**CONSUMER ACTIVISM – STARTING POINTS**

Progressive Era

* Food and drug safety legislation considered by Congress in 1892 and 1902
* Upton Sinclair publishes *The Jungle* in 1906
* Pure Food and Drug Act passes in 1906

1920s

* Stuart Chase and F. J. Schlink publish *Your Money's Worth: A Study in the Waste of the Consumer's Dollar* in 1927
* Consumers' clubs and research groups began to spring up, and state university extension home economists began to champion the rights of consumers

1930s

* boycotts
* educational campaigns
* “don’t buy where you can’t work” movements
* cost-of-living strikes

1950s-60s – Civil Rights Organizing at the Point of Consumption

* Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-56
* Greensboro, N.C. lunch counter sit-ins in 1960
* Civil Rights Act of 1964

1960s – Other forms of Consumer Activism

* President Kennedy’s Consumer Bill of Rights in 1962
* Ralph Nader publishes *Unsafe at Any Speed* in 1965
* Congress mandates that cigarette packages carry surgeon general’s warning
* Delano Grape Strike and Boycott organized by Cesar Chavez and the NFWA, 1964-1970

1970s and 80s

* anti-pornography campaign by Feminists against Pornography
* various campaigns to regulate explicit content on television and in other forms of media consumed by children
* further efforts to regulate tobacco and alcohol advertising

**1945-1970s: SHIFT FROM MASS MARKETING TO MARKET SEGMENTATION**

Theorists: Wendell Smith (1956) and Pierre Martineau (1958)

New axiom of marketing: homogeneity of buyers within a segmented market, heterogeneity between segmented markets.

Contributing factors:

* Fear of diminishing market returns
* Suburbanization and the commercialization of public space
* Emergence of television and changes in television advertising
* Segmentation of the television market, which increased with rise of cable television in the 1970s

Some examples of market segmentation:

* brand indoctrination of children,
* motivation of spending over saving in seniors
* colonization of minority business

Effects:

* On the one hand, more egalitarian –

Women, children and people of color were no longer subsumed under a hegemonic mass market identity.

* On the other hand, this recognition of differences is profit-driven –

It led to an even more insidious segmentation of culture and space than existed before.

“What resulted was a new commercial culture that reified-at times even exaggerated-social difference in the pursuit of profits, often reincorporating disaffected groups into the commercial marketplace”

Lizabeth Cohen, *The Consumers’ Republic,* 309