

TERMS v. CONCEPTS: MARKET SEGMENTATION, BRAND POSITIONING
AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ACADEMIC-PRACTITIONER GAP

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ABSTRACT

The "academic-practitioner gap" is a problem that marketers have kept at arm's length by rhetoric and promises and neither substantive nor metatheoretical implications have been considered. In this paper, with regard to three topical domains -- Market segmentation, Brand positioning, and Product versus Brand -- differences in the concepts the terms designate in academic and practitioner usage are explored. It is concluded that marketing academics have neglected the conceptual development appropriate to marketing's central assignment of responding to consumer wants in a competitive environment and that the academic-practitioner gap may be as marketing's separation from its own roots. The relationship between science and practice in marketing is considered in terms of help practitioners need from marketing science and challenges and opportunities for marketing academics. Marketing's paradigm of applied behavioral science is described and shown to be materially different from the prevailing stimulus-response model of experimental design. Enduring rapprochement between marketing academics and practitioners calls for translation between paradigms, a task in which metatheorists are invited to participate.

INTRODUCTION

With some regularity, the gulf between academics and practitioners is mentioned in the journals that marketers read. In statements of policy, editors offer assurances either that a journal will continue to serve the wishes of both publics, or that it will give more consideration than before to marketing practitioners' wishes. That a gap exists has not, to my knowledge, been questioned by anyone. Reasons for its existence are sometimes offered and typically include some reference to different reward systems in the academic and practitioner worlds. The outlook for an early end to the academic-practitioner divide is not promising. Notwithstanding general agreement on the phenomenon's existence and promises to bridge the chasm little, if any, improvement occurs. The subject is raised, analyzed to a degree and then put aside. Rarely, if ever, is the issue joined in the context of a specific topical domain. Especially troubling are (1) a statement in the announcement of the 1982 marketing theory conference which was published in the official newspaper of the American Marketing Association that the contributors are "discouraging papers and discussions which are managerially oriented . . ." (*Marketing News*, April 1981, p. 4) and (2) the scheduling of the marketing theory conference to coincide exactly with the attitude research conference, traditionally attended mainly by practitioners. I question the implication that managers have little interest in theory or that a managerial orientation is inappropriate at a conference on marketing theory.

Elements of the Problem

Marketing managers' supposed aversion to theory springs, I believe, from their reaction to the inappropriate orientation of particular theories, that is, an orientation which is inappropriately structured for the tasks they confront. The desire for simplification and order that characterizes scientific work is so pervasive an aspect of human thinking that it is unlikely it should not also be present among marketing managers. Note, however, that the pursuit of order is an instrumental activity in a particular contextual domain. The models and theories practitioners want are those that identify, order, and simplify the variables a

manager confronts in the implementation of daily tasks. They are the intellectual devices -- constructs and relationships -- that tell practitioners which variables to consider and which to ignore, and which relationships to look for, as they confront the decisions they must make. Minimally, analysis of the practitioner's tasks is a starting point for developing a list of domains that may benefit from the theorist's attention. But I believe even more substantial rewards await the theorist who attempts to make explicit, and then build on, reality as the manager confronts it. It is my thesis in this paper that close attention to the perspective of a practitioner confronting marketing tasks is likely to help bring order to marketing conceptualization and promote theory development. I propose to give specific examples to support this thesis. My purpose is twofold: by raising issues of substance in topical domains to accord the problem of the academic-practitioner gap the serious treatment it warrants and by including metatheoretical considerations in my analysis to find a place within the marketing discipline for an ongoing interest in the problem that may close and prevent the recurrence of the gap.

The temptation not to reach for an understanding of the practitioner's perspective is ever present for academics immersed, as they are, in the intellectual apparatus of their disciplines. Because of the public nature of science, the constructs of the sciences are accessible to anyone who wants to study the literature. The marketing practitioner's constructs are not public in this sense and practitioners sometimes may not make them explicit, even to themselves. It does not follow that practitioners' minds contain no constructs or that practitioners do not model their world. To the contrary, in the offices and conference rooms of business, managers invest considerable effort and interest in modeling aspects of marketing and advertising tasks.

The practitioner's constructs and models suffer in the contest for the theorist's attention not only because they often are not publicly available but also because it is enormously difficult for marketing scientists to avoid prematurely imposing on the practitioner's task the constructs and/or data analytic techniques available to them in their areas of expertise (cf. "borrowing," Zaltman, Pinson, and Angelmar 1973, pp. 182-184). Subtle, but possibly crucial features of the manager's task are missed in this way. Career rewards do not act as an incentive for scholarly activities by practitioners in the way they do for academics. Accordingly, we lack a built-in mechanism that fosters a process by which the practitioner's perspectives can become available to aid in theory development. Perhaps the locus for a permanent mechanism to encourage the theorist's immediate and unfiltered apprehension of the marketer's task is to be found in the domain of metatheory. By calling, metatheorists are of a practical turn of mind, concerned as they are that the energies we expend in building our house of cards not be wasted.

There are three main parts to this paper. First, in order to illustrate substantive aspects of the academic-practitioner gap, I describe, as briefly as possible, differences in the use of the terms "market segmentation," "positioning," and "product," by academics and practitioners and I offer some speculative analysis of the discrepancies in usage. In the second part, I discuss more general issues germane to the relationship between science and practice in marketing: scholarly neglect of topics central to the practice of marketing; the help practitioners need from marketing science, and the challenges and opportunities that the study of marketing

practice offers to the scholar. I describe marketing's paradigm of applied behavioral science, pointing out some of the respects in which it differs from the prevailing model of experimental design. In the final part, I discuss the nature of the help that marketers need from metatheorists in order to foster academic-practitioner rapprochement for the future.

TERMS v. CONCEPTS: THREE EXAMPLES

"Concepts are the fundamental units that marketers employ in their thinking about marketing problems and in their approaches to solving those problems. Examples of frequently used concepts in marketing include product positioning, market segmentation, brand loyalty, innovation, retailing, and loss leaders." (Zaltman et al. 1973, p. 21)

What should be done if marketing academics and marketing practitioners use the same term to designate different concepts? Should the meaning of one group, academics or practitioners, prevail? If so, on what grounds does one or the other group claim precedence? Or, if the issue is not to be resolved on the basis of the priority of scholarship or practice, then on what basis?

A case could generally be made that the usage of the marketing scholar should prevail because the scholar, being removed from the pressures of taking marketing action in real time and specific contexts, may be expected to show the benefits of depth of thought and breadth of perspective. Scholars may be able to contribute helpful insights gained from observing similar activities in different environments e.g., consumer, industrial, government, and we shall all benefit from this cross-fertilization of ideas and experience. However, the very purpose of reaching for a different perspective is lost should scholars substitute the broader perspective for that of practitioners confronting their own more restricted context. Undoubtedly everything is ultimately related to everything else but in the world of practical affairs, at any one time, some relationships are more important than others. Practitioners are surely grateful when the scholar strives to identify the variables that are relevant to their tasks. The chances of doing so are enhanced by an appreciation of the task from the practitioner's perspective.

Where does metatheory address the question of what scholars should study or what perspective they should adopt? Philosophers of science typically have not addressed such questions, being content to discuss requirements for extending knowledge in whatever domains the scientist chooses. I consider myself a strong supporter of the position that no topic should be disallowed as a subject of scientific study. At the same time, I suggest that our metatheory find room to address the issue of practical relevance even if only as a discussion of the way relevance to the marketing practitioner's tasks may be achieved by theorists interested in doing

In the passage just quoted from Zaltman et al., positioning and market segmentation lead the list of frequently used concepts in marketing. To the practitioner these terms designate tasks which are central to marketing as a business activity that identifies, and directs the firm's response to, consumer wants in a competitive environment. Practitioners read with dismay the use of these terms in the marketing literature. In my reading of marketing literature over the years I have tried to articulate for myself the underlying differences in perspectives and semantics that could account for the instances when I find myself stopped by the use of a term or the implications of an analysis. My conclusion is that these instances have had something to do with issues such as -- Is there a useful distinction to be made between: Market definition and market segmentation? Population segment and market segment; Product and brand; Product positioning and brand positioning; Positioning and perceived positioning? Is market segmentation relevant to product positioning or to brand positioning? Is a practitioner more likely to be interested in product purchase or brand purchase as

dependent variable? Who positions brands: Marketing management? Consumers? Researchers? These questions, in turn, may be manifestations of three basic aspects of the practitioner's experience that are felt less keenly, if at all, by marketing academics: (1) Responsibility for a brand's existence and characteristics, (2) Awareness of the competition as a presence in every aspect of the marketer's thinking and planning for consumer want satisfaction and (3) Dependence on a not-well-understood "consumer" for closure in all marketing discussions, plans, and actions. In sum, the implications of the marketer's task of responding to consumer wants in a competitive environment seem to be less pervasively present in the marketing and consumer behavior literatures than they are in the practitioner's consciousness.

1. Market Definition and Segmentation

In much of the marketing literature, "market segmentation" or "segmentation" is used to refer to analyses in terms of any of a wide variety of variables including: demographic, geographic, life-style, personality, as well as others more directly descriptive of marketplace behavior (e.g., benefits sought, rate of product use). For example, many marketing and consumer behavior texts contain an exhibit that lists variables such as those mentioned which is titled "Bases for market segmentation," or "Segmentation variables for consumer markets," or some equivalent phrase. A stylized version of this exhibit is shown in Figure 1.² The exhibit and accompanying discussion can be criticized on a number of counts but essentially for the two related flaws of inadequacy in the treatment of market segmentation and the misleading nature of what is presented: (1) Probably, the main underlying problem is failure to distinguish market definition and market segmentation. The term "market segmentation" implies that marketers are segmenting a market they have previously defined. Yet the textbook presentations omit to make clear that defining and segmenting markets are logically and operationally distinct tasks that implicate different variables and they give us no hint of the creative interplay between the distinct activities of definition and segmentation.³ (2) Variables relevant to market definition are listed as market segmentation variables. Specifically, most of the space in the pages assigned to market segmentation is devoted to a discussion of demographic and geographic variables -- variables which may be useful in defining markets -- to the neglect of the purposes, methods, and problems of market segmentation. We are told that marketers use demographic and geographic variables to segment their markets. In fact, this is not the case. Market segmentation has to do with

Figure 1 STYLIZED VERSION OF TEXTBOOK EXHIBIT SHOWING "MARKET SEGMENTATION VARIABLES"

MARKET SEGMENTATION VARIABLES

DEMOGRAPHIC

Age, Education, Family Life Cycle, Family Size, Income, Marital Status, Occupation, Race, Religion, Sex, Social Class

GEOGRAPHIC

City/MSMA Size, Climate, County Size Density, Region

PSYCHOGRAPHIC

Live-Style, Personality

PRODUCT-RELATED

Use Occasion, Use Rate, User Status,

Benefits Sought, Loyalty Status, Purchase Readiness

fine-tuning product offerings to customer requirements i.e., producing brands tailored to differing consumer wants. It is not to be expected that most members of a demographic/geographic group want the same version of a product or that knowing a person's demographic/geographic group helps a marketer tailor a brand to the person's requirements.

The concept marketing practitioners have in mind when they use the term, market segmentation, is different from that conveyed for the term by many marketing and consumer behavior texts. While former students of marketing readily learn the new meaning when they begin to work as marketing practitioners, it is regrettable that the academic-practitioner gap is perpetuated into a new generation who now have experienced this concrete example of irrelevant course content. Should the marketing or consumer behavior course have been taught by a marketing practitioner, the same point may already have been made in the classroom. Even more serious is the fact that the conceptually and functionally distinct tasks of market definition and segmentation, as confronted by practitioners, are not accorded the separate and systematic treatment they deserve in the texts and other literature of marketing. Terms proliferate (e.g., total market, market, submarket, target market, served market, market segment, subsegment, niche) but we are left without orientation to their systematic significance. Although profoundly satisfying to the person doing it, labeling does not in itself produce order. In marketing we do not need to relive psychology's experience in this regard. Marketers, for example, may vicariously experience psychologists' embarrassment over the prolifer-

ation of "instincts" (e.g., Bolles 1967, Cofer and Appley 1964) which, though the issue was joined in the 1920s, still echoes through the literature up to the present (e.g., Bolles 1967, p. 441, footnote). The injunction to specify antecedents was the methodological solution in that instance. More generally, the specification of relationships removes the ad hoc nature of mere labeling and furthers the objective of building a coherent system of concepts. The relationships that need to be specified are those among concepts, and among concepts and domains of experience, and I am suggesting that a relevant experiential domain is that of the practicing marketer confronting real-world tasks. At this point, let me go beyond mere exhortation by outlining the concepts and series of tasks which have been shortchanged by the textbook presentation of market segmentation. Because authors have confused the tasks of market definition and segmentation and, also, to clarify the role of demographic/geographic analysis, I shall briefly discuss market definition as well as market segmentation.

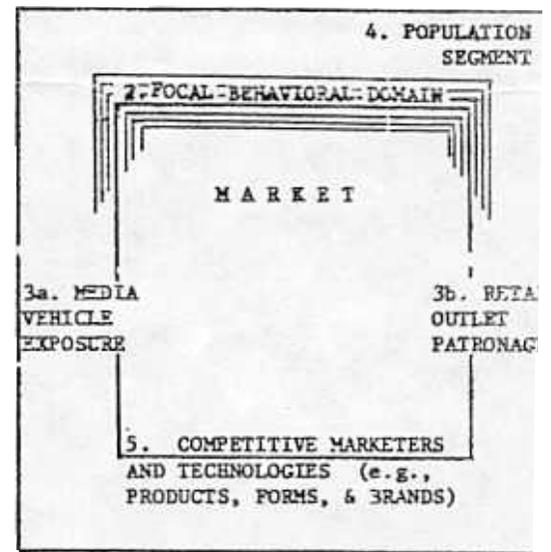
Market Definition. The essential difference is that market definition refers to the marketer's task of choosing the arena in which to compete for the consumer's business; market segmentation refers to aspects of the marketer's task of devising a strategy by which to compete in that arena. Figure 2 lists the major components of each task, and the tasks are described schematically in Figures 2a and 2b. This is not the place to develop the implications of each task component and I want merely to indicate the difference and linkage between market definition and segmentation. First,

FIGURE 2 MARKET DEFINITION AND SEGMENTATION: MAJOR TASK COMPONENTS

MARKET DEFINITION (see Figure 2a)

1. IDENTIFY DOMAIN OF OWN (i.e., Marketer's) EXPERTISE.
2. SELECT A (CORRESPONDING) DOMAIN OF CONSUMER EXPERIENCE/ACTIVITY (i.e., the FOCAL BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN).
3. EVALUATE LOCATABILITY OF PERSONS WHO PERFORM FOCAL BEHAVIOR (e.g., study their media exposure and retail outlet patronage in light of own resources) FOR PURPOSES OF:
 - COMMUNICATION FROM THEM -- of information needed to develop marketing strategy (via marketing research)
 - COMMUNICATION TO THEM -- of brand availability and attributes (via marketing communications)
 - EXCHANGE WITH THEM -- good/service for money.
4. DEFINE OUTER LIMITS OF CURRENT PROSPECT GROUP (e.g., select a population segment as analytic frame -- US adults, US adult males Blacks, US females age 15-45, US teens residing in west, etc.).
5. SPECIFY COMPETITIVE MARKETERS/TECHNOLOGIES (ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED) IMPLICATED BY OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN TASKS 1-4.

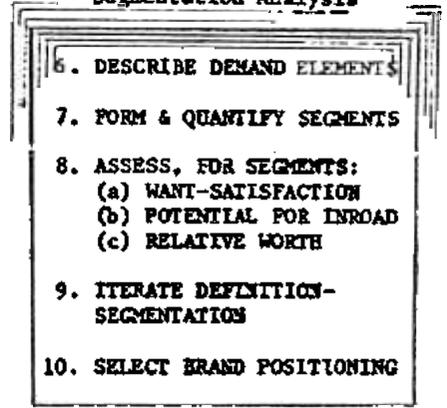
Figure 2a Dimensions of Market Definition



MARKET SEGMENTATION (see Figure 2b)

- Within Market as Defined (i.e., set of options in tasks 1-4),
6. DESCRIBE ELEMENTS OF HETEROGENEOUS DEMAND (e.g., custom information about activating conditions, desired states, desired product attributes for focal behavioral occasions).
 7. FORM AND QUANTIFY DEMAND SEGMENTS.
 8. ASSESS:
 - (a) STATE OF WANT-SATISFACTION IN DEMAND SEGMENTS
 - (b) POTENTIAL FOR BRAND INROADS IN DEMAND SEGMENTS (e.g., custom data on: Form preference; Brand consideration status, general and specific; Brand awareness, experience, beliefs, knowledge, perceived positionings overall)
 - (c) RELATIVE WORTH OF DEMAND SEGMENTS.
 9. REPEAT TASKS 6-8 FOR ALTERNATIVE MARKET DEFINITIONS/SEGMENTATIONS.
 10. SELECT BRAND POSITIONING i.e., target segment(s) of demand (one, some, or all conditions activating prospects to perform focal behavior as defined) and corresponding brand attributes, tangible and intangible.

Figure 2b Components of Market Segmentation Analysis



I shall say a few words about items #2-#5: (2) Specifying the focal behavior is a key aspect of the marketer's task and one on which the final decision may not be made until a number of definition-segmentation cycles have been examined. Accordingly, at the stage of market definition, a focal behavioral domain encompassing a range of candidate focal experiences and activities is specified. Assume we are marketing grapefruit. Candidate focal activities could include: Serving/eating/drinking breakfast; Serving/eating/drinking between-meals snacks; Serving/eating fruit/citrus fruit at breakfast/anytime; Serving/drinking fruit/citrus juice at breakfast/anytime, and many others, varying systematically environmental contexts for each generic activity (cf. "use occasions" e.g., Goldman and McDonald 1979; "situational variables" e.g., Belk 1975). A listing of candidate focal behaviors may or may not specify use of currently available products/brands and frequency or heaviness of use. Typically, the broadest definition likely to be of interest is chosen to qualify research respondents from whom information relative to narrower definitions is obtained, leaving open numerous possibilities for later analysis. (3) Marketers select among available options in communications media retail outlets, for example, mass media and supermarkets special interest media and specialty stores. Information on incidence of focal behaviors may be available for the audiences of media vehicles. (4) If it is not, demographic/geographic analysis may serve as a means of locating, in the audiences of media vehicles, persons who perform the focal behaviors. (5) Decisions regarding dimensions 1-4 of market definition entail a selection of competitive marketers and technologies. A market is an arena in which producers compete and consumers choose. Accordingly, the marketer may want to study the consumer's perception of competitive marketers and technologies in which case qualified respondents may be asked for their view of the products, forms, and brands appropriate to various focal behaviors (cf. Day, Shocker, and Srivastava 1979, Myers and Tauber 1977, Steffler 1979). In sum, in textbook presentations of "variables for market segmentation," demographic, geographic, product use occasions, product use rate, and product user status may be implicated in market definition (see Figure 3).

Market Segmentation. Market segmentation refers to an analytical process through which demand segments within a market as defined are identified and described and their potential as market targets assessed. Its purpose is to help to formulate a positioning for the marketer's brand i.e., to help select target segment(s) of demand and the tangible and intangible attributes appropriate to the target segment(s).

Market definition carves out an arena in which to compete but it gives the marketer no guidance on how to compete within that arena. In our grapefruit example, for instance, if we know that a person eats breakfast, or even that the person eats grapefruit for breakfast, and have all the demographic/geographic information imaginable thrown in for good measure, we still do not know what state the person strives to secure by means of the behavior. We lack the guidance we need in order to develop marketing strategy. What kind of grapefruit should we produce? What are the various conditions that consumers experience that activate grapefruit eating? We need to know, if we are to respond to consumer wants. Grapefruit is a textbook example used to typify "product homogeneity." But products, even agricultural products, are the creation of humans and they represent the outcome of choice. Why produce sweet, if consumers want tart, or large, if they want medium? And, as practitioners know well, consumers as a group want sweet and tart and large and medium. It is not at all difficult to think of heterogeneous orientations to eating grapefruit for breakfast. Among demand segments such as the following the marketer will want to decide which should be selected as market target(s) with corresponding implications for brand attribute selection: "Eating grapefruit" may be a means of overcoming lethargy, thirst, hunger, nutrient depletion; it may have symbolic significance and implicate responsible habits, or being good to oneself; it may be performed mindlessly out of pure routine; it may be

a source of intrinsic interest for a grapefruit buff to whom texture, skin thickness, color and smell are filled with significance; it may be viewed as a source of pure sensory pleasure; it may be any of these and also entail some element of unpleasantness such as dislike of pits, bitterness, sweetness, toughness, size ("too large for me"), etc.; it may be a source of frustration in that the person's desires are not being satisfied. Orientations such as these (Fennell 1978) are the source of different consumer wants in respect to the "same" focal behavior.

Typically, the demand segments are not well described by demographic/geographic variables (or indeed by personality or lifestyle variables which discriminate better among products purchased than among brands purchased). Accordingly, as regards locating segment members in the audience of media vehicles, marketers rely on elements in the marketing communication message -- typically elements in the individual print ad or TV commercial -- to locate the target segment members by means of selective attention (Fennell 1979). Media vehicles will likely have been selected whose audience profiles match characteristics of persons who perform the focal behavior(s) as finally defined.

The main variables that may be considered in market segmentation are indicated in Figure 2, items #6-#8. Note that within market segmentation analysis, different variables are relevant to different components of the overall task. Among the variables often shown as "Bases for market segmentation" benefits sought (#6, #7), brand loyalty (#8b), brand purchase readiness (#8b), and brand user status (#8b) are among the variables used in practice, each in a different aspect of the task. In sum, as indicated in Figures 2 and 3, the variables traditionally grouped together in textbooks as "market segmentation variables" are not used interchangeably in marketing analyses and some are not used for market segmentation at all.

FIGURE 3 "MARKET SEGMENTATION VARIABLES" ASSIGNED TO TASKS OF MARKET DEFINITION AND SEGMENTATION

VARIABLES	MARKET TASK	
	DEFINITION	SEGMENTATION COMPONENT (FIGURE 2)
DEMOGRAPHIC	x	#3, #4
GEOGRAPHIC	x	#3, #4
PSYCHOGRAPHIC	x	#3
PRODUCT-RELATED		
Product Use Occasion	x	#2
Product Use Rate	x	#2
Product User Status	x	#2
Benefits Sought	x	#6, #7
Brand Loyalty Status	x	#8b
Brand Purchase Readiness	x	#8b
Brand User Status	x	#8b

Even this brief outline indicates that the practitioner's tasks of market definition and segmentation comprise the quance of steps involved in responding to consumer wants the marketing concept requires i.e., developing brand strategy in an competitive environment. Different variables are implicated for different task components in a systematic manner. Listing these variables indiscriminately as "Market segmentation variables" in the texts that introduce marketing and consumer behavior to future marketers does a disservice to the discipline. The practice of marketing is considerably more systematic and intellectually satisfying than its presentation in textbooks suggests. (see Figure 5).

Underlying Reasons: Some Speculations. One way to interpret what has happened here is to suggest that marketing school focused on the term "market segmentation" and, omitting

enquire into the marketing practitioner's concept of market segmentation, relied on their own primary associations to guide their further thoughts and work on the subject. One primary association for segmentation is undoubtedly the dictionary meaning of segment namely, division. Hence, market segmentation is equated with subdividing. To the marketing practitioner, the act of subdividing is incidental to the main task of responding to heterogeneous demand within a defined market and the practitioner's task, in fact, involves aggregating individual wants to form homogeneous segments of demand. Accordingly, there is a close association in the practitioner's mind between "segmentation" and the activities of identifying and describing consumer wants in substantive terms that cannot conceivably be extracted from demographic/geographic analysis.

Another facet to the problem is, of course, the sense in which "market" is used. In this context, textbook authors may be equating "market" with "industry" or "business," so that a marketing effort directed to anything less than a total industry is viewed as an instance of "market segmentation." They may then regard the practitioner's defining an arena in which to compete as a case of segmenting some larger entity. Unfortunately, there is more to the problem than the mere misalignment of terms and levels of analysis. Missing from the "market segmentation variables" exhibit is the notion of the nesting of one set of tasks (market segmentation) within another (market definition) and the corresponding distinction between the groups of variables appropriate to each set of tasks. To the extent, however, that levels of analysis is a contributing factor I am hopeful that work which addresses the distinction among the corporate, business, and program levels (e.g., Abell 1980) may sensitize authors to this potential source of confusion. Abell (1980) associates market segmentation and brand positioning with the program level but, regrettably in my opinion, does not restrict his use of the term "segment" to the program level and uses it there to refer to population segments (e.g., male/female, upper income/lower income, p. 187). With other terms available, for example, sector or group, it would be unfortunate to lose the systematically significant association of the term "segment" with the task of identifying and describing heterogeneous demand within a competitive arena. Another possible solution is to take care to use "population segment" or "submarket" or "special market" (e.g., the black/teen/brides/retirees market) when referring to the practitioner's task of defining an arena in which to compete and "market segment" or "demand segment" when referring to the task of developing strategy for competing within the arena as defined.

Failure to appreciate the practitioner's perspective on market segmentation is also manifest in the fact that some marketing scholars have linked the term segmentation to the pervasive scientific endeavor of searching for pattern or regularity, specifically in this case, to the use of correlational analysis. Where other disciplines speak of finding correlates of some dependent variable, marketers may be found speaking of "segmentation" correlates. Now, "segmentation correlates" could serve a useful purpose if an author were searching for correlates of brand choice as the dependent variable. Although a case can be made that demand segments should not be expected to discriminate well among brands (because marketers may position a brand to address more than one segment, because consumers perceive positions variously, etc.), referring to the quest for correlates of brand choice as a search for a "segmentation" correlate conveys, at least, an intramarket focus of interest. Correlates of product choice, however, are in the realm of intermarket interest and belong in a discussion of market definition not market segmentation.

Studies published in the marketing literature have investigated income and social class as correlates of product use and frequency of product use. The authors characterize their work as searching for segmentation correlates. Variables that correlate with product use/frequency of use may

have a role to play in defining a market. Specifically, they may assist the marketer in the task of locating potential buyers in the audience of media vehicles. They are not relevant to the task of market segmentation. They do not cast light on the nature of demand within a product category i.e., serve as a basis for distinguishing different consumer want groups within a market. For example, were we to learn that frequency of playing golf is positively and frequency of dining at inexpensive restaurants is negatively correlated with social class we are not learning anything about the nature of heterogeneous demand within the market: for golf or low cost dining out.

2. Product versus Brand

It is clear that I have not been able to discuss the distinction between market definition and segmentation without also distinguishing the product and brand realms of discourse so it may not be surprising if I turn next to discuss differences between marketing scholars and practitioners in regard to usage of the terms "product" and "brand." At the outset, let me use Figure 2 to clarify that practitioners address interproduct considerations in the task of market definition (Figure 2a, dimension #5). When the analytic focus changes to investigating heterogeneous demand within a competitive arena as defined e.g., to tasks associated with market segmentation, we have moved to the realm of brands which are the available, or proposed, specific market offerings by means of which consumer wants may, or may not, be satisfied. The important distinctions are, first, that "product" is an abstraction and unobservable, whose function is to designate a competitive arena, while "brand" is the perceptible entity that is offered for sale in the marketplace in competition with other brands and, second, that marketers must share control of their product with the competition and are solely responsible for their brand.

The practitioner's sharp and systematic distinction between "product" and "brand" is rarely paralleled in the academic literature where "product" is, by a practitioner's lights, overused in two senses: (1) "Product" is used in theoretical discussions where "brand" is the appropriate term,⁴ (2) Product, correctly used, is the dependent variable in research where the practitioner would wish to see brand (use, choice, etc.) as the dependent variable. Wind (1977) has made a similar point in commenting favorably on Bourne's (1957) research for studying both products and brands: "Despite the importance of this distinction, many of the consumer behavior studies do not distinguish explicitly between product and brand" (p. 229). Little improvement is detectable.

To the marketing practitioner, it usually matters a great deal whether one studies products or brands. It seems highly unlikely that marketing scholars do not appreciate the distinction between the terms, product and brand, yet the fact remains that "product" is often used in the marketing literature where "brand" would seem to be the correct term. Minimally, ambiguity and lack of precision are unnecessarily introduced when it is left to the reader to decide whether the author intends to speak of products or of brands. Which concept is intended makes a great difference to the meaning of what is written. Consider the following:

"Results of the evaluation and preference analysis can be used (for) identification of those attributes of a product which are not perceived by certain categories of decision participants in the ways desired by management, so that corrective action can be taken in a product communication strategy within the firm" (1978, p. 29, italics added).

Is "product" or "brand" intended? Typically, management accepts customer desires relative to product attributes and modifies brand attributes accordingly, often by recourse to formulation or design changes. However, the authors do not continue with the further discussion one would expect if management is truly being advised to attempt to change cus-

ask in Figure 2). Given its status as the quintessential marketing act, the task of positioning has been accorded less than its due amount of scholarly attention.

SCIENCE AND PRACTICE IN MARKETING

It is clear, I trust, that I am not pointing merely to academic-practitioner differences in the terms used to describe the same concepts or activities. Difference in academic-practitioner usage is an element in each of the three issues I have discussed so far but it is of significance because it has been associated with scholarly neglect of concepts and activities that are important in marketing practice. Given that the concepts and activities touch the very definition of marketing itself, they are important to marketing scholars as well.

When substantive examples are confronted, the "academic-practitioner gap" may be seen as a separation of marketing scholarship from its own roots, raising the question: Can there be marketing science divorced from marketing as an activity? Given the ferment in the literature of the past decade relative to the definition, scope and scientific status of marketing, the obvious answer may be now be regarded as quaint, if not revolutionary: Whatever else marketing science may do, today or in the future, its primary task is to use scientific method to study questions raised in the practice of marketing. If not marketing, then which discipline is going to bring scientific method to bear in studying such questions? Granted, there is disagreement among scholars about marketing's focus and legitimate subject matter (e.g., O'Shaughnessy and Ryan 1979, p. 580). Must this disagreement paralyze marketing scholarship to the extent that the most fundamental notions of marketing as an activity are not embraced, explored, and developed? Where are marketing's theories of want-satisfaction in a competitive environment? Where are marketing's models of human motivation? Above all, where are marketing's models of heterogeneous demand? And for contrarians, where is the theorizing/research relative to alternatives to want-satisfaction as a means of influencing marketplace choice and resource allocation? Whatever the eventual consensus on how to conceptualize marketing's domain, is there any doubt that topics such as those just mentioned occupy a central place in marketing as a discipline? Because of their relevance to market segmentation and brand positioning, they are implicated pervasively in marketing practice.

Marketing practitioners know only too well the difficulty of understanding what consumers want. Two questions arise: (1) Are the practical and formal difficulties posed by the task of responding to consumer wants sufficient reason to abandon the attempt? (2) Is there a theory of marketing that does not implicate want-satisfaction? No, is my answer to the second question. Because the conceptualization of consumer wants has been somewhat neglected, it would be premature to abandon the enterprise. As regards my own approach to conceptualizing motivation and identifying consumer wants (Fennell 1975, 1978, 1980a,b) I think that we have scarcely begun to address the task and I see continuing possibilities for further improvement (e.g., Fennell 1981a). Regarding the second question: Even if we had substantial reason to be discouraged and, I repeat, we do not, it is not going to be easy to conceptualize marketing in a way that does not implicate consumer satisfaction in some manner. Certainly, recent reformulations of marketing that emphasize the transaction (Kotler 1972) or exchange (Bagozzi 1979) may have moved want-satisfaction from center stage but they have not banished it. According to Kotler: "The marketer's problem is to create attractive values. Value is completely subjective and exists in the eyes of the beholding market" (1972, p. 50), and the actors in Bagozzi's exchange are presumed to maximize joint "subjective satisfaction" (1979, p. 442). It seems we cannot avoid confronting want-satisfaction. But why avoid it? Because the task is too difficult? In marketing, we are doubly fortunate: Our discipline assigns us a topic that is maximally worthwhile and maximally challeng-

ing intellectually. Except for the interest of management science and organizational psychology in the subject of job satisfaction, marketing has no competitors for hegemony in the study of human satisfaction. Practitioners dream of finding an uncontested niche in the marketplace and would not relinquish it without a struggle. If marketing academics need the fillip of competition in order properly to appreciate this domain of scholarship that is theirs for the taking other disciplines may oblige. There are some indications that economists may abandon their traditional reluctance to discuss substantive issues of human wants or satisfactions and as Lane (1978) has shown, the availability of empirical data on life satisfactions (e.g., Andrews and Withey 1974, Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers 1976) permits scholars, with more specificity than has been customary within economics, to raise questions about the market's capacity to satisfy human wants.

In the following sections I discuss the reciprocal relationship between science and practice in marketing including the nature of the help for which the practitioner looks to marketing science and the challenges and opportunities that marketing scholars may find in addressing themselves to the requirements of marketing practice. But first, I should be remiss were I to ignore the explicit disparagement by some marketing scholars of marketing as an activity, a subject to which I now turn.

Do Marketing Academics Disparage Marketing as an Activity?

The academic-practitioner gap is not only implicit and unintentional as, I believe, is the case with the examples mentioned so far. There are instances of quite explicit rejection by marketing academics of the practitioner's perspective and of marketing as an institution. Here are two:

"Viewed critically, a first possible limitation of the marketing concept is that it is mainly an inside-out, technological statement of marketing, centering on a set of techniques applicable to a certain set of problems. Such a micro perspective cannot help conceptualizing marketing as a one-way control process, in which sellers act and buyers react. . . . The new broadened marketing or social marketing concept, however, was more than a bootstrapping phenomenon, as its chief architects were marketing academics. This in itself is a healthy development." (1980, pp. 391-392).

Marketing's "set of techniques" includes all those which are used in marketing research to obtain an understanding of the consumer's perspective initially and later to assess the effect of, and further tailor, marketing action. To say that "a micro perspective cannot help conceptualizing marketing as a one-way control process" is simply wrong; the statement reflects neither the facts of marketing practice, nor the meaning of the marketing concept itself. A second example follows: In the context of raising some questions about the "broadening" (Kotler and Levy 1969, Kotler 1972) of marketing, an author comments on "successful educational methods" such as open classrooms and says: "The critical feature of such education lies in the acceptance of the student as a special person who must not be marketed into doing what the organization wants" (1974, p. 33). I doubt that one marketing practitioner is to be found who believes that he or she or their firm, can make anyone do anything the person does not want to do. Marketing practitioners grapple daily with the task of understanding the consumer's perspective. In the absence of conceptualizations of heterogeneous demand and, in particular, of the structure and components of the consumer's perspective, practitioners have developed empirical procedures, specifically the two- (or more) phase, qualitative-quantitative format of segmentation research (Fennell 1978). In this most central of marketing activities, practitioners have had little help in conceptualization and model building from marketing academics. Under the circumstances, it is somewhat insensitive and, given the state of the art, unrealistic as well for marketing scholars publicly to portray marketing as imposing its will on helpless consumers.

ask in Figure 2). Given its status as the quintessential marketing act, the task of positioning has been accorded less than its due amount of scholarly attention.

SCIENCE AND PRACTICE IN MARKETING

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Correctly used, the term "marketing" is not a synonym for "high pressure tactics," "being influenced against your will," or similar ideas. To the contrary, the meaning of the term "marketing" is embodied in the marketing concept: Don't sell what you happen to make; make what the consumer wants to buy. Why should respected and well-established marketing scholars, who may be expected to know better, use "marketing" incorrectly, and malign our discipline in the process? By all means, let us speak out against abuses when we find them and let us identify pressure tactics as violations of marketing thought.

The Practitioner's Need for Marketing Science

Marketing management's essential question is: What should we do to ensure that our brand is selected over competition sufficiently often to give us a return on our investment? There are, perhaps, three distinguishable approaches to answering the question. One can reach for rules of thumb, one can use trial and error including sophisticated, small-scale simulation, or pretesting of selected options, and one can follow the classic scientific method of discovering pattern or regularity and, specifically, the antecedents of the desired effect. In day to day practice, time pressures dictate use of the first two. Even if marketing science were much more highly developed than it is today, the translation of its understanding into the terms appropriate to specific action would still necessitate the use of rules of thumb and trial and error. In the absence of the comprehensive frameworks which scientific understanding might generate, rules of thumb and empirically-based trial and error are unsatisfactory -- and anxiety-provoking for the user -- because of the constant risk of omitting some crucial element or perspective that may make itself known only after the fact. Marketing academics can help practitioners mainly in two ways: (1) Practitioners look to science in marketing to draw on, adapt, and develop general scientific knowledge so as to create improved tools for small-scale simulation and the pretesting of strategic options. (2) For the longer haul, practitioners turn to marketing science to identify the antecedents of marketplace choice and thus to help them structure their tasks and choose appropriately among the many variables which they confront. They look to marketing science to articulate the framework and essential structure of what they are doing.

The manager's normative-sounding question: How should I position my brand? is, in fact, asking for a descriptive answer. The manager is saying: Tell me the antecedents of repeated brand choice in a competitive environment. Proceeding to answer that question is something that marketing scholars, trained in scientific method, know how to do. So why should there be the evident disharmony and friction between academics and practitioners? The marketing academic may suggest that it derives, on the one hand, from the proprietary nature of business data and, on the other, from the scholar's desire not to be perceived as the handmaiden of industry.⁶ I can but accept the validity as perceptions of views such as these while suggesting that they are inadequate, singly or jointly, to explain the chasm that exists. In the first place, it would be the exception rather than the rule for scientists to make the development of a discipline contingent upon the availability of data generated by persons other than the scientists themselves. Secondly, when marketing scholars generate their own independent data and commentary relative to decisions the practitioner faces they may minimize the likelihood of being viewed as serving only business interests. More fundamental sources must be sought for the tension and failure of communication between marketing academics and practitioners and I turn next to discuss the following three issues as contributors to the academic-practitioner divide: The possibility that motivation -- the aspect of behavior so important to the marketer's goal of want-satisfaction -- may be the source of a discontinuity between the subject matters of behavioral and physical science making the methods developed for the study of physical science inappropriate to the study of human behavior; the failure, to date, to articulate marketing's paradigm of

If there is any merit in the issues I raise as possible reasons for the academic-practitioner gap, marketing scholars may find that their discipline offers unexpected challenges and accompanying opportunities for ground-breaking work. Viewed in this light, breakdowns in communication between academics and practitioners may be welcomed as signaling not only the need for making hidden assumptions explicit but a possible occasion for creating new ways to represent reality.

Motivation: Significant Variation Within and Among the Entities Studied. It is clear, I believe, that the market segmentation Smith (1956) spoke of is not the obvious and, to a marketer, uninteresting fact that the consumer, or industrial, or US, market consists of multiple markets. It is also clear that the heterogeneous demand Smith spoke of does not refer to the obvious and, to a marketer, uninteresting fact that the consumer, or industrial, or US markets comprise demand for a variety of products. It is abundantly clear that Smith (1956) is referring to the practitioner's concept of heterogeneity within a product market, to the strategic option of tailoring a brand to the wants of one or more segments of the total product demand, and to the dependence of this strategy on an intimate understanding of the varied nature of demand for a product. So what went wrong? Marketing would have been spared much travail and the academic-practitioner gap would not have opened to the extent it has, had Smith's (1956) paper been followed by a paper elucidating the antecedents of heterogeneous demand. No suitable formulation was to be found in any of the behavioral sciences and marketing embarked on a quarter century of effort to make sense out of available analytic categories, the data they generated, and existing and new analytic techniques. What was needed was a basic rethinking of the kinds of concepts that would adequately represent behavioral phenomena for the marketer.

A case can be made that what chiefly characterizes marketing as an activity is its dedication to the notion that influence in the marketplace depends on understanding. Elsewhere (Fennell 1980c), I have argued that the marketing concept is in fact a hypothesis about influence that implicates a particular theory of behavior. Marketing uses this theory to harness the energies in one part of society (i.e., the forces activating consumer behavior outside the marketplace) to influence the allocation of society's resources and direct its productive enterprise. However, harnessing human energy does not work in exactly the same way as harnessing the wind or falling water. The direction of the energies of wind and water is readily ascertainable and appropriate technology can be designed accordingly. The allocation of human energy is studied under the heading of motivation, an aspect of behavior that, so far, has proved to be among the most resistant to scientific study.

In considering the scientific status of marketing we need to grapple with the larger question of the extent to which the models of inquiry developed for the physical sciences are appropriate for the study of human behavior and experience. In behavioral science, the individual entities studied differ over occasions and from each other in ways relevant to the scientific goals of explanation, prediction, and control. The differences that matter are not likely to be found in the readily observable characteristics of humans but are to be sought among the determinants of the significance individuals assign to elements in their current environment. Significant variation within and among the entities studied,

and in ways not readily observable, makes the behavioral scientist's task different from that of the physical scientist, possibly to the extent of requiring modification in the methods of inquiry developed for the physical sciences. Marketers, perforce, address just this sort of significant variation by virtue of taking to themselves the task of responding to consumer wants. If the marketer's business is want-satisfaction it is unavoidably also the satisfaction of heterogeneous wants among people whose wants are not to be detected as readily as their skin color, age, or geographical location (Fennell 1981b). I venture to suggest that gaining formal understanding of the marketer's task of want-satisfaction is as difficult an assignment as scientists confront in any domain of knowledge.

Marketing's Paradigm of Applied Behavioral Science. By definition, the marketing scholar is not intimately involved in the practice of marketing and the very real question arises as to the means by which the scholar becomes exposed to marketing practice. Certainly it is not entirely desirable that the familiarization process be left to the luck of the consulting assignments especially since consulting opportunities may arise in organizations whose marketing operations are small or nonexistent. Ways must be found to represent marketing practice more faithfully in the marketing literature. As one effort in that direction I offer the following attempt to articulate marketing's implicit paradigm of applied behavioral science.

In their lucid review of concepts and contributors relative to marketing's status as science and technology, O'Shaughnessy and Ryan (1979) report the widely held belief that marketing lacks paradigms at this time. A good case can be made, I believe, that one paradigm is already in existence in marketing practice, if by paradigm we mean a framework that interconnects important aspects of the domain. That the framework has hitherto been invisible is not unusual for paradigms and does not detract from the reality of its existence. The paradigm to which I refer comprises marketing's research and strategic operations along with its implicit behavioral model. What has been visible are (1) the much used research and analytic tools of marketing research practice, and (2) the much discussed domains of strategic choice (the "4 Ps"). What has not been articulated is the model of behavior which these two sets of observables presuppose although it could be argued that a first approximation to that behavioral model has been articulated in the six steps of the so-called "hierarchy of effects" model of advertising effects (Lavidge and Steiner 1961). Given the information in Figure 4, how is the marketer's implicit behavioral model to be described?

In Figure 5, the marketer's domains of strategic choice (B), and major categories of information obtained through market-research (C), are shown coordinated to the corresponding features of a model (A) of consumer brand choice (Fennell 1980a, b). The six steps of the "hierarchy of effects" model (D) are similarly coordinated to the behavioral model.

Let us make just a few points that are relevant in the present context: (1) Without getting into differences as regards the models' common domain, note only that the hierarchy of effects model does not represent consumer motivation or post-purchase evaluation and learning. From a marketing point of view, the model is seriously deficient in failing to represent consumer motivation as the origin of marketplace behavior. In the model of consumer brand choice shown here, heterogeneous demand is represented in terms of seven qualitatively different activating conditions, discussed elsewhere (Fennell 1978): Current Problem, Potential Problem, Normal Depletion, Interest Opportunity, Sensory Pleasure Opportunity, Product-related Problem, Satisfaction Frustration. Activating conditions direct consumers' behavior by specifying the essential characteristics of desired states. The behavior of consumers outside the marketplace is directed toward securing their desired states and, in the process, consumers may need to acquire goods and services. Activating conditions, then, represent the origin of heterogeneous demand in the conditions affecting consumers' lives outside the marketplace. Marketing activity begins by carving out a focal domain of experience/activity, describing the conditions that activate this behavior and identifying appropriate attributes for goods and services that are responsive to consumer wants (Fennell 1980a). (2) Hitherto, management's exercise of choice in regard to the segment(s) to address has not been explicitly represented as a strategic "P", although the importance with which management regards the Prospects decision is amply in evidence in the supporting marketing research activity. To remedy this oversight, I am adding a fifth "P" namely, Prospects i.e., locatable persons who perform the focal behavior. (3) The positioning decision may be expressed here as the marketer's simultaneous choice among available options in Prospects (demand segments) and Product (attributes) i.e., the marketer's choice of attributes appropriate to one, some, or all of the conditions activating Prospects to perform the focal behavior. As indicated above (Figure 2), it is made in the light of a broad range of systematically relevant information.

More generally, as portrayed in Figure 5, marketing practice may be regarded as an elaborate example of applied behavioral science, one that may be better articulated than any other at this time. Marketing practice appears to be an example of Zaltman et al.'s (1974) "second use of control:"

"The first use (of control) refers to the theory of knowledge and considers control as a necessary activity in accruing knowledge . . . The second use of control views it as a goal rather than as a means. Inference about the existence of a causal relationship is not sought but rather assumed and exploited. Instead of controlling for other controlling conditions, following the principle of redundancy all of the available manipulable antecedents are brought to bear so as to maximize the chances of actually controlling the dependent variables. By doing this, however, causal inference as to what actually effected control is made difficult. The de-

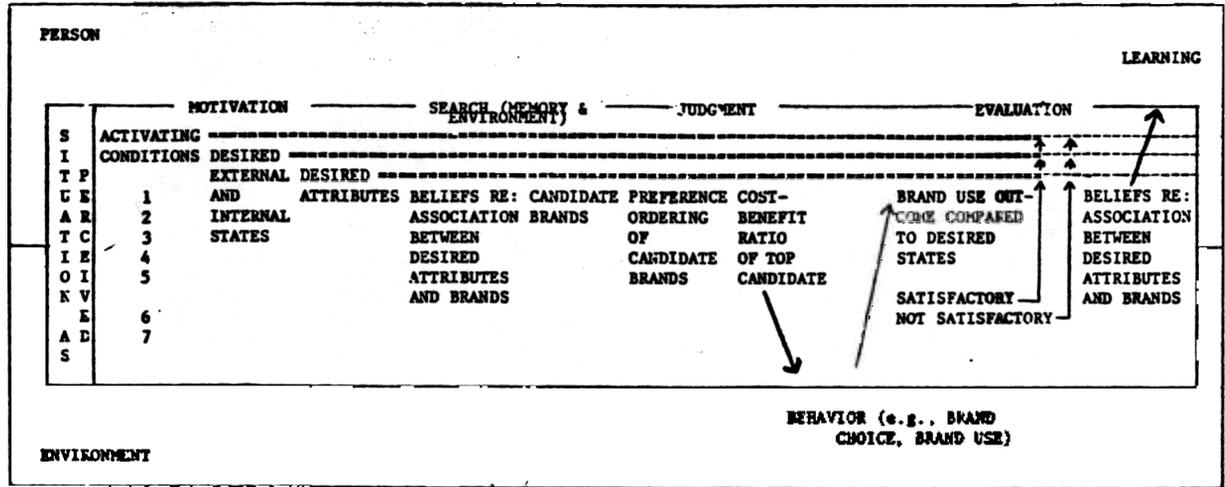
FIGURE 4. MANIFESTATIONS OF MARKETING'S IMPLICIT BEHAVIORAL MODEL

MARKETERS' DOMAINS OF STRATEGIC CHOICE:	PRODUCT (THE POSITIONING DECISION)	PROMOTION	PRICE	PLACE				
DIAGNOSTIC AND EVALUATIVE INFORMATION:*	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, PSYCHOGRAPHIC SEGMENTATION	PROPORTIONS TO PRODUCT BENEFITS & ATTRIBUTES (direct and derived), BENEFIT SEGMENTATION	BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND BELIEFS PERCEPTUAL MAPPING	BRAND CONSIDERATION SET	PREFERENCE VALUE RANKING, PURCHASE INTENT RATING, CONSTANT SUM SCALE (LIKING) PREFERENCE	OUT-OF-STOCK REPORTS, SALES DATA	BRAND-IN-USE RATINGS	BRAND KNOWLEDGE e.g., Brand Beliefs among Triers/Users
HIERARCHY OF EFFECTS:		AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE		CONVICTION PURCHASE				

*SHOWN HERE, FOR COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSES, ARE THE MAJOR KINDS OF MARKETING RESEARCH MEASURES AND ANALYSES IN CURRENT USE. DIRECTION FROM MY BEHAVIORAL MODEL (LATER) INCLUDES: (1) OPERATIONALIZING "PSYCHOGRAPHIC" SEGMENTATION IN TERMS OF THE SEVEN ACTIVATING CONDITIONS, (2) USING THE CURRENT "PSYCHOGRAPHIC" MEASURES (I.E., PERSONALITY AND LIFESTYLE) AS ANCILLARY DESCRIPTORS OF THE SEGMENTS, (3) CONSIDERING THE SEPARATE STATUS OF PRODUCT BENEFITS (DESIRED EXTERNAL/INTERNAL STATES) AND PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES (DESIRED ATTRIBUTES).

FIGURE 3 MARKETING'S PARADIGM OF APPLIED BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE AND THE "HIERARCHY OF EFFECTS"

A. MODEL OF CONSUMER BRAND CHOICE



B. MARKETERS' DOMAINS OF STRATEGIC CHOICE

PROSPECTS (THE POSITIONING DECISION) PRODUCT PROMOTION PRICE PLACE

C. DIAGNOSTIC AND EVALUATIVE INFORMATION

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, PSYCHOGRAPHIC SEGMENTATION	REACTIONS TO PRODUCT BENEFITS & ATTRIBUTES (direct and derived), BENEFIT SEGMENTATION	BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND BELIEFS, PERCEPTUAL MAPPING	BRAND CONSISTENCY SET	PREFERENCE RANKING, PURCHASE INTENT RATING, CONSTANT SUM SCALE	VALUE RATING	OUT-OF-STOCK REPORTS, SALES DATA	BRAND-IN-USE RATINGS	BRAND KNOWLEDGE e.g., Brand Beliefs among Triers/Users
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D. HIERARCHY OF EFFECTS

AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE (LIKING) PREFERENCE CONVICTION PURCHASE

sire for valid inference, however, ought not to stifle action" (pp. 175-176).

In marketing's case it did not stifle action and with uncanny intuition marketers identified the (assumed) antecedents of brand choice making them the focal points for strategic action aimed at securing repeat purchase of the marketer's brand.

Marketing's paradigm of applied behavioral science is an example of control through understanding in a form that is not a simple stimulus-response model by any means. It accepts influence as well as attempting to influence. Most strikingly, reflecting the essential marketing concept (Make what the consumer wants to buy), the motivational antecedents are not manipulated and marketing strategy is restricted to selecting among the Prospect and Product (attributes) options which research identifies. In the Product domain, influence is mutual to the extent that available technology places some constraint on the manner in which consumers may go about satisfying their wants. As regards each of the remaining strategic domains, marketing control is a process of mutual influence in which marketing action is guided on an ongoing basis by information about consumers' perspectives that is obtained both before (diagnostic), and after (evaluative), action is taken. It is, perhaps, in regard to the aspect of accepting influence that marketing scholars who are trained to think in terms of an experimental design model fail to make contact, fully, with the practitioner's perspective. Accordingly, this particular feature of marketing's paradigm warrants a few words of comment.

State-Description in the Application of Science. Much marketing research is purely descriptive. In this it reflects the fact that practitioners operate in the real world where many occurrences that are relevant to management's goals are beyond their control. Managers need information on the current state of relevant variables and this information specifies the options for strategic action that are available at any one time. Marketing academics, who are scientists rather than practitioners may not, at times, fully appreciate

the vital importance to managers of obtaining information that is "merely" descriptive and the indispensability of state-descriptive information to the manager. The scientist is accustomed to carving out a domain of interest and arranging for the presence and absence of certain conditions in order to test hypotheses. Practitioners may not operate in this manner. Even though they may end up addressing one segment of demand, they must begin by acquainting themselves with the current state of want-satisfaction in the market(s) of interest. It is not the function of theory to predict the initial state of a system and what practitioners need at this point is not specific hypotheses but conceptual products to aid in their task of state-description. In our texts and courses we may not have been as clear as is warranted about the distinction between obtaining data for purposes of hypothesis-testing and state-description. When we urge aspiring practitioners to formulate hypotheses in advance of conducting research we give them advice that is hard to reconcile with the meaning of the marketing concept whose implementation requires an initial phase of state-description.

Help for the Practitioner from Marketing Science. Let us return, as promised, to discuss some aspects of the help marketing practitioners need from marketing science. For their state-descriptive task practitioners need help in at least two respects: (1) Typically, the state-descriptive task begins with an attempt to report consumers' orientations to the behavior of interest i.e., the focal behavioral domain. By now, doing the laundry, feeding the dog, having a headache, brushing one's teeth, washing one's hair, shaving one beard, and many other domains of experience/activity have been described again and again. Individual marketers conduct their own proprietary exploratory investigations without much guidance as to the significant structural components of the domain whose current state they need to know. Lacking conceptualizations, practitioners have used qualitative research, and especially "focus groups," to generate the topics on which subsequent quantification surveys are based. From all of this qualitative work what have we learned? How do we know about the requirements for good state-description? When is a state-description excellent? What kinds

elements should it include in order to qualify as minimally adequate? My current answer to this question is reflected in the sets of topics indicated in Figure 2, in the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the situation as perceived (Figure 5), and elsewhere (Fennell 1981a, b). The relevant literature has, by and large, ignored the role individual depth and focused group research have played as de facto substitutes for the conceptual frameworks practitioners could otherwise use to generate the topics needing description. A goal for marketing science is to develop conceptual frameworks so well articulated as to replace the topic-generating function currently carried by qualitative research. (2) In common with other behavioral sciences, marketing has not invested much effort in taxonomic activity, possibly because it has not been entirely clear which entities should be classified. By their countless "focus group" explorations of focal behavioral domains such as "doing the laundry" and the others just mentioned, marketing practitioners have resoundingly indicated what one taxonomy should address. Accordingly, consumers' orientations to each of the hundreds of focal behavioral domains served by the major goods and services constitute one component of marketing's descriptive agenda. Because we live in a changing world it is not to be expected that marketing's descriptive task can be accomplished once and for all. Nevertheless, consumer orientations relative to the focal behavioral domains likely change less rapidly than does the corresponding brand array so that descriptions of perceived activating conditions, desired external and internal states, and desired attributes may be expected to have a reasonable span of useful life and serve as a base for modification as required.

Finally, if we are going to take the marketing concept seriously (Make what the consumer wants to buy), research conducted to develop understanding relevant to the marketer's tasks should prescreen subjects to ascertain their orientation to the focal behavioral domain under study. As I have noted elsewhere, explicit acknowledgement of the origin of marketing activity in the wants of prospective users is virtually absent in the published research on the use of fear appeals in marketing (Fennell 1979, p. 28), on the marketing application of the Fishbein approach to attitude (Fennell 1980a, b), and on consumer information processing (Fennell 1979, p. 32). Regarding the last-mentioned, for example, humans use their information processing apparatus in the service of their individual objectives. In developing basic understanding of human information processing for use in marketing, what the person is trying to achieve must be taken into account.

REPRISE AND PROSPECT: CAN METATHEORY HELP?

I have discussed three instances where marketing academics and practitioners use key marketing terms to designate different concepts: Market segmentation, Positioning, and Product. My speculative analysis of underlying reasons includes the possibility that academics may have reached for readily available meanings of terms e.g., segment and market, and readily available data analysis operations e.g., correlate search, and perceptual mapping, thus effectively blocking their further attempt to appreciate the ramifications of the tasks practitioners confront. Insufficient attention to the important distinction between the product and brand realms of discourse in American marketing scholarship also seems to be a contributing factor.

The upshot has been that marketing theory is underdeveloped in areas relevant to marketing's central activity of satisfying consumer wants in a competitive environment. At the same time, marketing theorists appear to be interested in finding other lands to conquer, and the decade of the seventies saw a "broadening" of marketing's range to embrace non-business applications such as nonprofit, government, and social cause contexts. A few years into marketing's "broadening" phase, Enis (1973) suggested that marketing was in need of "deepening." In referring to the desirability of

of relating "abstract ideas to real marketing situations" (p. 60), Enis was calling, I believe, for marketing theory that is more relevant to the practice of marketing. For the most part, Enis' call appears to have gone unheeded.

My own further analysis suggests that marketing theorists, trained in the prevailing experimental model, confront a number of related difficulties in their attempt to develop marketing science. In their daily concern with the phenomenon of human motivation, and their dependence on state-description as the starting point for strategic action, practitioners inhabit a world that is literally beyond the ken of one trained in traditional scientific method. Furthermore, the absence of representations of the practitioner's task in abstract terms has denied the marketing scientist access to the practitioner's world. The failure to appreciate the role of state-description in marketing practice and the practitioner's need for conceptual frameworks to guide the state-descriptive task may be viewed as a simple oversight regarding the different assignments of the basic and applied scientist yet there is more to it than this. Because of marketing's concern with want-satisfaction, the state the practitioner is particularly interested in describing (i.e., the direction in which human energy is being allocated) implicates the point at which the problems of behavioral science differ most significantly from those of the mainstream scientific tradition. If this analysis is correct, then marketing academics and practitioners find themselves confronting the fascinating question of the extent to which science's classic method of inquiry is appropriate to the study of human affairs or may need to be modified. The issue is not unique to marketing, of course. It appears frequently in the psychological literature (e.g., Bickman 1981, Petrinovich 1979) where one summary of recurring themes is as follows:

"There has been concern expressed recently regarding the ability of the science of psychology to deal with significant behavioral issues at an adequate level of complexity. This concern has taken the form of questioning the adequacy of traditional experimental research procedures for yielding generalizations beyond the particular experimental paradigm . . . , of arguing for the inclusion of ecological variables in the behavioral equation . . . , and of doubting that traditional behavioral science can deal with meaningful problems without losing the essence of human existence . . ." (Petrinovich 1979, p. 373).

The tension that has existed between academics and practitioners in marketing may be a manifestation of an underlying paradigm clash -- between the formal and explicit paradigm of experimental method in a laboratory setting in which many marketing academics are trained and marketing's implicit paradigm of action in the real world of human behavior. Under the circumstances, marketers may need help from metatheory in at least two respects: Firstly, in exploring ways to achieve the goals of scientific inquiry, such as order and publicly shared knowledge, in a context that explicitly acknowledges the special problems of behavioral science. Secondly, in effecting translation between marketing's two communities of academics and practitioners, each of whom may be operating within different paradigms or, minimally, approaching the subject with different tacit understandings. One uses the term, paradigm, with caution. In the postscript to the second edition, Kuhn (1970) notes that a commentator found twenty-two different ways in which he had used "paradigm" in the first edition. He discusses two "very different usages" (p. 182) which he proposes to call, respectively, disciplinary matrix, and shared exemplar. By whatever name, one of the values of Kuhn's work has been his emphasis on the importance of tacit or implicit understanding in affecting our way of seeing as scientists no less than as lay people. It seems to me that tacit understanding may be acquired implicitly or explicitly -- implicitly as the result of exposure to shared exemplars in the course of one's studies in a particular discipline, in which case, neither student nor, presumably, teacher is aware of the tacitly

training and then professional work, ways of seeing that were originally explicit and were the object of deliberate study become implicit. Whether acquired implicitly or explicitly, tacit understanding may be a prime reason for communicative failure with persons outside one's own discipline, perhaps more remedially so, when explicitly acquired. The practitioner's "exemplars" are the on-the-job tasks and problems of marketing practice and, particularly relevant in the present instance, the numerous marketing and media research projects planned and discussed. More than the data that these projects generate, it is important that the academic have access to the nature of the marketing decisions that give rise to the research. To the extent that the practitioner's exemplars are not available to the marketing scholar, academics and practitioners do not share the same discipline of marketing. Planned attention to translation across the divide is needed at least until the practitioner's perspective is incorporated into the literature of marketing where it can become the substance of the training exemplars of future generations of marketing scholars.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹The question of the irresponsible pursuit of knowledge has been raised in recent discussions regarding recombinant DNA.
- ²The usages to which I refer are so widespread in the marketing literature that it would be impossible to cite them all. Accordingly, in my discussion of market segmentation, positioning, and product versus brand, I do not cite sources. Specific references are in my files.
- ³Confusion between the activities of defining and segmenting markets is not restricted to textbooks. Consider the following sentence which opens a journal article: Market segmentation has been accepted as a strategic marketing tool to define markets and thereby allocate resources" (1976, p. 67).
- ⁴In comparison with this country, some marketing writing published in Britain is more rigorous and sharply focused by virtue of closer observance of the product/brand distinction.
- ⁵Hanna (1980) has addressed needs specifically for a marketing application without, however, confronting the basic question whether a person construct such as "need" is appropriate for the marketer's task (Pennell 1975, 1978, 1980b, 1981b).
- ⁶I owe these two points to a reviewer's comments.

⁷I use the "hierarchy of effects" model in preference to the comprehensive consumer behavior models (e.g., Engel et al., 1968, Howard and Sheth 1969) for many reasons but principally because it is earlier and is known and used pervasively in marketing practice. My model of consumer brand choice differs in a number of respects from other models of consumer behavior including: its treatment of motivation, its inclusion of a vertical dimension representing heterogeneous demand, and its explicitly situational focus.

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