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Expanding our understanding of marketing in society

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Abstract The *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* was started 40 years ago, at a time when "marketing in society" issues were capturing much attention from marketing scholars. Since that time both the field and this journal have grown and matured, but the marketing in society area has become somewhat removed from the dominant perspectives of marketing scholarship. This paper provides an historical perspective on these developments and offers an examination of the fundamental role of societal interests in our field. Six basic topics are explored: (1) the hundred years of history of marketing thought development, as reflected in the "4 Eras" of marketing thought; (2) the ebbs and flows of attention to marketing in society topics during these 4 Eras; (3) two illustrations of difficulties brought about by this area's move to sideline status in the field; (4) our concept of the "aggregate marketing system" as a basis for appreciating the centrality of this research area for the field of marketing; (5) the nature of marketing in society research today; and (6) a discussion of several research challenges and opportunities for the future.

Keywords Marketing history · Academic marketing · Marketing in society · Definition of marketing · Public policy research · Aggregate marketing system

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We are pleased to participate in recognizing the fortieth anniversary of the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* (*JAMS*) and to pay our respects to its fundamental role within scholarship in marketing. Our comments here are based on an extended project in which we have been inquiring into the nature and extent of marketing thought. We have learned a great deal while pursuing this work—one significant lesson for us is how very fundamental and important are the issues studied within the "marketing in society" area.

As readers would likely agree, however, the importance and centrality of marketing in society are not recognized by all sectors of marketing academia today, an oversight that we wish to address in this article. As shown in Table 1, we plan to cover six major topics, which range from the past to the future, cover deficits as well as contributions, and focus on challenges and opportunities within the academic enterprise. We begin by placing the field of marketing in historical perspective.

A brief historical reprise: the "4 Eras" of marketing thought development

Table 2 outlines what we (Wilkie and Moore 2003) have defined as the "4 Eras of Marketing Thought" in the United States since the field's formal beginnings approximately 110 years ago.[1] Table 2's first row, "Pre-Marketing," acknowledges that considerable thought about marketing-related phenomena (e.g., concepts of markets, marginal

[1] Interested readers may download the article "Scholarly Research in Marketing: Exploring the 4 Eras of Thought Development" directly from: http://web2.business.nd.edu/Faculty/wilkie.html.

Table 1 Six topics related to understanding marketing in society research

I.	A Brief Historical Reprise: The “4 Eras” of Marketing Thought Development
II.	Treatment of the Societal Domain: Ebbs and Flows across the 4 Eras
III.	Two Illustrative Concerns of “To the Sidelines”
IV.	The “Aggregate Marketing System” as a Central Organizing Concept
V.	Research on Marketing in Society Today
VI.	Research Challenges and Opportunities for the Future

analysis, value, production, humans as social and economic entities, competition, and role of governments) had been undertaken within the field of economics prior to the formal beginnings of the marketing field (e.g., Dixon 2002; Shaw 1995). As of the turn of the 20th century, therefore, the area that would become “marketing” was still firmly ensconced within the field of economics.

Era I: “Founding the Field of Marketing” (1900–1920)

The first era of formal marketing thought began shortly after the turn of the 20th century, when more structured academic attention started to be given to a specific portion of the business system that was evolving and assuming ever greater prominence in the marketplace—the area of *market distribution*. Economists in general had not been handling this topic, as the thrust of traditional economic theory had focused on *production* (and thus land, labor, and capital) as the creator of economic value, and had placed little emphasis on services of the sort provided through distribution.[2] The marketing field began to take on its own distinct identity when professors at a number of universities across the country independently began to develop new courses to examine various aspects of the marketing system, including “distributive and regulative industries” (at the University of Michigan), “the marketing of products” (University of Pennsylvania), “methods of marketing farm products” (University of Wisconsin), and “mercantile institutions” (New York University) (Bartels 1951, 1988). Substantively, these courses reflected the realities of their time and place (e.g., agriculture was extremely important in these times, with significant attention paid to distribution of farm products, thus it is no happenstance that Big Ten universities have long been leading contributors to marketing scholarship).

As Era I progressed, from 1910–1920, articles in economics journals and free-standing books helped the fledgling field of marketing to begin to create distinct conceptual approaches to knowledge development (Bussiere 2000; Savitt 1990). Three of these later came to be known as the *commodity approach* (focusing on all marketing actions involved in a particular product category), the *institutional approach* (focusing on describing the operations of a specialized type of marketing agency, such as a wholesaler or a broker), and the *functional approach* (focusing on the purposes served by various marketing activities).

Era II: “Formalizing the Field” (1920–1950)

During Era II, marketing moved from an ill-formed, nascent area to a flourishing, vibrant academic field. The rapid development of the field during this period actually accompanied (and reflected) a number of profound societal changes—in only 30 years, the United States moved through boom and prosperity in the 1920s, to the Great Depression of the 1930s, to the cataclysmic World War II and into the postwar period of the 1940s. In many respects this was a remarkable time in the nation’s history. As the world shifted and evolved in Era II, so did the marketing system. Mass production capabilities required more complex and varied distribution systems, as well as more sophisticated understanding of tools to influence mass consumer demand. Technological developments led to the introduction of a vast array of new products. For example, as electricity was brought into American homes (53% of homes by 1925 from only 8% in 1908), innovations such as the electric iron, washing machine, refrigerator, and vacuum cleaner eased the lives of the average consumer (Cross 2000; Lebergott 1993). Consumers’ choices also expanded exponentially via newly convenient packaged goods, delivered in new retailing formats such as the supermarket (circa 1930). The resurgence of the “Consumer Movement” in the 1920s and 1930s was centered in part on frustrations with prices, the quality of some products, and a shortage of product information (and resulting

[2] This view was somewhat understandable when markets were entirely localized. By the turn of the 20th century in the United States, however, immigration, migration to urban centers, production and technology gains, as well as improvements in transport and storage were combining to dramatically change the state of the marketplace, with the growth and evolution of distribution systems developing apace. Thus there was a genuine need for some economists to step forward to embrace and then explain those elements of this new world that were not incorporated into the body of thought of the time.

Table 2 The "4 Eras" of marketing thought

Era	Distinctive characteristics
(Before 1900) "Pre-Marketing"	➢ No distinguishing field of study: issues embedded within the field of economics.
I. (1900–1920) "Founding the Field"	➢ Focus on marketing as distribution.
	➢ Emphasis on defining the purview of marketing's activities as an economic institution (derived from the field of economics).
	➢ Development of first courses with "marketing" in title.
II. (1920–1950) "Formalizing the Field"	➢ Development of generally accepted foundations or "principles of marketing."
	➢ Establishment of knowledge development infrastructure for the field: professional association (AMA), conferences, journals (*Journal of Retailing* and *Journal of Marketing*).
III. (1950–1980) "A Paradigm Shift… Marketing, Management and the Sciences"	➢ Growth boom in U.S. mass market and marketing body of thought.
	➢ Two perspectives emerge to dominate the marketing mainstream:
	(1) the "managerial viewpoint"
	(2) the behavioral and quantitative sciences as keys to future knowledge development.
	➢ Knowledge infrastructure undergoes major expansion and evolution in keeping with these changes (*JAMS* begins 1973).
IV. (1980–present) "The Shift Intensifies: A Fragmentation of the Mainstream"	➢ New challenges arise in business world: short-term financial focus, downsizing, globalization, re-engineering.
	➢ Dominant perspectives are questioned in philosophy of science debates.
	➢ "Publish or perish" pressure intensifies on academics.
	➢ Knowledge infrastructure expands and diversifies into specialized interest areas.

consumer confusion), as well as a growing use of emotion in advertising (Allen 1952; Cross 2000). All of these difficulties were exacerbated by the Great Depression, then wrenched into a different domestic reality by World War II, and finally launched into the dawn of an uncertain new world as the postwar period ensued.

The availability of an academic infrastructure—formal organizations, scheduled conferences, and chronicles of knowledge developments (e.g., newsletters and journals)—is virtually a necessary condition for a vibrant body of thought in a field. The academic field of marketing became a formalized area of study during Era II with these developments. Until the early 1920s, the American Economic Association's (AEA) conference had served as a setting for a small number of marketing persons to meet for discussion, while the AEA's journal had published a small number of formal articles in this fledgling field (Bussiere 2000). Then, in 1925, the *Journal of Retailing* was launched at New York University.[3] In 1936–37, the American Marketing Association was formed and its *Journal of Marketing* began publication (Bartels 1988; Kerin 1996).[4] The value of the AMA's infrastructure was quickly apparent, as the *Journal of Marketing* published some 500 articles in the first decade alone (Kerin 1996).

The early textbooks of Era II represented much of the mainstream body of academic thought, as marketing journals did not yet exist in numbers. The primary emphasis in the Era II textbooks was on the development and integration of generally accepted "marketing principles." Over time, the functional approach especially gained wide acceptance among marketing thinkers. Many functions were identified, falling under three general categories: (1) physically supplying the market, (2) creating opportunities for exchange, and (3) undertaking auxiliary or facilitating functions.[5] Grounded in economic theory, functional analysis also extended interest to the efficiency with which the functions were being performed. As Era II was ending, academic books and journal articles began to seriously address a new topic—what could the role of theory and

[3] The *Journal of Retailing* was published on a quarterly basis and contained primarily short articles (1–5 pages) aimed at understanding the management of retail functions and processes (e.g., "The Merchandise Division—Why it Exists, and Its Job" (Mench 1925); "Some Observations on Merchandise Control" (Straus 1926)). Thus, for the retailing sector of the field, a valuable communications vehicle had become available.

[4] In 1924 the National Association of Teachers of Marketing and Advertising was formed, while in 1930 the American Marketing Society, representing the interests of practitioners, came into being. This Society began the *American Marketing Journal* in 1934, with a name change in 1935 to the *National Marketing Review*. In 1936–1937 the teaching and practitioner associations merged to form the American Marketing Association (AMA), and the new group's publication was renamed the *Journal of Marketing* (*JM*).

[5] Though the functional approach achieved wide currency among marketing thinkers in Era II, lists of functions did vary across authors. See Hunt and Goolsby (1988) for an excellent further discussion.

science be for this field? This development presaged a major shift in the future, to Era III.

Era III: "A Paradigm Shift in the Marketing Mainstream: Marketing, Management, and the Sciences" (1950–1980)

The third era was very much built around the arrival of mass marketing dominance and a period of booming growth in the United States' marketing system. The infrastructure and body of marketing thought likewise expanded in geometric fashion during these 30 years. (Note: because this era presaged the modern world of marketing scholarship, it is here discussed in more detail than the others.) Marketing academia was fueled by the enormous growth experienced in university business education programs, as represented by awards of nearly 2 million business Bachelor's degrees and almost one-half million MBA degrees during Era III. Overall, the field of marketing was growing rapidly during Era III.

The new mainstream A new mainstream for marketing scholarship was formed during this time—a mainstream that was (1) steeped in science as the basis for marketing thought development and (2) devoted to viewing the field from the perspective of the marketing manager, to help him or her in undertaking successful marketing programs. In earlier times the efforts of marketing thinkers were somehow more idiosyncratic: some leading academics seemed to be more clearly standing apart in order to observe and describe the operations of marketing. From this perspective they could offer expert, empathetic, and yet objective and sometimes critical evaluations of actions being taken by marketers. As Myers et al. (1980, p. 96) summarize: "The study of marketing as an interesting subject to think about and reflect on gave way to a much more action-oriented view of the training of potential marketing managers."

The turn to a managerial perspective A number of factors were influential in bringing about the shift to viewing the field from the vantage point of the manager. First, this perspective certainly brought professional and vocational appeal to university courses, in the sense of directly preparing students for jobs they would be undertaking after graduation. Beyond this, the field had been experiencing a growing impatience on the part of some thinkers, such as Wroe Alderson at Wharton, with what they saw as a too-heavy reliance on *description* of marketing institutions and activities, as opposed to efforts to *develop theory* in the field.

External factors were also very significant at this time. The world of marketing was now dealing with an exploding mass market. This was driven by pent-up demand from the war years' restrictions on supplies of consumer goods, as well as an explosive growth in population. The "Baby Boom" had begun in 1946, bringing an additional four million babies per year, which began to strain institutional and market capacities as it flowed through its life cycle, until a total of 76 million new consumers had arrived in 19 years. In addition, marketers faced new opportunities through significant infrastructure developments for distribution (such as the new interstate highway system), new regions experiencing substantial growth, a shift to suburban living (altering the nature of locations in the retailing sector), and the development of a new communicator—television—and a national audience toward which to advertise each evening during "prime time." Overall, the scope of the real world of marketing in the United States was becoming much larger and much more national in character. This changing world offered huge new opportunities, but at the same time it demanded significant adaptations, trials, and risks by companies and their marketing managers.

The strength of the shift to the managerial perspective in marketing during the early portion of Era III is strikingly evident in the burst of significant new concepts that were introduced during this time. It is startling to realize just how many of these—now almost a half-century old—are still basic to the field today:

- The marketing concept (John McKitterick 1957)
- Market segmentation as a managerial strategy (Wendell Smith 1956)
- The marketing mix (Neil Borden 1964)
- The 4 P's (E. Jerome McCarthy 1960)
- Brand image (e.g., Burleigh Gardner and Sidney Levy 1955)
- Marketing management as analysis, planning, and control (Philip Kotler 1967)
- Marketing myopia (Theodore Levitt 1960)

The shift toward the managerial perspective of marketing was also much enhanced by several key textbooks appearing during the early portion of Era III. Jones and Shaw (2002) identify three textbooks in particular, by Wroe Alderson (*Marketing Behavior and Executive Action*, 1957), John Howard (*Marketing Management: Analysis and Planning*, 1957), and E. Jerome McCarthy (*Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach*, 1960), plus a readings book by Eugene Kelley and William Lazer (*Managerial Marketing: Perspectives and Viewpoints*, 1958).

The emergence of the sciences in marketing The sciences arrived in stages, slowly during the 1950s (the journal *Management Science* was started in 1954), increasingly during the 1960s, and, as PhD programs completed their adjustments, in a dominant manner through the 1970s. By the end of Era III there was no question that the future of the mainstream of marketing thought would be governed by persons having these forms of scientific training and these basic perspectives about the field.

The tale behind the rise of marketing science is particularly interesting. It was significantly enhanced in the United States by two external factors: (1) a national effort to infuse math and statistics into business schools, and (2) the development of the computer as a research tool. In the early 1950s the Ford Foundation began a multi-year initiative to infuse scientific theory, methods, and analysis into the research agendas, PhD educations, and teaching approaches of the faculty members at work in American business schools. The rationale, reflected in the *Gordon-Howell Report* (1959), was that business professors were teaching business in a largely descriptive fashion representing the past, not the future, and that they were doing so in part because they had simply never been trained to do anything else. The centerpiece of the effort was a special year-long program in 1959 ("The Harvard/MIT Institute of Basic Mathematics") in which a select group of promising young business faculty members was tutored deeply for a year by the mathematics faculty. The success of this effort was felt strongly, and almost immediately, as the program's marketing participants—including Frank Bass, Robert Buzzell, Philip Kotler, William Lazer, E. Jerome McCarthy, Edgar Pessemier, Donald Shawver, and Abraham Schuchman—returned to their universities and went to work.[6] In the ensuing years this group contributed to the diffusion of the new quantitative perspective through journal articles, influential books, seminal conferences on research theory and methods, and by training the next generation of thought leaders in this new approach. A second crucial factor in the success of marketing science was the rapid development of computer technology in both industry and academia. This new tool allowed researchers to undertake sophisticated efforts to model complex marketing problems, as with optimization models of physical distribution, sales force allocation, and advertising budgeting. In addition, new forms of multivariate statistical analyses could now be applied to large banks of information on the growing mass marketplace.

No program similar to the Harvard/MIT math training was available for the behavioral sciences, however, so that marketing professors who had not been trained in the underlying disciplines of psychology and sociology had to attempt to learn on their own, or to hire new faculty from these fields. Acceptance into the mainstream of marketing thought was somewhat slower for the consumer behavior area, though it was a natural response to the pressing needs for insights about the mass consumer marketplace—insights for use in new product planning, advertising, retailing, and other marketing decision areas. The growth in computers was also a positive here, as it allowed for large-scale consumer surveys and the dissemination of new empirical research findings, their causes and implications.

Growth in the academic infrastructure Era III experienced a sharp increase in PhD degree production in business generally—if only 10% of these were in marketing, 1,100 new potential thought contributors entered the field during this time. This addition of many new marketing academics meant that the nature of marketing's knowledge infrastructure needed to significantly expand to accommodate these new forces. The first major research journal to appear—the *Journal of Advertising Research* in 1960—was driven by the practitioner community. Shortly thereafter, in 1964, the *Journal of Marketing Research* was begun by the American Marketing Association. In 1967, the *Journal of Consumer Affairs* began, offering an outlet for studies on the consumer marketplace. Then, in 1973, the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* made its debut, followed in 1974 by the *Journal of Consumer Research*. Thus, by the end of Era III the number of vehicles for advancing marketing thought had more than tripled.

In addition, special conferences and workshops began to be held on behavioral and quantitative frontier topics, as well as on marketing strategy issues. New associations were formed to afford increased opportunities for communicating about research ideas and results—these included the "Marketing College" within The Institute of Management Science (TIMS), the Association for Consumer Research, and the Academy of Marketing Science. Another important infrastructure development also occurred in 1961, when a new think tank, the Marketing Science Institute, was formed in Philadelphia (later moved to Boston and Harvard) as collaboration between 29 sponsoring firms and leading marketing academic thinkers. MSI was an interesting and bold effort: over the ensuing years the research it stimulated and supported became a major factor in advancing thought in the marketing field (Kerin 1996; Bloom 1987).

Characteristics of Era III knowledge development Era III was a time of great expansion of marketing scholarship, one in which growth and innovation were much welcomed. In retrospect, the speed with which thought leaders adopted and worked with new ideas is a significant feature of the period.[7] To be sure, not all concepts, theories, and methods were original with marketing thinkers: unabashed borrowing and trial was characteristic, at times followed by further

[6] As an aside of interest, the senior author of this paper was an undergraduate undecided between a liberal arts and mathematics major when he was recruited by the recently returned Professor E. Jerome McCarthy into a new minor, "Management Science," that he was instituting in Notre Dame's College of Business Administration. Some twenty students from various fields entered the new program, and seven went on for PhD work in business fields.

[7] A detailed look at Era III topics is available as Figure 6 in Wilkie and Moore (2003).

applications and refinements. Also, the emerging power of the behavioral and quantitative sciences was quite evident, as was the way in which they merge within a larger “marketing research” sphere. It is also important to note that the academic training required to contribute to many of the Era III topics had changed dramatically from Era II. This meant that the persons leading the research thrusts of late Era III were either new to the field, or had re-trained themselves in the Ford Foundation program or elsewhere. Finally, the heterogeneity represented by such advances was very high, calling for increasing specialization by individual researchers working to push back the frontiers of knowledge. This is the characteristic that drove the development of the next period of marketing thought, Era IV.

Era IV: “The Shift Intensifies—A Fragmentation of the Mainstream” (1980–present)

The overall character of Era IV The fourth era, which extends from 1980 to the present, is characterized by a much changed face of the field, brought about by adaptations and reactions to the powerful shifts in marketing during Era III. In a sense, it appears that the pressures that had been building on the mainstream of marketing thought finally reached a stress level that demanded relief through the infrastructure, much as an over-full dam might burst so that the pent-up waters can find their new courses and destinations. The new directions taken during Era IV have had far-reaching consequences for both the marketing mainstream and for the field’s treatment of marketing and society.

The pressures build and the field responds By 1980, three powerful forces were bearing on the academic infrastructure to create Era IV:

- A substantial increase in persons pursuing “publish or perish” tracks in marketing academia.
- Pressures for increasingly specialized outlets to reflect the technical languages, methods, and shared paradigms at work at the frontiers of research.
- The globalization of business education, bringing new thinkers from around the world into marketing.

In examining these developments, we were shocked to find a poignant illustration—the burst of significant new marketing journals that began to appear in 1980. The new entries, by year, were:

- *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 1980
- *Journal of Macromarketing*, 1981
- *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 1982
- *Marketing Science*, 1982
- *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 1983
- *Psychology and Marketing*, 1984
- *Journal of Product Innovation and Management*, 1984
- *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 1984

In just 5 short years then, from 1980 through 1984, the number of research-based marketing journal outlets more than doubled (from 7 to 15).[8] The academic publication infrastructure that had slowly evolved over the previous 45 years had now changed pace and direction. Further, these new venues had been independently developed, suggesting the presence of some broader factors at work. For example, most of these new entries were directly aimed at narrower constituencies within the marketing field, reflecting a decisive arrival of research specialization in marketing. Other changes in the academic infrastructure favoring specialization soon followed, notably the formation of the American Marketing Association’s “Special Interest Group” structure, and a growth in single-topic workshops, symposia, and “research camps” at which specialists gather to pursue advanced developments.

The field continues to grow and evolve One of the major trends during Era IV has been a dramatic globalization of business concepts, as entire blocs of nations moved toward market-based systems and away from centralized command and control. For example, the MBA degree is now the largest single field of study for graduate program applications in China, and numerous business schools have been established in other transitional nations.

Within the United States, increasing numbers of students have been pursuing higher education in business. In 1980, at the close of Era III, over 185,000 Bachelor’s degrees were awarded in business in the United States. During Era IV this number has almost doubled, reaching over 335,000 degrees awarded in 2008. MBA growth has been even more impressive during Era IV. Some 55,000 U.S. MBA degrees were awarded in 1980, at the close of Era III, and now that number has nearly tripled, to some 155,000 MBA degrees awarded in 2008. Meanwhile doctoral degrees in business have kept pace, increasing from over 767 to nearly 2,100 during these same years (*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 2011, Tables 298–300). This demand for business education has contributed to a continuing increase in academic positions available in business schools, and a concomitant increase (assuming a publish or perish reward

[8] Of course there are many types of publication outlets, so definition may be an issue for this calculation. To be clear, the seven existing marketing-related journals we used in this assumption were the *Journal of Marketing, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Advertising Research, Journal of Retailing*, and *Journal of Consumer Affairs*. Generalized publications such as *Harvard Business Review* and *Management Science* were not included here.

system in many universities) in marketing academics wishing to contribute to the body of thought during Era IV.

The most important impact of globalization on the world of marketing thought has not been felt through courses themselves, but rather through the dramatic increase in international scholars contributing new theories, concepts, and findings. Earlier in Era IV, one major source of international contributions was the increasing number of persons born outside the United States who attended U.S. doctoral programs and began to add to marketing knowledge. Many of these persons remained in this country as faculty members and productive researchers, while others moved to other nations as business faculty positions became increasingly numerous and attractive there. Our analyses of the authorship of articles and the membership on journal editorial boards over a fifteen-year period in Era IV showed a strongly increasing presence of international scholars on both measures for four major publications in the field; in fact international scholars reached a majority in total articles contributed as of 2002. In conducting these assessments it also appeared that the sizes of journal editorial boards increased, the number of authors per paper increased, and that the number of single-authored papers decreased as Era IV progressed. In preparing the present article we undertook parallel analyses of *JAMS* and found:

- The *JAMS* editorial board expanded from 71 members in 1980 to 109 members in 2010.
- The proportion of international scholars on the *JAMS* editorial board (defined here as persons believed to have been born or who are now working outside the U.S.) has increased from about 25% in 1980 to 37% in 2010 (n.b., given the increase in size of the board, the absolute gain is greater).
- The proportion of single-authored papers decreased significantly across the era: deleting special issues and special sections from the analysis, in the 5 years 1980–1984 single-authored articles represented 36% of articles in JAMS, whereas in the most recent period (2006–2011) they now account for only 9%.
- Relatedly, the average number of authors per article has also increased, from 1.9 at the start of the era to 2.6 recently, with an increasing trend apparent currently.

Finally, Era IV has also been a time of remarkable technological advances that have strongly impacted both the real world of marketing and the world of academia. The Internet is most apparent, providing huge gains in communication potentials across the nation and across the world. Building off of technology as well, social media has transformed marketer-consumer relationships and has advanced possibilities of consumer co-creation as well as powers of word of mouth. “Marketplaces” have transformed into “marketspaces,” and many new topics have appeared to be investigated by marketing academics. Electronic journal databases have vastly improved access to the “web of knowledge,” and that web has been enlarged greatly by the continued growth in number of marketing journal outlets. The ARC section of the American Marketing Association’s website currently lists 117 journals for this field, a number that is clearly too large to be regularly read by today’s scholar.[9] Thus the ranking of journals has also become important, as a means of identifying those with broadest thought impact (Baumgartner and Pieters 2003; Hult et al. 2009). Finally, as discussed in a separate section here, doctoral programs in marketing have continued to increase their stress on sophisticated research training, and on production of journal articles, even early in the program. The net result today, after 30 years of Era IV, is a field of study that is much larger, much more extended across the globe, much more active in sophisticated research pursuits, much more specialized—and accordingly much more fragmented—than was the case at the end of Era III. Barring unforeseen events, we anticipate that these trends will continue into the future of the field.

Treatment of the societal domain across the 4 Eras

As might be inferred from our coverage of the 4 Eras, rather than a steady, cumulative advance of a unified body of marketing thought, our field has seen periodic shifts in dominance of prevailing modes of thinking. This has clearly been the case for societal issues in marketing, as we’ll discuss in this section.

Attention to societal concerns in Eras I and II: up and up

Within both Era I and Era II the societal domain was a central issue in the body of marketing thought. Focus was strongly on the distribution sector, with stress directed at explicating the economic rationales for these increasingly complex systems evolving within the society of the time. Reflecting their disciplinary training in economics, writers of the time placed strong emphasis on understanding markets and their operations. In contrast to today’s focus on managerial decision making, these approaches were more abstract and clearly encompassed societal concerns, as Shaw (1912) illustrates: (1) “The accepted system of distribution was built up on the satisfying of staple needs … this sort of activity has … contributed to the progress of civilization” (p. 708), (2) “Society can no more afford an ill-adjusted system of distribution than it can inefficient and

[9] See Marketingpower.com/Community/ARC/Pages/Research/Journals/Other, accessed 7/13/2011.

wasteful methods of production" (p. 706), (3) "The middleman is a social necessity" (p. 737). This stress on economic efficiency stimulated exploration of the roles being played by marketers and the government. For example, the passage of the Clayton Act and creation of the Federal Trade Commission, both in 1914, reflected serious societal concern with pricing and other competitive behaviors within the growing capitalist economy (e.g., Murphy and Wilkie 1990).

Overall, it is instructive to note that the thought leaders of Era I were quite willing to use economic efficiency criteria to express negative as well as positive judgments about marketing. The first era's literature was also willing to raise and address larger questions, such as:

- Are there too many middlemen? Does distribution cost too much?
- Does advertising raise or lower prices?
- What control, if any, should be exerted over new combinations in distribution?
- Of the total costs paid by consumers, which elements are desirable? Indispensable?
- What about "non-essential" services such as credit availability—should these be eliminated?

In the absence of elaborate theory, data, or structure, the authors then sought to provide non-empirical but relatively objective answers about these social issues reflecting their evolving marketing system.

This central role continued in Era II. The larger events of the times—the economic depression of the 1930s and World War II in the early 1940s—sparked special interest in exigencies of the marketing and society relationship among thinkers in this field. Chapters were devoted to societal issues in most textbooks of the time, with three of the most common issues discussed being pricing practices, costs of distribution, and value of advertising. The *Journal of Marketing* (*JM*), moreover, contributed greatly to the development of thought in the field beginning in 1936—although it was only available for about half of this era (1936–1950), 146 articles and commentaries relating to marketing and society appeared in during this time.[10] During World War II, moreover, the proportion of *JM* attention to marketing and society peaked for the entire period we have studied. With the country galvanized by the war effort, according to our calculations 55% of *JM*'s content was devoted to societal issues. At the end of the war, contributors to the journal focused significant attention on postwar planning and analysis. Underpinning these efforts was an explicit recognition that the efficiency and performance of the marketing system played a critical role in ensuring economic prosperity. New coverage was dedicated to topics such as the growth of the mass market, employment, consumer savings, and industrial development, along with a return to some older issues such as resale price maintenance, agricultural grade-labeling, and false advertising.

To illustrate the centrality of the "marketing as societal system" concept during these times, consider these quotes from two marketing thinkers who clearly viewed their scholarly and professional roles more broadly than many marketing academics do today:

> It is the responsibility of the marketing profession, therefore, to provide a marketing view of competition in order to guide efforts at regulation and to revitalize certain aspects of the science of economics…. For surely no one is better qualified to play a leading part in the consideration of measures designed for the regulation of competition. (Alderson 1937, pp. 189, 190)

> [M]arketing is not primarily a means for garnering profits for individuals. It is, in the larger, more vital sense, an economic instrument used to accomplish indispensable social ends.... A marketing system designed solely for its social effectiveness would move goods with a minimum of time and effort to deficit points … [and] provide a fair compensation, and no more, for the efforts of those engaged in the activity. At the same time it would provide the incentive needed to stimulate constant improvements in its methods. These are the prime requisites of social effectiveness. (Breyer 1934, p. 192)

Attention to societal concerns in Era III: down, then strongly up

The relatively high and consistent level of attention to marketing in society in Eras I and II shifted sharply at the start of Era III, as the new major thrusts—an infusion of both a scientific perspective and a managerial view of marketing—had other priorities, and appear to be largely indifferent to the study of marketing in society. During the 1950s and early 1960s the proportion of marketing and society articles in the *Journal of Marketing* declined noticeably, as the field's authors turned their attention to new managerial topics, and to the growing area of marketing research.

Then, in the second half of the 1960s, a powerful new interest in marketing and society began to emerge, reflecting the tenor of the times. Social unrest was spreading

[10] This total is based on listings in the *Journal of Marketing's* cumulative index under subject headings Government Issues, Social Marketing, and Social, Political and Economic Issues for volumes 1–15. We should note however, that this is a conservative number because these listings tend not to include the many articles devoted to the role of marketing in a national emergency, specifics on the war effort, and postwar planning and analysis.

across society (e.g., issues such as civil rights, the role of government and the "military-industrial complex" in waging a controversial war in Vietnam, and assassinations of national leaders and role models). Thoughtful people associated with business increasingly began to examine these issues, evidencing concern with the equity and operation of their society, including the "social responsibility of business." The American Marketing Association formed a Public Policy Division and established committees to deal with such topics as inner-city marketing and minority enterprise. The *Journal of Marketing* published a special issue, "Marketing's Changing Social/Environmental Role" (July 1971), featuring articles on such topics as planned social change, recycling, food prices and vulnerable groups, self-regulation, and ecology. Consumers also became a featured area, as behavioral marketing academics were spurred to examine the possibilities of putting their theories and methods to use in the service of poor and vulnerable consumers, or for better health (e.g., cigarettes, alcohol, drug use), or for better, wiser, or more efficient consumer purchases. This movement was greatly enhanced in the political arena in 1962, when President John F. Kennedy announced the Consumer Bill of Rights.[11]

The marketing and society stream of work continued to sharply accelerate throughout the 1970s, up to the end of Era III. Some 20 readings books on this topic appeared between 1966 and 1974 (Bartels 1988, p. 220). Also, many in the field approved of broadening the concept of marketing (Kotler and Levy 1969a, b; Luck 1969), thus setting the stage for developing *social marketing*, a research area that would focus on the work of not-for-profit groups and government agencies concerned with effective interventions into social problem areas.[12]

In addition, a number of academics, typically with the new consumer behavior training, began to study the area of *public policy*.[13] For example, in 1972 the senior author of this article went (on leave from Purdue) to the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection as its first "in-house consultant" from the field of marketing. In addition to working on legal cases with attorneys and economists, he developed a rotating consultancy program for further academics to serve in the future. During the next 10 years, some 30 marketing faculty worked in this capacity, contributing significantly to the development of research in the public policy sphere (see Murphy 1990 for an interesting summary of this program). FTC issues in consumer protection thus became a major focus within the marketing journals and conferences of the 1970s, and marketing academics played key roles in an influential "Consumer Information Task Force Report" for the FTC.[14] By the end of the decade, reflecting the impact of the marketing academics, the FTC was spending $1 million per year on marketing research, under the guidance of a talented marketing academic, Kenneth Bernhardt.

This burst of public policy research during the 1970s resulted in 550 published articles in those 10 years (Gundlach and Wilkie 1990).[15] This is many more publications than had appeared during the second half of Era II, a period earlier described as highly involved with marketing and society issues. The primary reason for this difference, of course, is the vastly increased thought infrastructure and number of marketing contributors—the compilations here represent many more outlets (12 journals plus conferences), versus only two journals during Era II. Thus we may conclude that the proportional representation of marketing and society articles was lower during the end of Era III, but the absolute number of marketing and society contributions was much higher, and it was again a major topic of interest to the marketing field. Marketing and society was a vibrant, flourishing field in marketing as Era III drew to a close.

Attention to societal concerns in Era IV: to the sidelines, but now emerging?

The fourth era (1980–present) has seen a paradoxical evolution of interest in and coverage of marketing and society. First, within the larger field of marketing this

[11] See Lampman (1988) for a first-person account. This important declaration established that, within the framework of our society, consumers have the right to expect product safety, to be fully informed, to have freedom of choice, and to have a voice in the rules for the marketplace. Thus marketers were presented with some formal constraints well beyond any residual notions that *caveat emptor* ("Let the buyer beware") might still rule the American marketplace.

[12] Some elements of "broadening" were controversial (e.g., Kotler and Levy 1969b; Luck 1969), and *JAMS* played a role in advancing this discussion (e.g., Ferrell and Lucas 1987; Laczniak and Michie 1979)

[13] This movement was greatly assisted by a new program sponsored by the AACSB and the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, to place approximately 20 business faculty members annually in government agencies for year-long periods of consulting work and study. Similar to the effects of the Ford Foundation's mathematics program, this led to significant diffusion of new research perspectives during the decade.

[14] An excellent set of short articles describing this period is available in the Spring 1997 issue of the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* (Andreasen 1997; Bloom 1997; Greyser 1997; Kinnear 1997; Mazis 1997; Wilkie 1997).

[15] Unpublished data courtesy of the authors; see Gundlach and Wilkie (1990, p. 335) for an earlier report of findings. The 550 figure reflects only "marketing and public policy" topics, involving some mix of consumerism, government, and self-regulatory issues. This study represents a considerable sampling of the major research venues in Marketing, including the 12 most prominent journals published during all or part of this period (*J. Marketing, J. Marketing Research, J. Consumer Research, J. Advertising, J. Advertising Research, J. Academy of Marketing Science, Business Horizons, J. Business Research, California Management Review, J. Consumer Affairs, Harvard Business Review, J. Retailing*), plus the *Proceedings* of the conferences of the American Marketing Association (Educators) and the Association for Consumer Research, plus the publications of the Marketing Science Institute.

era has brought the most significant decline in mainstream interest in this topic during the entire history—nearly a century—of marketing thought. It is fair to say that most marketing thinkers' attention has been directed elsewhere, and that many have given virtually no research thought to this question during the entire fourth era.[16]

The mainstream journals, which were publishing a number of societal-oriented articles during the 1970s, published many fewer such papers in the 1980s and beyond. Whether this was because they were receiving fewer papers due to the availability of the new specialized publications, or whether their publishing priorities changed, is unknown to us. For the purposes of the present article, we have undertaken a rough analysis of the publications of the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, and here are some of the highlights:

- Since its inception in 1973, 121, or 9% of *JAMS'* roughly 1,400 articles fit into this category.[17]
- We found only a slight decline in *JAMS'* publication rates for this category between Era III (10% are societal papers) and Era IV (8% are societal papers). This is due to some areas which have received particular stress across time in *JAMS*.
- However, we have observed an apparent decline in the 1990s and 2000s, from 12% of 1980s articles now down to 6–7% more recently.
- During the 1970s and 1980s *JAMS* published articles across a range of societal topics, with no topics especially predominating.
- Since 1990, however, ethics articles and corporate social responsibility articles have been particularly stressed in *JAMS*. These topics were lightly covered until about 1990 (only 5 articles between 1973 and 1989), but have accounted for 31 articles since that time (or 65% of the 48 total societal publications since 1990).
- The February 2011 special issue on Sustainability accounts for 10 further articles or 21% of the 48 societal articles since 1990.
- Societal articles on other topics than these three have been few and far between, accounting for only 7 papers in the last 20 years.
- With respect to levels of analysis, we found relatively few articles in *JAMS* that dealt with marketing systems beyond a firm level, or their impacts on society (a topic we take up later in this paper).

As journal editors will point out, they are able to publish only articles that are submitted to them. If it is perceived that general articles on societal issues are low in number, this would suggest that researchers either are not undertaking work on these issues or are directing such work elsewhere. In addition we noted that *JAMS* editors have been proactive in creating special issues to encourage work on particular topics of importance, including the recent successful sustainability effort.

Turning back to general coverage, our second conclusion is that the area of marketing and society has actually been flourishing, especially during the second half of Era IV. This has been primarily due to an active subset of marketing thinkers who have (1) built a welcoming infrastructure to encourage thought development and (2) continued to pursue research on these issues with enthusiasm and energy. Overall, then, this paradoxical state of affairs reflects the fragmentation that we have seen more generally in the marketing field in Era IV. Thus there are a number of other interest areas with similar research situations as well.

It was right at the beginning of Era IV that the marketing and society research area began to create a strong infrastructure for itself. First came the journals. The *Journal of Macromarketing* (*JMM*) began in 1981, "to provide a forum in which people can debate and clarify the role of marketing and society … we hope to identify social issues in which improvements in knowledge can lead to improvements in the way resources are managed in private and public organizations to serve society's interest" (Fisk 1981, p. 3). Over time, *JMM* has published articles covering a wide expanse of topics and perspectives, especially in these areas: (1) marketing history, (2) quality-of-life studies, (3) marketing and development, (4) competition and markets, (5) global policy and environment, (6) marketing ethics, and (7) reviews and communications. Meanwhile, in 1982 the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* (*JPP&M*) was begun, according to its founding editor Thomas Kinnear (1982, p. 2, see also Kinnear 2011) to "provide a forum for dialogue on issues in marketing and public policy." Empirical studies were particularly encouraged, and many did appear in the ensuing years. An excellent overview of the earlier history of *JPP&M* (Sprott and Miyazaki 2002) reports that some 455 articles were published in the first

[16] It may be that this is partially due to the "level of analysis" appropriate to a given issue. To illustrate, for most marketing strategists and many quantitative marketing scientists, adopting the managerial perspective means focusing on the firm: analyses of the societal issues may actually be dysfunctional for solving firm-level problems. Meanwhile, for many consumer researchers, emphasis has been on individual consumer or household decisions; again, a system-wide look at either marketing or consumers would be a dysfunctional choice given the research goals.

[17] Close judgments sometimes had to be made here, and readers may not concur with our treatments. Nonprofit marketing articles were counted here, for example, as were ethics articles. Articles on the definition of marketing were not counted, however, though in some cases they might have qualified under closer inspection.

20 years of the journal, written by 602 authors from 272 different institutions.

Conferences were also crucial for the development of marketing and society research early in Era IV. The macromarketing group had been holding an annual conference for several years preceding the advent of *JMM*, while others were attending their own sessions at the mainstream marketing and consumer research conferences. In 1989, an invitation-only symposium was held on the Notre Dame campus in recognition of the FTC's 75th anniversary (Murphy and Wilkie 1990). This provided an impetus for regular meetings that grew into the annual Marketing and Public Policy Conference, now run by the American Marketing Association. Several years later, the "Marketing and Society Special Interest Group" was formed within the AMA, and it grew quickly. Thus a strong infrastructure for knowledge development was created, and continues to serve today. We will return to Era IV developments in a later section on marketing in society research today.

Two disturbing illustrations of "to the sidelines"

Illustration 1: the 2004 AMA definition

We have indicated that Era IV is characterized by a fragmentation of the pursuit of marketing thought, and that marketing in society has been moved from its former position as a mainstream concern of the field to a new position as one of many sideline pursuits. This can lead to instability in shared views, and perhaps an evolution away from some core concepts and issues. The 2004 issuance of the American Marketing Association's new definition for marketing is one case that substantiates our concerns.

In brief, the first AMA definition had been developed in 1935 and was essentially retained for 50 years until being modified in 1985, and then modified again in 2004. The three definitions are:

- 1935: "(Marketing is) the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers."
- 1985: "(Marketing is) the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives."
- 2004: "Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders."

Consistent with our 4 Eras history, examining the direction of these definitions reveals a distinct narrowing of focus over time. Notice that until 1985 the field's definition was pluralistic, thereby easily translatable to more aggregated issues such as competition, system performance, and contributions to consumer welfare. The 1985 change then firmly turned focus toward the manager's tasks as embodied in the 4 P's, and the 2004 definition extended this thrust to adopt a singular focus on the individual organization alone: "What we (now) have is more strategic. Now it says marketing is really something that makes the organization run" (Head of AMA's Academic Division, in Keefe 2004, p. 17).

At this point a set of marketing academics, led by Gregory Gundlach, held sessions at the AMA conferences and contributed a special section in the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* in order to raise questions about the deficiencies of this definition for the field.[18] The authors of this article participated in these sessions and argued for a broadening of the official definition. We suggested that the 2004 definition be used for "marketing management," and that a more inclusive definition be developed for the field itself. To be clear about our position, we quite agree that conceiving of marketing as a strategic and tactical activity undertaken within individual organizations is a most reasonable view for marketing managers to take, and for academics to use when appropriate. However, we also see the sole focus on the firm to be *incomplete*, in that some broader questions go unaddressed precisely because the managerial perspective within a firm does not need to consider these questions in order to act in that firm's interest. These issues include, for example (Wilkie and Moore 2007):

1. *Dangers in simply adopting goals of all organizations engaged in marketing*. In our view the greatest risk of equating all of marketing solely with how to make managerial decisions inside organizations is that these organizations' goals are being adopted by marketing thinkers without any external appraisal whatsoever. *This leads to something akin to blanket approval of the reality of all of the marketing world's undertakings*. When identifying ourselves in this way, whose perceived interests are being served, and does this matter? Brief consideration of egregious examples found in political campaigning, lobbying, fraud, bid rigging, energy gouging, channel stuffing, etc. alerts us that many organizations are highly imperfect entities with mixed motivations. In most firms, moreover, persons other than marketers are setting priorities. Organiza-

[18] Interested readers may wish to consult the Fall 2007 issue of the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* for articles calling for change in the 2004 AMA definition.

tional marketing is very important, but does not represent all of marketing thought.

2. *Limitations in addressing the competitive nature of our marketing system*. A sole focus on the firm also does not provide constructs with which to assess marketing more broadly. For example, when 5 or 15 firms are competing in a market, how do we assess the "marketing" that is occurring on all fronts? It would appear that inefficiencies would be natural in such settings, but are beyond the managerial purview itself. Extended to public policy, moreover, what does this conception of marketing have to offer to antitrust theory and enforcement? Is this why our field hasn't made more impact on the antitrust area?
3. *Limitations in addressing the marketing system's interactions with consumers*. One major task confronting every consumer is allocating his or her budget for purchases. If we ask: "How well do marketers help consumers with their budget and effort allocation decisions?" the answer is: "Very poorly." In the aggregate, all marketers together simply propose too much consumption for any individual to come close to undertaking. The marketing system acts as if consumer resources and wants are infinite and insatiable: every product and service category is advocated as worthy of consumption for virtually everyone. Further, within each category marketers are offering consumers *highly conflicting advice* as to which alternative to select. To cope, consumers must ignore or resist most marketing programs, responding positively to only a relative few (Wilkie 1994). Further, as Redmond (2005) explores, the marketing system sometimes decreases consumers' quality of life by intruding on their privacy with unwanted promotional solicitations.[19] These characteristics surely make it difficult to equate each marketer's best interest with each consumer's best interest (we stress that these are not criticisms, but characteristics of our marketing system that are not enough evident from the managerial perspective on marketing).
4. *Limitations in addressing major societal and public policy issues*. The within-organization focus can also clearly hinder the appreciation of larger issues and problems. For example, childhood obesity is a growing problem in our nation; would anyone seriously argue that a single firm focus for marketing is best for addressing this? As another example, direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising of prescription drugs is actually a public policy experiment in the U.S.; New Zealand is the only other nation allowing this practice (Farris and Wilkie 2005). How helpful have marketing academics been in devising or evaluating this policy? Our point is simple: there are issues in our world that are larger than the problems of a single organization.
5. *Removing research opportunities from many marketing academics who would like to pursue these broader issues*. If marketing is defined in a manner so as to eliminate larger issues, this could increase risks that new scholars may not be exposed to this area of research in their PhD programs. This risk clearly emerges in our second illustration here, to follow shortly.

The set of concerns raised in these protests was heard by the then AMA Chairperson Debra Ringold, who named several committees to examine the process of definition promulgation, then to review the 2004 definition itself and propose keeping or revising it. The senior author served on both committees, and was pleased with their deliberations. A report by Gundlach and Wilkie (2009) provides the details of this process, which involved considerable interactions with AMA members. A new AMA definition of marketing was issued in 2007:

> Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

We are pleased with this change, in that it provides a larger view of our field. We would stress that one responsibility of academia is to place a field of study into proper perspective. The impacts that marketing has on the world are a legitimate concern for scholarship in our field, and it is important that the official definition for the field of marketing explicitly include the societal domain. It wasn't going to do so, but now it does again.

Illustration 2: the AMA consortium survey

We have for some time been concerned about the dangers of fragmentation's impacts on effort, attention, and transmission of marketing knowledge. Consider two brief quotes:

> It is troubling to realize that knowledge does not necessarily accumulate in a field—that knowledge can disappear over time if it is not actually transmitted…. (Wilkie 1981)

> As research specialization has increased, this risk has increased—knowledge outside a person's specialty may first be viewed as non-instrumental, then as non-essential, then as non-important, and finally as non-existent in terms of meriting attention…. (Wilkie 2002)

In our exploration of the 4 Eras, it became clear that many research insights and findings, including those generated by

[19] The increasing emphasis on customer co-creation, as contemplated by service-dominant logic, should serve to reduce these problems (Lusch and Vargo 2006).

marketing in society pioneers, did not get passed on but instead were "left behind" as researchers turned attention to new areas of interest. This prompted us to look more closely at whence academic marketing thought leaders of the future will come. How are scholarly training and predispositions about the field of marketing being shaped? Specifically, for us, are they being educated in the societal domain of marketing issues?

To explore this, we undertook a brief survey of AMA-Sheth Doctoral Consortium participants (Wilkie and Moore 1997). The results were most interesting. Somewhat surprisingly to us, these people, who were near the end of their doctoral training, reported *a high level of personal interest in marketing and society topics*: two-thirds of these doctoral candidates indicated that they were personally interested in learning about this area, and also that they believed it should be covered in PhD education. However, fewer than one in ten had ever taken even one course in the subject. They openly reported self-ratings of expertise as low, and that regular readership of the marketing in society journals was very low, as was participation in this area's conferences. Finally, most of these respondents answered that they do not see this area as professionally relevant for them, at least at this stage of their careers.

This illustration substantiated our belief that marketing in society has clearly been moved out of the mainstream of doctoral education in marketing. However, it further clarified that the root problem is not with the *people* who are entering study for a career in marketing academia, but instead lies with the curricula of PhD programs. Doctoral programs sorely need to reconsider this issue, but this will not happen unless the marketing scholars who control them are willing to acknowledge that knowledge is being lost from this field. Our true concern in this regard is not for the aware scholar who opts to make an informed choice to avoid societal issues, but instead is for later generations of scholars (today's and the future's doctoral students) who may not gain enough background to even realize that a choice is available to them.

Our basic conceptualization: the "aggregate marketing system"

Background

This concept emerged as the centerpiece of our investigation of "Marketing's Contributions to Society," which appeared in the special Millennium Issue of the *Journal of Marketing* in late 1999 (Wilkie and Moore 1999). As readers can imagine, one significant conceptual hurdle we faced involved how best to represent and think about "society." In the end, we resolved this by building on the systems concepts in the writings of the earlier eras and proposing a conception of an "aggregate marketing system." We see the aggregate marketing system (AGMS) as a huge, powerful, yet intricate complex operating to serve the needs of its host society. It differs for each society, in that it is an adaptive human and technological institution reflecting the idiosyncrasies of the people and their culture, geography, sociopolitical decisions, and economic opportunities and constraints. Three primary sets of actors within the system are seen to be: (1) marketers, (2) consumers, and (3) governments, whose public policy decisions are meant to facilitate the maximal operations of the AGMS for the benefit of the host society.

The "Marketing's Contributions" article then explored the AGMS of the United States. Early in the process we realized that much of the marketing system operates "behind the scenes," known only to those persons involved in pieces of the operation itself. This makes it challenging for outside observers to fully appreciate the scope and nuances of marketing (a useful reminder to us academics as well).[20] Three insights we also gained were that marketing's contributions (1) accumulate over time, (2) diffuse through a society, and (3) occur within the context of everyday life, which makes them difficult to distinguish at any given point in time. We thus extended the time dimension and took a roughly 100-year glimpse at what the U.S. AGMS is delivering to daily life. Here's a little of what we found (Wilkie and Moore 1999):

> At the turn of the 20th century in 1900 (when the academic field of marketing was beginning to form), few homes had running water, so the average housewife had to carry 9000 gal per year from the well source outside. Only 3% of homes had electricity: this meant reading with no electric lighting, and keeping house with no labor-saving household appliances, and of course no radio, television, internet, or mobile devices. Food purchasing and preparation took 42 hours per week, versus less than 10 hours today. Home heating was often limited to only the kitchen, versus central heating today, and of course there was no home air conditioning. Virtually no one had a gas powered vehicle: there are some 200,000,000 motor vehicles registered in the U.S. today, all having been delivered through the AGMS. Infant mortality was common at the time, about one in every ten births, and life expectancy in 1900 was only 47 years. Today's health and well-being has improved dramatically, with infant mortality

[20] Studies have shown that the less familiar a person is with the marketing field, the more likely he or she is to equate marketing with advertising or selling, the most visible portions of marketing to laypersons. As a person learns more, the view deepens and he or she begins to appreciate the richness of the field (Kasper 1993).

> much less than 1% and life expectancy at almost 80 years. Similar findings exist on many other fronts as well: it is clear that the U. S. Aggregate Marketing System has delivered a substantially better standard of living to its society across time.

But aren't we giving marketing too much credit for these advances? It isn't responsible for discoveries, inventions, or production outputs. Our point is that today's marketing academics are not conceiving of marketing as a system in our world: if they were to do so it would be easy to see that the AGMS is, in tandem with other systems such as R&D, finance, and production, clearly engaged in delivering a standard of living to society while supporting innovations to raise these standards in the future. As pointed out in the classic volume by Vaile et al. (1952) many years ago, marketing systems perform two distinct macro tasks for their societies: (1) delivering the standard of living for the citizenry and (2) creating a marketplace dynamism that fosters and supports continual innovation and improvement such that the standard of daily life is enhanced over time.

Viewing marketing as a system

To examine marketing as a system, we began by learning directly in detail from marketing practitioners and then illustrating this in a vignette we called "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (for the full vignette, see Wilkie and Moore 1999). Imagine Tiffany Jones sitting in her New York City apartment, picking up her cup of coffee, and blowing across the top of the cup. How did this cup of coffee get here? We traced the process, discussing the planting of coffee; where it is planted; why it is planted; how it is sold by contract; how it is harvested; how it is graded and processed and then bagged, warehoused, and transported to the United States by sea; unloaded, taken to the plant site where it is mixed, roasted, packaged, and then shipped through the channels of distribution to retail, where Tiffany has purchased it. We then shifted to her breakfast pastry and repeated the system analysis, though this was much more complex because there was new product development involved, plus 15 ingredient-sourcing systems similar to that for coffee. Each of the foods that her four family members was consuming were then recognized as having its own marketing system, as was each component of the kitchen support system (e.g., appliances, cutlery, utilities), which also had been provided by the AGMS at prior points and which were still delivering benefits through use across time.

As part of this illustration, we noted the set of well-designed and practiced activities that were already developed in an infrastructure sense. This was a marketing system at work, in the sense that buying and selling occurred at all stages, with temporal dimensions, planning, employment, capital investment, movement, production, risk taking, financing, and so forth, each one taking place in advance, with the expectation of transactional exchanges that would occur to fuel the system's continuing operations. We further pointed out that the AGMS routinely provides these kinds of breakfasts for a hundred million American households every day, and that this was just a *miniscule* portion of its total activity.

It is clear just from this simple illustration that the AGMS is huge, practiced, and powerful. In our discussion of aggregating these separate systems into a whole, we attempted statistical estimates of sizes and arrived at over 30 million workers—approximately one in five workers—directly employed in the marketing operations of the AGMS. The AGMS also includes over 300 million consumers, and a series of government involvements that serve to mostly facilitate the smooth operations of the AGMS. When viewed in this fashion it becomes clear that the study of public policy is an intrinsic topic for marketing scholarship.

Marketing in society research today

Eight active subgroups

It is interesting that, rather than a single unified presence, there are at least *eight organized subgroups* at work on research dealing with marketing in society issues, most with their own journals and conferences.[21] Table 3 provides a brief synopsis of each group and their activities.

Why, however, are there eight separate groups? It is our impression that the reason for the separate groupings can be traced to significant differences in:

- Disciplinary underpinnings
- Preferred level of analysis
- Research methods
- Substantive focus and goals

For example, among the eight primary groups we today find persons who wish to focus on social change and help those managing these efforts (*social marketing*), persons who strive to assist the poor to develop their own sustainable markets (*subsistence marketplace initiative*), and others who wish to focus on helping corporate marketers make more ethical decisions (*marketing ethics*).

[21] These are the larger groups of which the authors are aware. There are, in addition, other efforts to be noted, including growing activities of the Consumer Culture Theory group, which could extend to join the Marketing in Society rubric.

Table 3 Eight sub-groups in marketing in society research

Public Policy and Marketing. This informal group has its own annual conference (now in its 23rd year), and the specialized *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, published by the American Marketing Association. Its focus has been largely on the legal system and government's policies with regard to marketing and consumer protection, and it enjoys strong ties to professionals at the FTC and FDA. It welcomes government, industry, and legal practitioners as well as academics from any discipline.

Macromarketing. This Society has an annual conference and is associated with several other specialized conferences in alliance with smaller groups focused on international economic development, quality of life studies, and marketing history. It also produces the *Journal of Macromarketing*, published by Sage, which celebrated its Silver Anniversary Issue several years ago. Macromarketing's orientation represents the closest tie to an overall marketing system view as represented in Eras I and II.

Consumer Economics. The American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI) is an organization consisting primarily of consumer economists who study marketing issues from the perspective of advancing the consumer interest. This group also holds its own annual conference and publishes the *Journal of Consumer Affairs.* A number of marketing academics have published in this journal.

Social Marketing. This has been a loosely affiliated group of researchers who are interested in assisting not-for-profits and government agencies in designing effective interventions. It does not publish a journal, but it does have ties to the more practice-oriented *Social Marketing Quarterly* and annual conference.

Marketing Ethics**.** The memberships of Society for Business Ethics and the International Society of Business, Economics and Ethics (ISBEE) come from various business disciplines, but they do not publish their own journal. *Business Ethics Quarterly* and *Journal of Business Ethics* are the major outlets, and they do have special editors for marketing. The group is active in special sessions at major marketing conferences.

International Consumer Policy. Distance and cultures still do present barriers. These persons are at work in other nations, with only sporadic interactions with the U.S. groups. They publish two journals on different aspects of this topic: the *Journal of Consumer Policy* and the *Journal of Economic Psychology.*

Transformative Consumer Research. This new entry is an outgrowth of ACR, comprised of consumer researchers interested in advancing well-being: "A primary goal of TCR is the timely and effective dissemination of research outputs to enhance consumer, societal, and earthly welfare." It does not have a journal (but has had a special issue of the *Journal of Consumer Research* devoted to its work), and now holds its conference every other year. A recent book provides much insight into this area (Mick et al. 2012a, b).

The Subsistence Marketplace Initiative. This new entry focuses on "bottom-up" research designed to understand and enable the progress from subsistence marketplaces to sustainable marketplaces, i.e., marketplaces characterized by sustainable production and consumption that enhance individual and community welfare and conserve natural resources. It holds its conferences every other year, and can be found at: http://www.business.illinois.edu/subsistence/

Another set of researchers focuses on efforts to attain a "fair and efficient marketplace for consumers and competitors," and in helping government decision makers and marketers devise more efficient and effective legislation as well as regulatory actions (*public policy and marketing*). Further, some persons are approaching problems within different cultural and political contexts (*international consumer policy*), and some with different aims and methods (*consumer interest economists*). Meanwhile, *macromarketing* is focused on larger questions having to do with marketing as a provisioning system for a society. The newest of the groups, *transformative consumer research* (TCR), as reflected in its name, stresses empirical research undertakings with consumers, but here with the purpose of promoting actions that will help to enhance quality of life.

During the 1990s efforts were undertaken to integrate these persons into a larger area of focus, and over 200 marketing academics joined the Marketing and Society Special Interest Group (SIG) of the AMA. However, true integration did not really occur for at least half of the groups listed, and each of the previously specialized conferences and journals continues to operate today. While not a cohesive entity, however, the fact that these various vehicles exist does present a significant set of outlets for scholars seeking to publish their societal domain research.

So the overall picture is vibrant and welcoming for researchers wishing to work in this area. On the other hand, the area remains oddly splintered—even more so with the entry of TCR, which holds considerable growth potential given its alliance with the large Association for Consumer Research academic community. Perhaps the most significant drawback of this splintering is that others are not able to easily appreciate the fact that *a large number of marketing academics are at work on societal issues for the field*.

A plethora of research opportunities

Given the existence of the eight groups it is clear that differing perspectives are extant within this area. Our particular research interests have been primarily in the public policy area, and we will focus on that here. Public policy research in marketing actually contains a surprisingly large number of research topics, and fits well with the concept of the aggregate marketing system discussed earlier. If someone were to consider entering this area to undertake research, what options might they find? A useful place to start would be with the Bloom and Gundlach framework developed for the *Handbook of Marketing and Society* (2001). A brief analysis of the framework helps us to recognize the means-end nature of much activity in this research field, as seen in its primary organizing sectors and their chapter contents:

- *How knowledge about marketing improves public policy decisions*. This area of research assesses how marketing knowledge can, and has, improved public policy regulatory decisions on *consumer protection* (especially at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Food & Drug Administration (FDA)), on *antitrust policies* (at FTC and U.S. Justice Department), and with regard to *deceptive advertising and selling techniques* (FTC and the court system).
- *Impacts of corporate marketing decisions on competition*. This area focuses on mainstream marketing management research topics, but here exploring their implications for potential legality and effects on competition as well as consumer decisions. Examples of topics include *advertising's effects on price and competition, socioeconomic consequences of franchising distribution*, and *positive and negative aspects of pricing strategies*.
- *Impacts of public policy decisions*. These topics focus on the impacts of public policy decisions on both competition and consumers. Some topics here reflect attention to technical aspects of product and service offerings, such as *how public policymakers and marketers can best regulate product safety* as well as *issues and challenges in the arena of consumer privacy*. Other topics rely heavily on consumer research expertise, such as *consumer response to warnings, the effectiveness of nutritional labels on foods, the effectiveness of environmental product claims,* and *the effects of deceptive advertising regulation*.
- *Social marketing initiatives*. The fourth major area of this framework reflects marketing tools increasingly being adopted by not-for-profit—whether governmental or private—agencies involved with education, health, poverty, religion, crime prevention, and myriad other social programs. Formally, social marketing differs from traditional marketing in aiming to directly benefit the target audience (e.g., AIDS awareness or childhood immunization) or society as a whole (e.g., recycling programs, blood donations) rather than the firm sponsoring the program (Andreasen 1994).
- *Under-studied topics*. Though not designated by this term in the *Handbook*, the remaining links in the Bloom and Gundlach framework have actually seen little research undertaken within the marketing academic community, though interesting issues are present. Examples here include issues of *corporate response to alterations in the legal environment* (e.g., how grocery manufacturers changed their marketing mixes in response to the nutritional labeling law, and how companies react to antitrust enforcement) and to issues with public relations or reputational overtones (e.g., *corporate responses to boycotts*). Chapters are also devoted to *intellectual property laws* (trademarks, patents), *economic development*, and *marketing's long-term impacts on consumer welfare*.

Given this background, we can now turn to research topics themselves. Table 4 depicts an adapted version of a public policy research topic framework originally developed by Wilkie and Gundlach (in Gundlach and Wilkie 1990) and updated for this article to also reflect additional topics that have recently emerged in the field. Through an iterative process, research articles were examined, then assigned to primary, secondary, and tertiary framework categories, with the creation of new categories and reassignments when necessary. Note that Table 4 contains over 100 categories, with every category having been studied by marketing academics. Further, the number of gradations within headings is a reasonable reflection of areas of greater or lesser stress.

Notice that the literature reflects a strong emphasis on marketing mix issues in general. Promotion issues receive the most attention, but marketing authors have actually pursued each of the 4 P's to a considerable extent. It is also apparent that consumer protection has been heavily stressed, reflecting both the prominence of consumer research among many marketing academics, and the fact that the FTC, FDA, and the courts have called upon marketing academics to provide expertise in operating some programs in this area. In contrast, antitrust attorneys and economists have only very recently begun to discern that marketing academia might be a source of useful expertise. Here, however, our primary concern is to communicate the wide array of research issues that have been studied. Reading through Table 4, we can easily notice how distinct and advanced are its many topics, and why they would be of significance to marketers and to society in general. Thus, while a person who has been trained elsewhere in the fragmented marketing world of today might perceive this area to be underpopulated and under-developed, the facts is that it is *not* small, and has been heavily studied for quite some time. It is also important and interesting, and well worth our considered attention.

Into the future

The coverage to this point will hopefully have stimulated readers to consider undertaking societal research in the future. If so, there are three further issues that merit consideration: (1) intrinsic research characteristics and constraints, (2) research receptivity by the journal reviewers today, and (3) personal motivation and purpose. We briefly raise each of these here.

Table 4 Wilkie and Gundlach's adapted framework for marketing and public policy research

General topics	Marketing management topics		Consumer protection topics
International Issues	***Product Issues***	***Pricing Issues***	***Consumer Protection Issues***
-Economic Development	-Protection of Trade Secrets	-Price Fixing	-Consumerism
-Subsistence Marketplace	-Patents	-Exchange Price Information	-Socially Conscious Consumers
-Protectionism	-Copyright	-Parallel Pricing	-Quality of Life
-Corrupt Practices	-Trademarks	-Predatory Pricing	-Legal Aspects
-General International	-Certification marks	-Discriminatory Pricing	-Comparative Marketing
	-Warranty	-Credit and Loan Practices	-Marketing of Governmental Programs
Public Policy Participants	-Product Liability	-Robinson-Patman Act	-Competition
-U.S. Supreme Court	-Food Safety/Product Safety	-Unit Pricing	-General Macro Issues
-Administrative Agencies	-Package and labeling	-Reference Price	-Marketer Behavior
-State and Local Government	-Nutrition Information	-Item Price Removal	-Management of Consumer Protection
-Lobbying	-Services	-General Price	-Consumer Information
	-Product Standards		-Consumer Education
General Antitrust	-Sustainable Products	***Promotion Issues***	-Consumer Complaining
-Antitrust Regulation	-Hazardous Products	-Deceptive Advertising	-Vulnerable Groups
	-Financial Products/Services	-Unfairness in Advertising	-Ethnic Targeting
Other Governmental Regulation	-General Product	-Marketing to Children	-Consumer Practices
-Commercial Speech		-Advertising Substantiation	-Environmental Issues
-Licensing	***Place Issues***	-Affirmative Disclosure	-Energy Conservation
-Health Policy	-Exclusive Dealing	-Corrective Advertising	-Minority Owned Businesses
-General Government Regulation	-Tying Contracts	-Health Claims	-Consumer Affairs
	-Territorial and Customer Restrictions	-Comparative Advertising	-Ethics
Self-Regulation		-Endorsements	-Consumer Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction
-Advertising Self-Regulation	-Resale Price Maintenance	-Price Promotions	-Consumer Information Search
-Stakeholder Marketing	-Reciprocity	-Warranty Promotions	-Health Literacy
-Local Business Bureaus	-Refusals to Deal	-Credit Promotions	-Medical Problems
	-Functional Discounts	-Sweepstakes and Contests	-Objective Price/Quality
Information Technology Issues	-Vertical Integration	-Personal Selling Practices	-Social Marketing
-Internet Marketing	-Gray Markets	-Mail Order/Internet Selling	-Consumer Financial Problems
-Global Digital Divide	-Mergers	-Referral Selling	-Addictive Consumption
-Identity Theft	-Franchising	-Covert Marketing	-Marketplace Discrimination
-Impacts on marketing Productivity	-Slotting Allowances	-Promotional Allowances	-Impoverished Consumers
-Consumer Privacy/Data Security	-General Place	-Promotion of Prof. Services	-General Consumer Protection
		-Cigarette Advertising	
Market Research Issues		-Political Advertising	
-Using Marketing Research		-Counter/Demarketing	
-Market Research Problems		-General Promotion	

Intrinsic research characteristics: insights from the Brinberg/McGrath framework

One important element of the takeover of marketing thought by the sciences is that the nature of research is governed by requirements of the approved approaches to scientific undertakings. This means that empirical societal research must consider its performance along scientific dimensions (as is true of all other areas within marketing). The nature of this question has been nicely captured in the research validity framework proposed by Brinberg and McGrath (1985; see also Brinberg and Hirschman 1986). In brief, this framework proposes that there are three domains inherent in any research study: the *theoretical domain* of conceptual causes and relationships; the *methodological domain* of rigorous approaches to empirical investigation, including research design, data generation, and analysis and inference; and the *substantive domain* of real world phenomena and problems. The essence of the framework lies in its characterization of how the research process is governed by the priorities of the researcher. If we picture a triangle with each domain located at one of the three intersections, the framework asserts that a researcher must begin any particular study at only one of these points—and that this point will reflect that domain of his or her top priority for the study (i.e., that it be highly realistic with respect to the real world, or that it be add to or cleanly test theory, or that it correctly and rigorously employ and/or advance a research method). To further develop the research plan, the researcher then moves along one of the legs toward the domain of next highest priority concern for the research effort. Then, only after reaching many decisions and reconciliations on these two domains, can the researcher begin to consider issues of the third domain (by moving from the midpoint of the leg across the triangle to the third domain). By this point, prospects for a strong representation from the third domain in the study are bleak, as its essential demands will have been sacrificed in order to achieve the demands of the first and second domains.

Having experienced this very problem in some of our own work and observed it in reading and reviewing many other marketing studies, by now we are convinced that this is an excellent representation of the nature of the empirical research process and the associated difficulties that can expect to be encountered with that third domain. The dominance of the quantitative and behavioral sciences that began in Era III and which have strengthened in Era IV has led to an academic research world in which the theoretical and methodological domains are given absolute priority. Consider, for example, the positive research article requirements for the field's presumably leading journals (the *Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research*, and *Marketing Science*)—in each, the substantive domain is clearly relegated to the third position of priority, not to be well studied or represented.[22]

It appears to us that it is important to recognize that singular theories seem to be inherently confounded in the complex real world. Thus if we start our research process with the substantive domain, we will likely not find a clean mapping onto a single theory (we can of course use advanced methodology, but this will be seen as "descriptive research" of the sort done by business operations). Conversely, if we start with a single theory, we are likely to oversimplify the realities of the societal domain. Two lessons emerge from this analysis. First, it seems to us that much of the work in marketing and society *must* examine and reflect the substantive domain strongly. However, this virtually guarantees that either theory or methodology, whichever comes third in domain priority, will be weaker in these studies. Thus it is a fair speculation that much research in marketing and society, while likely strong on substance, is likely either weak in theory or weak in method. As just pointed out, this state of affairs is not looked on with favor by the marketing academic community running the premier journals, which is likely to label such undertakings as "not rigorous."[23] Given the fundamental (and largely unrecognized) nature of this reaction, we've thus come to believe that part of the isolation of much societal research actually springs from a learned antipathy toward less strong representations of either theory or method (in the Brinberg/McGrath framework sense).

What can be done about this real difficulty? Ideally, all three domains should be strongly represented in a single empirical undertaking, but this is not possible according to Brinberg and McGrath. Thus it seems that the best alternative is for programmatic research that, over time, ensures that different domains receive priority, thus repairing weaknesses from earlier efforts while adding to the accumulation of knowledge on the topic. The downside, of course, is that this approach requires more time (and research support) than many marketing academics may wish to invest. In that case it may be possible to plan an experimental research undertaking in which theory and method are stressed, but that employs a societal "context" that is under study.[24]

Pressures of "publish or perish" and status

These issues are quite apparent to all of us, so we'll simply raise some points for further consideration here. First, continuing with attention to journal reviewers' demands, it appears to us that the field has in some respects been becoming more "instrumentally demanding" as Era IV has moved along. More and more universities stress "publish or perish" to their junior faculty members, and many of these have adopted implicit—and sometimes explicit—rankings of journals to employ in evaluations of quality in scholarship. This has led to two particular conditions that we have observed: (1) very high pressures to produce articles as quickly as possible, including within a short time after entry into PhD programs and (2) intense competition to "get into" the "A" journals in order to secure tenure and reputation. It is our impression, though we admittedly don't have data to

[22] Many researchers likely appreciate that the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, the *Journal of Marketing*, and other journals are more open to alternative priority configurations.

[23] Alternatively, those whose priorities are strong for the substantive domain of marketing are quite familiar with the reaction that much research appearing in the top journals is "irrelevant," "unrealistic," or "overly simplistic."

[24] Interesting discussions of this issue have recently been provided in the new transformative consumer research book (Mick et al. 2012a, b, see pp. 11–14 and commentary by Lehmann and Hill 2012, pp. 684–686).

support this, that a higher proportion of junior faculty members are in turn falling short of publication requirements, and are having to move elsewhere to continue their professional quests. It is also our impression that this movement is gaining momentum, and that "status" is establishing itself as a foundation of our scholarly environment.

Given these impressions, we have two major reactions: (1) It is somewhat unsettling to realize that there doesn't seem to be an overall font of wisdom attending to and guiding our field in its scholarly pursuits.(2) The field of marketing academia is in danger of becoming less, not more, scholarly as Era IV progresses. With respect to the first point, we would relate an interesting vignette that followed the publication of our Four Eras article in 2003. In the article's discussion of the impacts of globalization within Era IV, we reported the following:

> The picture with respect to authorship opportunities is quite different but interesting nonetheless…, the publication opportunities in the four most prestigious U.S. marketing journals have basically not changed … The number of contributions per year is about the same today (2002) as it was in 1986 and 1987. (Wilkie and Moore 2003)

Although we did not further highlight this point, Leigh McAlister certainly took note about what this represented in terms of the reality of publication in leading journals for the rapidly increasing body of marketing academics. She wrote an essay that discussed this finding briefly and recommended that the number of pages in the leading journals be expanded to reflect the increased supply of research being done (McAlister 2005).[25] Behind the scenes, moreover, Leigh used her influence as Executive Director of the Marketing Science Institute to push for such changes at *JM* and *JMR*, and was successful in convincing the AMA to move their publication to six issues per year. This, together with the initiatives of Dawn Iacobucci at *JCR* to increase the number of articles in that journal, and the recent decision by *JAMS* to move to six issues as well, has helped considerably the plight of academics attempting to pursue tenure and promotion. Overall, though, it is clearly a need for an empathetic institutional entity to monitor and push on behalf of the marketing academic community.

[25] In his essay in "The Sages Speak" special section of the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, in which authors were reacting to points raised in the 4 Eras article, former *JAMS* Editor Robert Peterson (2005) reported an additional finding using a longer time frame in his analysis of the structure of marketing scholarship: "a comparison of the contents of the three journals (JM, JMR, JCR) in 1978 and 2003 reveals that the total number of reviewed articles and notes … decreased 27%…."

With regard to the second point, clearly some elements of research are advancing impressively. However, the increasing stress on status and success also brings risks, and it may be instructive for all of us to consider the insights offered in this regard by the distinguished management educator James March (1996) on the occasion of his retirement from the Stanford Business School. March began his talk by characterizing the guiding rationale for modern business schools (as with the social sciences generally) as in the "consequentionalist" tradition. Here, "action is seen as choice, and choice is seen as driven by anticipations, incentives, and desires." While recognizing that this is a powerful and useful perspective, March also pointedly observed that John Stuart Mill once described Jeremy Bentham, the father of modern consequentionalism, as having all "the completeness of a limited man." Similarly, March pointed out that extending a marketplace metaphor to business schools leads to a situation in which:

> The problems of business schools are pictured as problems of creating educational programs (or public relations activities) that satisfy the wishes of customers and patrons rich enough to sustain them.... But [this] fails to capture the fundamental nature of the educational soul.... A university is only incidentally a market. It is more essentially a temple—a temple dedicated to knowledge and a human spirit of inquiry. It is a place where learning and scholarship are revered, not primarily for what they contribute to personal or social well-being but for the vision of humanity that they symbolize, sustain, and pass on.... In order to sustain the temple of education, we probably need to rescue it from those deans, donors, faculty, and students who respond to incentives and calculate consequences and restore it to those who respond to senses of themselves and their callings. (March 1996, p. 13)

Societal issues and a personal life of scholarship

In closing, we would note that virtually everything in our journals is about facts, theories, methods, and applications. Behind this, however, is the living reality of our academic lives and pursuits. Collectively, we are the College of Marketing. Individually, we are talented people who have invested heavily to be in a position to contribute to knowledge.

An instructive treatise on pursuit of a scholarly life is available in the book, *The Cultivated Mind* by Edward Hodnet (1963), who proposes three distinguishing properties:

- The cultivated mind is *conceptual*. It seeks understanding, desires to know, and is willing to speculate.

- The cultivated mind is *discriminating*. It is sensitive to value and is willing to distinguish and differentiate.
- The cultivated mind is *humane*. It regularly moves beyond an obsession with self and the press of daily affairs. It is thus capable of a serious concern with the nature of human existence.

If one were to assess the formal field of marketing academia today, he or she might agree that it fares well on the first property, and perhaps well on the second also. With respect to the third, though, this doesn't seem to fit well with either scientific method or managerial mandate. For those of us wishing to incorporate this dimension into our professional lives, however, the study of marketing in society offers this opportunity. We are most pleased to have been able to pursue this field in our own careers, and invite readers to join us in this pursuit in the future.

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