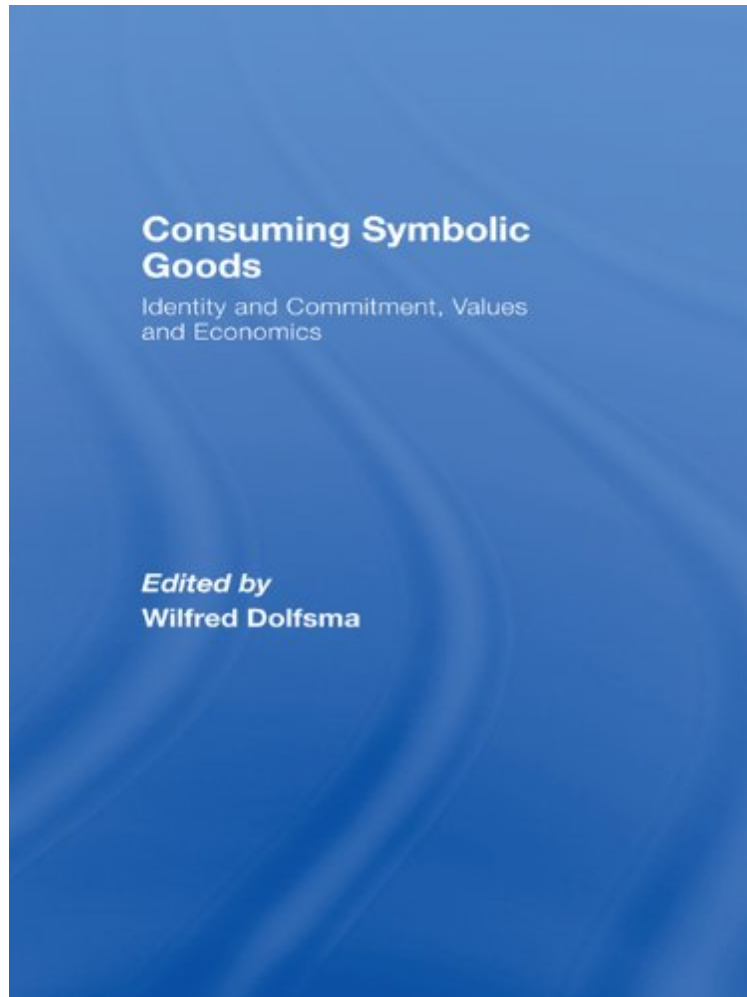


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# Consuming Symbolic Goods: Identity and Commitment, Values and Economics

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The phenomenon of consumption has increasingly drawn attention from economists. While the 'sole purpose of production is consumption', as Adam Smith has claimed, economists have up to recently generally ignored the topic. This book brings together a range of different perspectives on the topic of consumption that will finally shed the necessary light on a largely neglected theme, such as Why is the consumption of symbolic goods different than that of goods that are not constitutive of individuals' identity? How does the consumption of symbolic goods affect

social processes and economic phenomena? Will taking consumption (of symbolic goods) seriously impact economics itself? The book discusses these issues theoretically, and, through analyses of such cases as food, religion, fashion, empirically as well. It also discusses the possible role in the future of consumption. This book was previously published as a special issue of *Review of Social Economy*

About the Author Wilfred Dolfsma is both an economist and philosopher and holds a PhD in the former. He is attached to the Utrecht School of Economics as an Associate Professor, to Maastricht University (UNU-MERIT) as a professorial fellow, and is corresponding editor for the *Journal of Social Economy*. He has won the Hellen Potter best article award and the Gunnar Myrdal best book award. His research interests are the interrelations between economy, society and technology. He has published on various aspects of media industries, feminist economics as well as on globalisation, and the developments in and effects of IPR. In addition, as an institutional economist, Dolfsma does research in the history and methodology of economics, and consumption.