

## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **Social Marketing: Global Perspectives, Strategies and Effects on Consumer Behavior**

**Editor:** W. Douglas Evans

Social marketing is not just something for selling products but, instead, provides a framework for all influence attempts including those promoting prosocial behavior. In this book, Dr. Evans offers an excellent overview of this approach, showing how it can be used in a variety of domains to achieve a variety of aims. Focusing on current trends in theory, research, and practice around the world, Evans shows that social marketing is not just a strategy for the hyper-capitalist U.S. environment but, instead, a global strategy.

Evans is clearly one of the world's leading experts in this area and the authors he has chosen are similarly expert in their domains. The result is a series of chapters that start by laying down the theoretical and conceptual basics in Chapters 1-3 and then take us into the future of social marketing by show applications to new media (chapter 4), health information technology (chapter 5), web-based behavioral change (chapter 6) and twitter (chapter 8). From there chapters show us how this powerful influence theory can be used in cultures as diverse as China and Brazil and topics as varied as the environment (chapter 6), youth wellbeing (chapter 8) and breastfeeding (chapter 10).

The book reflects these excellent choices. It presents a clear yet sophisticated and nuanced presentations of the various subjects that should be of benefit not only to business and not-for-profit professions but also to academics and researchers as well (as long as they value clear and concise writing rather than the usual obfuscation of academic discourse). If you are just looking for an overview of the approach, then Evan's introductory chapter will get you started understanding this powerful approach. If you want to go more in depth, the other chapters in Part I will take you there. And, of course, a full read will provide the reader with insights into what is being done and, perhaps more importantly, what can and likely will be done with this potent technology for prosocial behavior change.

The book does a particularly good job communicating the importance of engaging participants in health interventions. In my opinion, we cannot get people to change their behavior if interventions are not engaging, and social marketing is all about getting people to participate by making prevention and health promotion fun, easy, and popular -- summing up what social marketing does. My own substance abuse prevention work has been impacted by social marketing and Evan's previous work. He showed me how useful it was for adolescent substance use prevention and helped me sharpen my thinking about our *keepin' it REAL* brand.

Finally, I should note that what is mystifying to this reviewer, and which he wishes the chapters might had dealt with in greater detail, is the resistance of some segments in the public health community to the use of a strategy that so clearly explains the effects we get in health promotion work and provides a tool for developing, evaluating, and implementing this work. This book, however, should make a significant contribution to this discussion and to the skill set of health promotion professionals and researchers.

#### **Michael L. Hecht**

Distinguished Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences, Penn State University

President, REAL Prevention LLC

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