

The Clustered World : How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are

By Michael J. Weiss

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Michael Weiss expands on the geodemographics of The Clustering of America with this fascinating look at the sixty-two new lifestyle clusters that define Americans and their parallels in other countries. Today, the concept of clustering has spread throughout the world, revealing a global village made up of Long Distance Commuters in Japan and Chattering Classes in England who have more in common with Americans of the same cluster than they do with fellow countrymen. In The Clustered World, Weiss unveils how businesses and bureaucrats utilize clustering systems to influence our opinions and choices about bowling alleys in Florida, vending machines in Japan, and so forth.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
"Primary age group: 35-64... Median household income: $80,600... Median home value: $247,000... Predominant ideology: moderate Republican... Preferences: car phones, domestic wine, Land Rovers."

If this sounds like you, then you're a part of what's known as the "Winner's Circle" cluster. If not, then you probably fall into one of 61 other lifestyle clusters with names such as "Urban Gold Coast," "Pools & Patios," "God's Country," "Golden Ponds," and "Shotguns & Pickups." In *The Clustered World*, demographic detective Michael Weiss draws on the work of market research firm Claritas and its PRIZM cluster system to render a richly detailed view of the many neighborhoods and demographic segments that make up the United States. According to Weiss, the image of America as a melting pot is simply inaccurate--think *salad bar*, instead. He writes, "For a nation that's always valued community, this breakup of the mass market into balkanized population segments is as momentous as the collapse of Communism.... Today, the country's new motto should be '*E pluribus pluriba*': 'Out of many, many.'"

In addition to explaining the cluster concept, Weiss shows how marketers can put clusters to work to understand consumers better and sell everything from college educations to Dodge Caravans. Weiss also looks beyond the U.S. population to lifestyle clusters in Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, South Africa, and Spain. Marketers and social observers will find this pointillist view incredibly useful and perhaps a little disturbing. The overriding truth behind *The Clustered World* is that, like it or not, "*You are like your neighbors*." And in case you're wondering what cluster you belong to, Weiss includes the URL for the Claritas Web site (yawyl.claritas.com), where you can enter your ZIP code to find out more about you and your neighbors. *--Harry C. Edwards*

From Publishers Weekly
It's a brave new world for marketers, thanks to the data-gathering efforts of computers. With their number-crunching ability, it's now possible to identify many characteristics shared by residents of specific neighborhoods, including age, income level, education, buying habits, favorite forms of entertainment and consumption of brand-name products. Weiss is one of the pioneers in developing this form of demographic profile, first introduced in 1988 in his book, The Clustering of America. A decade later, as his new book relates, much more is known and some things have changed. From the established urban areas of the U.S. to the emerging consumer nations of Eastern Europe, clustering analysis provides a practical snapshot of attitudes and behaviors. Among the 62 distinct American clusters described here are unique groups such as "bohemian mix" (they prefer jogging to golfing and like foreign videos), "old Yankee rows" (stamp collecting is out, lottery tickets are in) and "blue blood estates" (country clubs, housekeepers and tennis are popular) . Readers unfamiliar with the modern world of marketing may find this off-putting, but the cutesy labels and standardized profiles have turned out to represent a bonanza--for advertisers, product developers, politicians and TV producers, among others--because they produce results. As Weiss states, "Forget race, national origin, age, household composition, and wealth. The characteristic that defines and separates Americans more than any other is the cluster." A minor complaint is the promotional nature of the contents, which focuses on the work of a single market research company. Maps and illus. (Jan.)
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From Kirkus Reviews
For the popular market, a demographer's view that people who live in mid-Manhattan may have more in

common with amigos in mid-Madrid than with their neighbors in the Bronx. That's not a breakthrough theory, even for those unsophisticated about marketing, but what is both interesting and frightening about this book is how refined demographic breakdowns have become. According to Weiss (The Clustering of America, 1989, etc.), one geodemographics company has divided the population of the US into 62 clusters, that is, a group of people defined by income, spending habits, interests, place and type of residence, and other criteria. They range from ``Blue Blood Estates'' (rich white and Asian professionals) to ``Southside City'' (poor African-American singles), and include such in-between categories as ``American Dreams'' (established immigrants) and ``Blue Highways'' (farm families). (There is actually someone who makes a living thinking up these labels.) Weiss devotes nearly half his time here to unnervingly detailed descriptions of each cluster, highlighting not only age and income, but political leanings, preferences in food, cars, magazines, television, and travel. He adds some social heft by discussing how these clusters have changed in the past decadeAmerica is now a ``salad bar'' rather than a melting potand how they have not changedblacks and whites are still segregated from one another, even in prosperous neighborhoods. Also new: the global village has become a ``clustered world,'' with clusters of yuppies, for instance, identified in at least 19 countries. Weisss reassurance on issues of personal privacy rings hollow after the revelation of how much information is available to the telemarketers who ring at dinner time. A chapter on Canada feels like filler; advice on how to find your own cluster seems to be available only through America Online. Some interesting tidbits for social scientists and a feast for marketing v.p.'sbut then they probably know all this already. (150 two-color maps, illus., and tables) (Author tour) -- *Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Richie:

This The Clustered World : How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is definitely information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This The Clustered World : How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are without we comprehend teach the one who examining it become critical in pondering and analyzing. Don't become worry The Clustered World : How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are can bring if you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even cell phone. This The Clustered World : How We Live, What We Buy, and What It All Means About Who We Are having very good arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

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