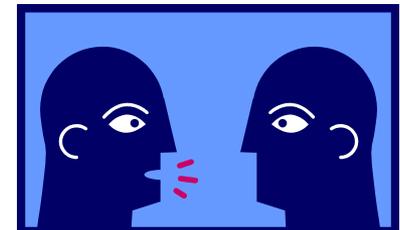
← [Click for And1.com](http://And1.com)

Researching the Youth Market

- **Research firms come up with innovative ways to tap teen desires**
- **Coolhunters: kids in major markets who roam urban streets and report back on cutting-edge trends**
- **P&G's teen community Web sites**
- **Teens as “consumers-in-training”**
 - **Brand loyalty develops during adolescence**
 - **Teen influence of family purchase decisions**

Discussion

- *If you were a marketing researcher assigned to study what products are “cool,” how would you do this?*
- *Do you agree with the definitions of cool provided by the young people in this chapter?*

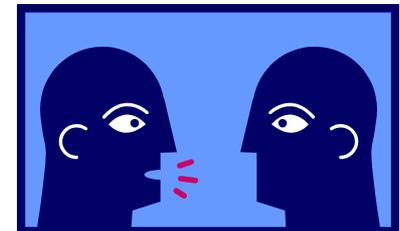


Big (Wo)Man on Campus

- **College market is attractive**
 - **Many students have extra cash/free time**
 - **Undeveloped brand loyalty**
- **College students are hard to reach via conventional media**
 - **Online advertising is very effective**
 - **Sampler boxes**
 - **Wall media**
 - **Spring break beach promotions**

Discussion

- *What are some of the positives and negatives of targeting college students?*
- *Identify some specific marketing strategies that you feel have either been successful or unsuccessful at appealing to this segment*
- *What characteristics distinguish the successes from the failures?*



Baby Busters: “Generation X”

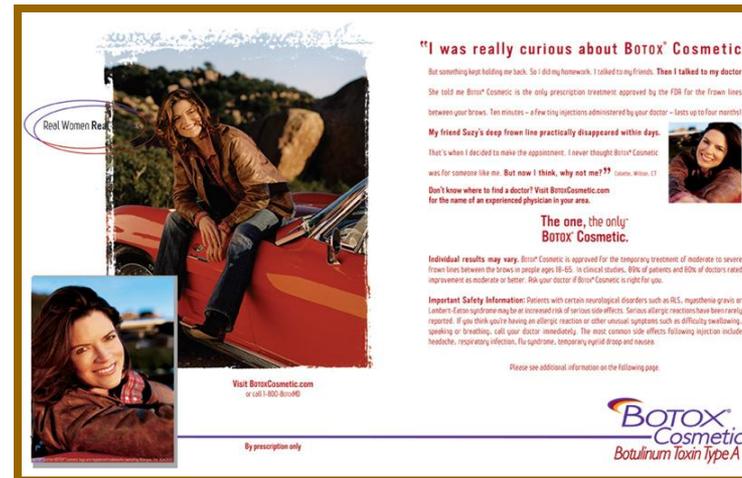


- **Consumers born between 1966 and 1976**
- **Today’s Gen Xer is both values-oriented and value-oriented”**
- **Desire stable families, save portion of income, and view home as expression of individuality**

Baby Boomers

- Consumers born between 1946 and 1965
- Revolution in style, politics, consumer attitudes
- Active and physically fit
- Currently in peak earning years
 - Food, apparel, and retirement programs
 - “Midlife crisis” products

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BotoxCosmetic.com



Real Women Real

"I was really curious about BOTOX[®] Cosmetic.
But something kept holding me back. So I did my homework. I talked to my friends. Then I talked to my doctor. She told me BOTOX[®] Cosmetic is the only prescription treatment approved by the FDA for the frown lines between your brows. Ten minutes - a few tiny injections administered by your doctor - lasts up to four months!
My friend Suzy's deep frown line practically disappeared within days.
That's when I decided to make the appointment. I never thought BOTOX[®] Cosmetic was for someone like me. **But now I think, why not me?!"** *Leslie Wilson, CT*
Don't know where to find a doctor? Visit BotoxCosmetic.com for the name of an experienced physician in your area.

**The one, the only[®]
BOTOX[®] Cosmetic.**

Individual results may vary. BOTOX[®] Cosmetic is approved for the temporary treatment of moderate to severe frown lines between the brows in people ages 18-65. In clinical studies, 80% of patients and 60% of doctors rated improvement as moderate or better. Ask your doctor if BOTOX[®] Cosmetic is right for you.

Important Safety Information: Patients with certain neurological disorders such as ALS, myasthenia gravis or Lambert-Eaton syndrome may be at increased risk of serious side effects. Serious allergic reactions have been rarely reported. If you think you're having an allergic reaction or other unusual symptoms such as difficulty swallowing, speaking or breathing, call your doctor immediately. The most common side effects following injection include headache, respiratory infection, flu symptoms, temporary eyelid droop and bruise.

Please see additional information on the following page.

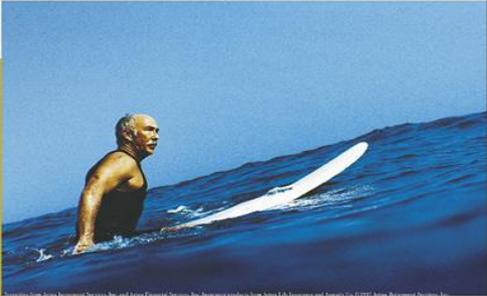
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The Gray Market

A ROCKING CHAIR IS A PIECE OF FURNITURE.
NOT A STATE OF MIND.



We know people whose lust for life has not and will not diminish because it's the morning after their 65th birthday. They're too busy putting the finishing touches on a book of poems. Tutoring underprivileged kids with their math. Learning the tango. Or taking acting classes. It's an outlook that works rather well with sons. Whether it's annuities, 401(k)s, IRAs, mutual funds or life insurance for your family, we've packaged a unique set of tools to help you realize your life's next great exploit. Which comes naturally when retirement isn't viewed as merely an end. But rather the way you've been living all along: passionately. For a free brochure, call 1-800-AETNA-60 or visit us at <http://www.aetna.com>.

Build for Retirement. Manage for Life.™

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- Traditionally neglected by marketers
- People are now living longer/healthier lives
 - “Zoomers” = active, interested in life, enthusiastic consumers with buying power
- Fastest growing group of Internet users

Gray Power: Seniors' Economic Clout

Impact of gray market on marketplace

- **Most brand loyal of any age group**
- **Economic health of gray market is good and getting better**
 - **Exercise facilities, cruises/tourism, cosmetic surgery/skin treatments, “how-to” books/classes**
- **Most advertising campaigns don't recognize gray market**

Talking to Seniors



- **Psyche of older people is important for marketers to probe**
- **Key values of mature consumers**
 - **Autonomy: want to be self-sufficient**
 - **Connectedness: value bonds with friends and family**
 - **Altruism: want to give something back to the world**

Perceived Age: You're Only as Old as You Feel

- **Age is more a state of mind than of body**
 - **Mental outlook/activity = longevity/quality of life**
- **Perceived age: how old a person feels as opposed to his or her chronological age**
 - **“Feel age”**
 - **“Look age”**
- **The older we get, the younger we feel relative to actual age**
 - **Marketers emphasize product benefits over age-appropriateness**

Segmenting Seniors

- **Segmented by:**
 - **Specific ages (50s, 60s, 70s)**
 - **Marital status**
 - **Health and outlook on life**
- **Social aging theories: try to understand how society assigns people to different roles across life span**

A ROCKING CHAIR IS A PIECE OF FURNITURE.
NOT A STATE OF MIND.

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Build for Retirement. Manage for Life.SM

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Gerontographics: Selected Characteristics

- **Gerontographics: segmentation approach that divides the mature market by level of physical well-being and social conditions**

Segment	% of 55+ Population	Profile	Marketing Ramifications
Healthy Indulgents	18%	Focus on enjoying life; act like younger consumers	Good customers for discretionary services
Healthy Hermits	36%	Resent expectation to behave like old people	Emphasize conformity and well-known brands
Ailing Outgoers	29%	Accept limitations but maintain positive self-esteem	Health problems: special diet/needs
Frail Recluses	17%	Adjusted lifestyle to accept old age; spiritually strong	Stay in home: remodeling and emergency response

Selling to Seniors

- **Most older people lead more active, multidimensional lives than we assume**
- **Older consumers are finished with many financial obligations**
 - **Most own their own homes**
 - **Child-rearing costs are over**
 - **“We’re Spending Our Children’s Inheritance”**
- **Marketers must provide more welcoming advertising for mature market**
 - **Packaging sensitive to physical limitations**

Mature Marketing Messages

Basic guidelines for effective advertising

- **Abundance of information**
- **Simple language**
- **Clear, bright pictures**
- **Use action to attract attention**
- **Speak clearly, and keep word count low**
- **Single sales message, emphasize brand extensions (familiarity)**
- **Avoid extraneous stimuli (excessive pictures)**