



Legends in Marketing

SHELBY D. HUNT

Series Editor
Jagdish N. Sheth

8

Volume Editor
Robert M. Morgan





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RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

Volume Editor

Robert M. Morgan, Ph.D.

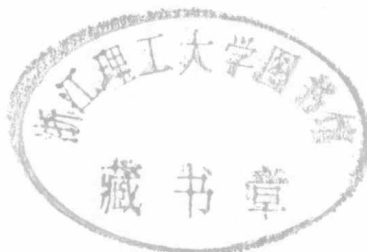
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SHELBY D. HUNT

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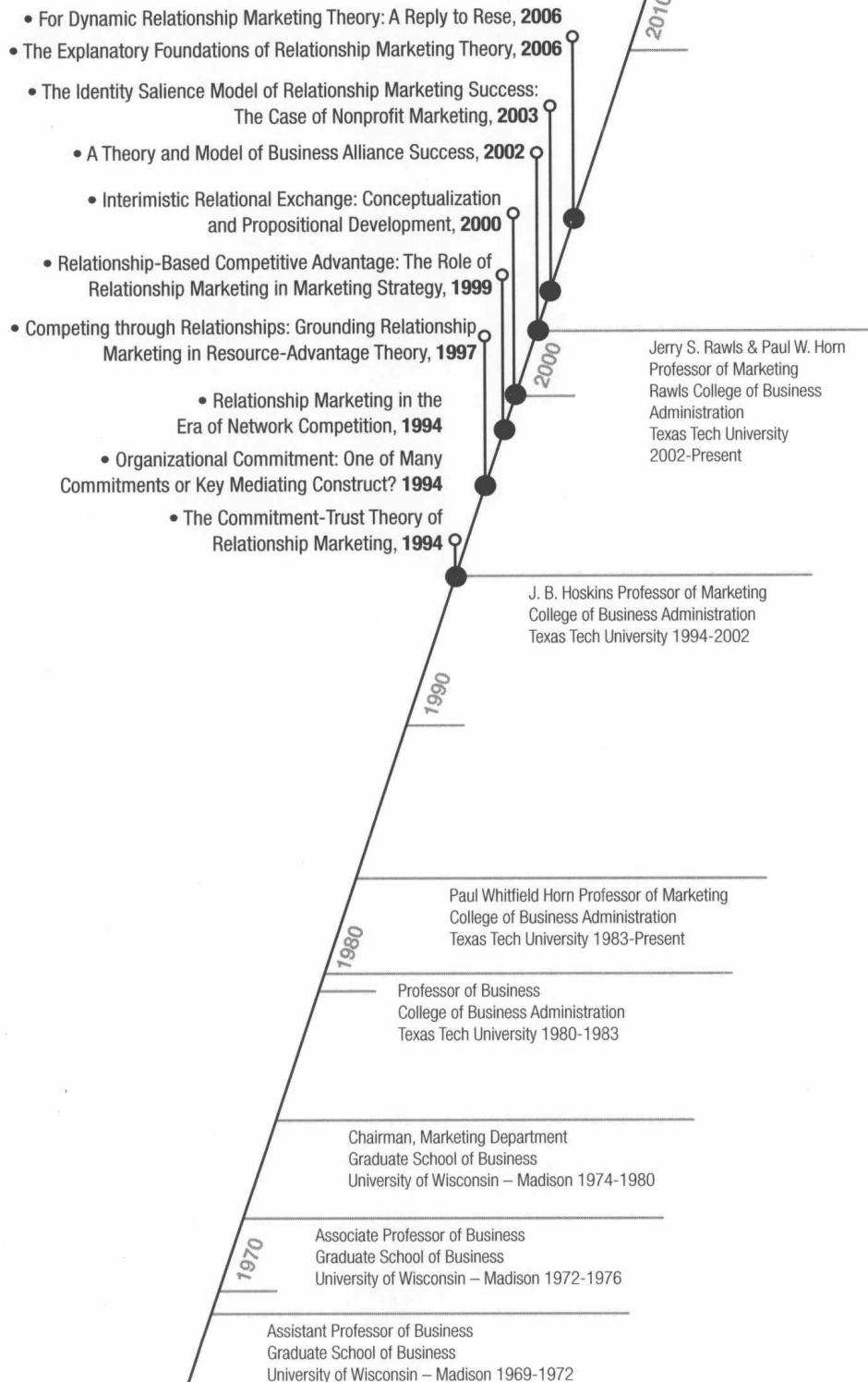
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SHELBY D. HUNT

Shelby D. Hunt is the Jerry S. Rawls and P.W. Horn Professor of Marketing at the Rawls College of Business, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, USA. A past editor of the *Journal of Marketing* (1985–87), he is the author of numerous books, including *Foundations of Marketing Theory: Toward a General Theory of Marketing* (2002), *Controversy in Marketing Theory: For Reason, Realism, Truth, and Objectivity* (2003), and *A General Theory of Competition: Resources, Competences, Productivity, Economic Growth* (SAGE Publications, 2000). One of the 250 most frequently cited researchers in economics and business (Thomson-ISI), he has written numerous articles on competitive theory, strategy, macromarketing, ethics, relationship marketing, channels of distribution, philosophy of science, and marketing theory. Three of his *Journal of Marketing* articles won the Harold H. Maynard Award for the “best article on marketing theory.” His 1994 *Journal of Marketing* article “Commitment and Trust,” with Robert M. Morgan, was the most highly cited article in economics and business in the 1993–2003 decade (Thomson-ISI). For his contributions to theory and science in marketing, he has received multiple other distinguished awards.

VOLUME 8 ARTICLE TIMELINE



Legends in Marketing

As a post doc Research Fellow at Columbia University while writing the book *The Theory of Buyer Behavior* (Wiley, 1969) with my mentor and professor, John A. Howard, I had spent two full years in the stacks of Columbia University Library, reading in awe, classic books in psychology, philosophy, economics, sociology, and anthropology. I was always fascinated with history since my undergraduate days and especially with the biographies of philosophers, scholars and advisors to kings and monarchs. I was curious about how they developed their thoughts; what made them challenge existing wisdom; and the context or circumstances which made them propose alternative perspectives or explanations.

What impressed me the most through this experience was the realization that knowledge is recursive: what we discover today was also discovered yesterday but forgotten just like the ancient civilizations in Machu Picchu, Egypt, India, and China. The old monuments and ruins were overrun by vegetation and buried in forests or swallowed by floods, only to be rediscovered by archeologists and anthropologists. Just as we are in awe of ancient civilizations and marvel at how advanced our ancestors were in organizing civic societies and synthesizing extant knowledge in either scriptures or in mythologies, I am always in awe of insightful concepts, discoveries, experiments and synthesis of knowledge by well respected scholars. Furthermore, often their best writings are not just in top tier journals but also in symposia, monographs and chapters in specialized books. Often their books become textbooks for graduate students because of their unique perspectives or research findings. In fact, most of the best known scholars are more remembered by their books and not for their papers.

The breadth and depth of knowledge I gained in those two years at Columbia University was simply invaluable in writing *The Theory of Buyer Behavior*. This was also the case in my other academic books including *Marketing Theory: Evolution and Evaluation* (Wiley, 1988) and *Consumption Values and Market Choices* (Southwestern, 1991).

I followed that tradition in my doctoral seminars at the University of Illinois in Consumer Behavior, Marketing Theory and Multivariate Methods, by assigning and encouraging doctoral students to read classic writings, many of them out of print and

therefore not easily accessible, unlike today. Similarly, I continue to encourage doctoral students to read and review old literature to gain perspectives for their doctoral dissertations and research papers.

The genesis of *Legends in Marketing* comes from these experiences as a doctoral student, post-doc Fellow and doctoral seminar leader. There are world class thinkers and researchers in marketing, who, over their four to five decades of scholarship, have generated knowledge which is both deep and broad. However, it is scattered in different publications, some of them out of print and not digitized. What if we could assemble and organize this knowledge into volumes and make them available both in print and online? Hence, this series called *Legends in Marketing*.

The mission of *Legends in Marketing* is to:

1. Compile and organize decades of published academic research of a world renowned marketing scholar into six to ten volumes.
2. Ensure that his or her legacy is widely disseminated to the next generation of marketing scholars especially from emerging markets such as Africa, China, and India as well as from the transition economies of ex-Soviet Union including Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia.
3. Preserve this knowledge as a Legacy in marketing.

Each Legend selected compiles and organizes his or her published works from academic journals, conference proceedings, chapters of books and any other source of publication. While this is not a census of all the Legend's writings, it includes a vast majority of his or her lifelong contributions over several decades which can be organized into six to ten volumes.

For each volume, the Legend selects a Volume Editor (VE) who is familiar with the Legend's publications in that specific area. The VE in collaboration with the Legend organizes the selected publications into a Table of Contents with thematic sections of the Volume. The VE also writes an Introduction to the Volume which traces the origins of the focal area, how the Legend has impacted that area and how the field is likely to evolve in the future.

The VE also invites three contributors who comment on how the Legend's work has impacted the field and them personally. Finally, the VE interviews the Legend to get his or her latest views and reflections on the published works.

I went through this process for my own writings with the extraordinary assistance from Balaji C. Krishnan, who agreed to be the Set Editor, resulting in eight volumes which SAGE (India) published in early 2010.

The first set of nine Legends who have agreed to be featured are:

Shelby D. Hunt
Richard Bagozzi
Paul Green

Kent B. Monroe
Philip Kotler
V. Kumar

Naresh Malhotra
Yoram Wind
Gerald Zaltman

Both SAGE (India) and I are very pleased with the strong interest and enthusiasm about the Legends in Marketing Series from faculty, doctoral students, and academic libraries, especially from emerging markets. I am especially pleased that each Legend is also passionate about this project. Our plan is to continue the Series each year by adding five to six additional Legends in Marketing. This is a very gratifying labor of love.

Jagdish N. Sheth, Series Editor
Emory University

Legends in Marketing:

Shelby D. Hunt

There are very few marketing scholars who are as versatile, precise, and knowledgeable as Shelby Hunt. In marketing theory, you have to study his writings just as in earlier days, we all, as doctoral students, had to study Robert Bartels and Wroe Alderson. Shelby is what I refer to as a deep generalist. He is incredible in his depth of knowledge in philosophy of science and theory construction. At the same time, he is a generalist who can develop and articulate theories across different marketing domains ranging from the nature and scope of marketing to macromarketing to relationship marketing, and most recently, developing a respected and thoughtful general theory of marketing anchored to relative advantage.

Just like other Legends in Marketing, Shelby Hunt is exceptional in three skills. First, it is about what he has to say. It is insightful and thorough. Second, it is about how he says it. His style makes the subject matter easy to understand, concise, and to the point. Third, he knows how to frame the situation or the context. In fact, in my interview, he told me that it takes him several iterations and sheer hard work to write the first two or three paragraphs of an article. Once this is done to his satisfaction, the rest of the content flows naturally.

Shelby decided to become an academic as early as his freshman year in engineering at Ohio State University. One day there was a knock on his door. A fellow student in the 200-plus-student chemistry class that he didn't even know, asked him to be his tutor. He realized right then and there that he had a knack of explaining difficult material in ways that everyone can understand. This made him realize that he may be a good educator. Since then he has never looked back. When I asked him if he had second thoughts about the academic career spanning over four decades, his answer was a definite NO; he has no regrets. He has won virtually every academic award bestowed by the marketing discipline.

His advice to younger scholars: Be very efficient; don't waste time; and write down what works and what does not work for you. He is really puzzled by today's reduced teaching load in order to increase research productivity. For example, when he started

his academic career at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he taught five different courses with five different preparations in his first three years. It never occurred to him that it was a lot of teaching. According to him, if you have curiosity to learn new things, you don't think of teaching as a burden. In fact, the best way to learn is to teach!

Shelby has no plans to retire unless some unexpected health-related issue interferes. He truly enjoys what he does. He was born into a family that owned a shoe store business and he learned how to sell in his youth. What may be a loss to the family business has been a great gift to the marketing discipline!

I have known Shelby Hunt for more than 40 years. We usually meet at academic conferences throughout the year. Sometimes we are asked to be on the same panel. I admire his writings and have personally benefited from his books and papers.

Jagdish N. Sheth, Series Editor
Emory University

Volume Introduction: Relationship Marketing

Robert M. Morgan

Professor of Marketing and
Head of Department
Management and Marketing
University of Alabama

Welcome to the eighth volume in SAGE's *Legends of Marketing* series honoring the work of Shelby D. Hunt. In this volume, we highlight the work that Shelby has done in the area of relationship marketing. I consider it a great honor to serve as editor of this volume, to have the opportunity to share some memories of conversations that Shelby and I have had about academia, scholarship, teaching and, of course, relationship marketing.

I am often asked to describe what it is like to work with Shelby Hunt. Though most people in our discipline know Shelby as a prolific, successful scholar, a relative few are fortunate enough to have known him as a teacher. In my doctoral program, I was a student in Shelby's Macromarketing and Marketing Theory courses and I often marveled at his approach to teaching. Shelby is an excellent communicator. He has that gift I think all teachers wish for, of being able to explain very complex concepts and ideas in a way that mostly anyone could understand. To say this is a "gift," however, is misleading to you and unfair to Shelby. Whether it was philosophy of science, the competitiveness of nations, or the advantages and disadvantages of franchising, it was always clear that Shelby had spent a good deal of time thinking through how to illustrate a point or clarify the differences between seemingly identical concepts. He puts in the time and effort that his work requires. I once read that John Kenneth Galbraith was asked for his "secret" to writing clearly and persuasively. He reportedly responded something like "I don't know, I guess after the fifteenth or sixteenth revision, it starts to become clear and persuasive." Shelby is such a master of continuous improvement in his own work. Of course, this ability that he has mastered in the classroom he also brings to his writing.

I would also describe Shelby as deliberate. I had the pleasure of working for him as a graduate research assistant, and like many of the other volume editors in this series, had opportunities to talk to him about everything from assigning grades, to structuring a paragraph in a manuscript, to writing an exam, to buying a car, to interviewing for a job. In each case, Shelby has developed ways of doing things, and being deliberate about it, he has given careful thought to what he is trying to achieve and what approach would be the most effective for the decision in question, down to the finest detail. Many of the research and teaching practices that I follow today were derived from methods and lessons I learned from Shelby.

Shelby Hunt's Contributions to Relationship Marketing Literature

This volume contains a 10-article sampling of Shelby's published contributions to the relationship marketing literature. I would like to introduce the papers to you by providing an overview of the articles' combined contribution, but start by first providing some detailed background on the first two papers. My hope is that in sharing the background of these papers and how they came about, younger readers might learn some of the lessons that I was able to learn with Shelby and reflect on their own approach to research.

Commitment-Trust Theory

After working with Shelby as a research assistant, I finished the course work required in the doctoral program and began work on developing a dissertation topic. I wanted to work with Shelby as my dissertation chair, so I learned he had a method for coming up with a suitable dissertation topic. Basically, it involved my putting together, in five pages or less, a description of the marketing problem that I wanted to study, why it was important, and how I might conduct the research. Once I had developed such a whitepaper, I would leave it with Shelby for a few days for him to give it some thought. After he had a chance to review the whitepaper, he would call me in and explain how it was flawed and encourage me to look in another direction. As do most of Shelby's students, we went through several iterations like this until I developed an idea he was willing to investigate with me.

The idea that we settled on involved attempting to better explain the dynamics of interorganizational relationships. Shelby had been a part of the "power movement," the group of scholars who, starting in the late 1960s, had studied the role of power in the relationships that develop among companies interacting in distribution channels. Along with Jack Nevin (Hunt and Nevin, 1974), Adel El Ansary, Lou Stern (El-Ansary and Stern, 1972), and others, Shelby studied several types of distribution channels and the way power was used by the larger members of the channel to get the