



Legends in Marketing

SHELBY D. HUNT

Series Editor
Jagdish N. Sheth

6

Volume Editor
John R. Sparks



Legends in Marketing

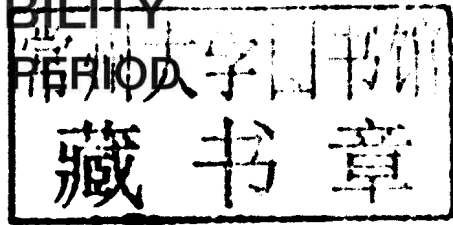
SHELBY D. HUNT

Series Editor

Jagdish N. Sheth, Ph.D.

Volume 6

MACROMARKETING, ETHICS, AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THE RESEARCH TRADITION PERIOD



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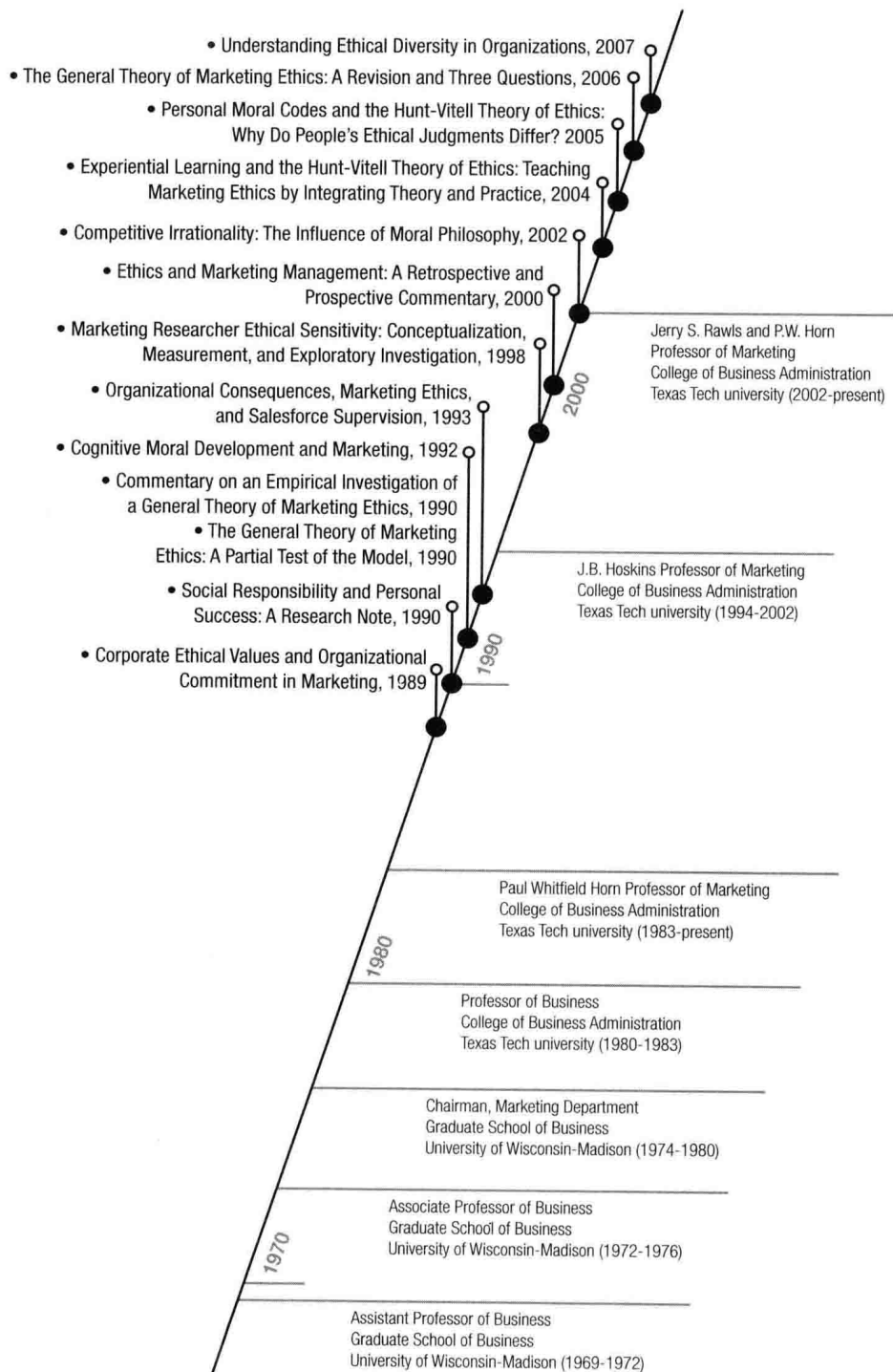
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SHELBY D. HUNT

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 6 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	Kent B. Monroe	Naresh Malhotra
Richard Bagozzi	Philip Kotler	Yoram Wind
Paul Green	V. Kumar	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: On Shelby Hunt, Marketing Ethics, and Research Traditions

John R. Sparks

Associate Professor of Marketing
School of Business Administration
University of Dayton

One windy spring day in 1994, I stared at the wall of my office on the seventh floor of the business building at Texas Tech University. I had just returned from Shelby Hunt's office with his comments on my ideas about sustained competitive advantage, which I hoped would become my dissertation topic. He had politely pointed out several major shortcomings in my thinking and, needless to say, I felt dejected and desperate. Time was quickly running out before job interviews at the American Marketing Association Summer Educators' Conference and I was without a dissertation topic much less a defended proposal.

Later that day, Shelby called to invite me back to his office. As I walked through the door, he pointed to a small pile of photocopied articles on the corner of his desk. "Mr. Sparks, why don't you read these articles. I think you can find a good dissertation in there." On top of the pile was his 1986 article with Scott Vitell, "A General Theory of Marketing Ethics." Until that moment, marketing ethics was a subject I had never even thought about researching.

Shelby was right. I did find a dissertation in those articles. More than that, I found a fascinating area of scholarly research that remains vitally important to the study and practice of marketing. In addition, I gained an appreciation for the degree to which the work of Shelby Hunt has advanced our understanding of ethical decision making and brought rigor, recognition, and respect to an area of research that was too often viewed as a second class citizen to more "mainstream" topics in marketing. This volume and the other in this series devoted to marketing ethics attest to the importance and lasting value of that work.

Research Traditions

The title of this volume refers to the “research tradition” period in Hunt’s writings on macromarketing, ethics, and social responsibility. In a casual context, a research tradition might be thought of simply as a collection of work united by a similar topic. While not necessarily inaccurate, that description lacks specificity and consequently fails to capture the connection, synergy, and scholarly momentum of Hunt’s ethics work. As it pertains to this volume, the term research tradition is not used causally; instead, it conveys very specific meaning to how these collected works should be regarded. According to Hunt (1991), the term research tradition originates with Laudén (1977), who defines it as sets of theoretical assumptions about phenomena and relationships in the world and methodological assumptions about testing them. Specifically, a research tradition contains (1) a general ontology of a domain of knowledge, (2) one or more theories pertaining to that domain, and (3) a broad methodological approach for testing them.

The term research tradition is occasionally used interchangeably with Lakatos’s “research programs” or Kuhn’s “research paradigms.” However, these three concepts differ sufficiently from each other to warrant some brief discussion here. Lakatos (1978) advanced the concept of a “research program,” which he described as a sequence of related theories that competes for acceptance with other research programs. More controversially, Lakatos argued that a research program is necessarily built around a “hard core” set of assumptions that provides an absolute theoretical foundation for the research program and therefore is not subject to testing or refutation (Hunt, 1991). Kuhn’s (1970) “research paradigms” refer to “world views” that contain theoretical matter (i.e., laws, hypotheses, concepts), methodology appropriate for testing the theoretical matter, and an epistemology that provides the criteria for evaluating the paradigm’s claims (Hunt, 1991). The Kuhnian notion of a research paradigm encountered difficulty among philosophers of science when he claimed that true paradigms are “incommensurate” with other paradigms, meaning that they cannot be rationally compared. As such, according to Kuhn, all knowledge is specific or relative to one paradigm and the veracity of its claims cannot be objectively evaluated. In marketing, as with other disciplines, this relativistic view of truth and science has largely been discredited.

Given the weaknesses in the philosophies of Lakatos and Kuhn, it is not surprising that Hunt would favor the term “research tradition” to describe his work in marketing ethics (Hunt, 1997). Unlike a Lakatosian research program, the “hard core” of a research tradition is not immune from testing or refutation. Indeed, the “core relationships” of the Hunt-Vitell Model have been empirically tested many times, scrutiny that Hunt himself has welcomed (Hunt, 1990; Hunt and Vitell, 2006). Moreover, Hunt (1991) thoroughly rejects the notion that any research, much less his own, belongs to a cloistered paradigm that cannot rationally interact with other perspectives. His work in marketing ethics moves easily across disciplinary and methodological

boundaries, drawing from and adding to important discussions on ethical decision making in a variety of contexts.

The body of Hunt's work captures well the spirit of the research tradition, and no more so than the work contained in this volume. While volume five in this series chronicles Hunt's developmental contributions to the marketing ethics research tradition, the work in volume six documents his efforts to strengthen and expand its content. First, Hunt conducts his research within a clearly defined conceptual domain, which helps delineate areas of research appropriate to the broad ontology of the marketing ethics research tradition. Second, some of the articles in this volume report replications, refinements, and extensions of earlier developmental work, which is essential for the research tradition to remain a credible avenue for scientific progress. Third, the data collection, measurement, and analysis described in the empirical works identify research methodologies useful for investigating phenomena in the research tradition. In the sections that follow, I briefly discuss how Hunt's work during this period advances the marketing ethics research tradition in each of these three areas.

Domain of the Research Tradition Period

As noted in the preceding section, research traditions specify domains of inquiry around which scientific investigation in the tradition can progress. These domains of inquiry or "domain ontologies" help organize the research tradition by classifying its content. While philosophers of science frequently disagree as to the details of what constitutes ontology, few disagree as to its basic purpose of organizing and placing boundaries around the contents of areas of study. That is, ontology studies "the kids of things that exist" (Chandrasekaran et al., 1999: 20). For purposes here, I divide the ontological content of Hunt's research tradition period into three basic categories: study setting, entities under study, and phenomena under study. Table 1 shows these categorizations applied to the articles presented in this volume.

The research setting category in Table 1 refers to the context from which data are collected or into which ideas are applied. Thus, research settings collectively specify appropriate social, cultural, and organizational *milieu* for the research tradition. It is worth noting that the settings of Hunt's research do not by themselves specify the ontological boundaries of a marketing ethics research tradition. Instead, the settings chosen by one researcher offer guidance for other researcher's working in that tradition. Hunt's early work in the research tradition period is conducted in organizational settings (e.g., Hunt et al., 1989; Hunt et al., 1990), a focus that broadens later in the period to include business schools and physical and virtual consumer marketplaces (e.g., Arnett and Hunt, 2002; Hunt and Vitell, 2006).

The "Entities Under Study" column in Table 1 shows the units of interest for each of the articles in this volume. Hunt's studies focus primarily on individuals as decision makers, although frequently the decisions in question are made on behalf of