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Black Friday Shopping Expertise Garners Attention for Marketing Professor

Winthrop University

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Quick Facts

- Marketing Professor Jane Thomas, who along with Associate Business Dean Cara Peters, has pioneered business thought on shoppers' Black Friday strategy.
- In a Nov. 26 Smithsonian Magazine online article, Thomas explained how shopping makes Americans feel like "well-loved warriors."
- Thomas branched out this holiday season to participate in a Nov. 20 panel discussion about the pink tax on HuffPost Live.



Jane Thomas

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – In the retail world, she's known as **Dr. Shopping**.

Marketing Professor Jane Thomas, who along with Associate Business Dean Cara Peters, has pioneered business thought on shoppers' **Black Friday strategy**. For the past few holiday seasons, Thomas has explained in journal articles and in the media about the elaborate planning by some families for Black Friday shopping.

In a Nov. 26 **Smithsonian Magazine** online article, Thomas explained how shopping makes Americans feel like "**well-loved warriors**."

She was quoted as saying: "The typical Black Friday shopper is a person who is on a mission. It's part of their family's tradition, and they've been doing it for years."

The professors found through interviews that the **Black Friday experience** can be broken down into **four main themes**: intense bonding, strategic planning, The Great Race and Mission Accomplished.

Shoppers from Thomas' study were nearly united in their focus—"everyone is on a mission backed by a detailed strategy." Shoppers know what deals they want, and they often target only those items, ignoring other in-store promotions.

Their shopping frenzy is fueled by competition, Thomas said. "It's competitive in the sense that everybody is trying to be near the head of the line and get the sale item before everyone else," Thomas told Smithsonian Magazine. Shoppers said the experience is an exciting adventure, "complete with the enjoyable swapping of 'war stories' when the day is done."

Thomas predicted that within five years, changing habits and preferences will reduce **Black Friday's allure**. However the reasons why people participate in Black Friday probably won't change much, and the practice won't fade away anytime soon. "There are still those people who have a family unit or group of girlfriends and enjoy this as part of their tradition," she says in the article. "And it's going to stay part of their traditions."

[Read the full article here.](#)

Thomas served on two recent panel discussions concerning shopping:

* A **Dec. 15 panel discussion** on **'Tis the Season to be Shopping** for **WNPR**. Thomas was one of four retail experts to talk about the latest holiday shopping trends, how sales are doing, and what they mean for the overall health of our economy.

* A **Nov. 20 panel discussion** about the **pink tax** on **HuffPost Live**. Panelists discussed why females can pay up to \$1,300 more annually for identical products than men do. [Watch the show here.](#)

Thomas is active on Twitter; follow her [@drshopping](#).

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at longshawj@winthrop.edu or call her at 803/323-2404.

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