

few postwar periods without a long-run depression. The effects of these policies, however, were not particularly good on the developing nations nor have they had lasting effects on the economy of the United States. This is a result of the failure of American business to keep current and to use political force in the search for international markets.

In recent times, there is less evidence that economic interests provide design for foreign policy. In spite of the tragedies of Vietnam, the confusion over Cuba, and the posturing toward Latin America, these actions more reflect political and security issues than economic. Whatever the flow of future diplomatic policies, there will always be a high degree of interdependence between economic and foreign policy. The issues of cause and effects are not always clear and the prudent judgment will be to fully evaluate the totality of the situation over a reasonable period. As the editors state in the Epilogue: "In short, scholars need to devote greater effort to examining the complex interrelationships among economic aspiration, ideological tenets, and national security imperatives" (p. 464).

This point not only has meaning to students of American foreign policy, but also direct and substantial advice to the marketing scholar intent on attempting to understand the role of marketing in society. Too much of our writings and the conclusions about the importance of marketing are drawn from narrow and inclusive analysis about marketing without regard to its larger environmental setting. We need to recognize and deal with those other institutions that

affect marketing. While it is a substantial task to place upon the marketing scholar, it is the necessary goal if marketing and its effects on society are to be well understood. I am afraid that scholars looking at some of the marketing literature would not come away from it with the broad appreciation of how well we understand our role and how well we understand how we interact with other disciplines and forces related to the study of market behaviors.

Further, the authors provide insights into that difficult process of building arguments that deal with explanation of macro forces. It is not simply the choice of data that reflect the individual theses in the various essays which is important. What is most important is that they have broad theories about behavior of groups and are able to use these in explaining generally established trends. Unlike marketing, the other social science disciplines have strong and substantial competing schools of thought and alternative approaches to explanation. These individuals have been able to clearly provide a model for the role of institutional explanation which could well be brought into marketing. If we in marketing are to mature to the level of other disciplines the rigor of analysis, the care of explanation, and richness of argumentation found in this volume will have to be developed.

I recommend this volume for both the success it has in treating an important topic and because of the agenda it provides to marketing scholars.

Ronald Savitt
Michigan State University

THE MARKETING IMAGINATION

Theodore Levitt

(New York: The Free Press 1983)

First Review by Dr. Thomas Kinnear, University of Michigan

Few books written in marketing in the last few years have generated the amount of controversy as that by Ted Levitt's *The Marketing Imagination*. At the heart of this controversy is Levitt's view of the globalization of market. However, to focus on this issue takes away from the great breadth of insight offered by Levitt in the other eight chapters of this book.

For the most part, the book is pure "Levitt." That is, it builds a basically entertaining and philosophical argument for its point of view. Evidence to support positions is always anecdotal, but is also very persuasive.

The book begins in the first chapter, "Marketing and the Corporate Purpose," by restating Levitt's now much-accepted theme that attention

to the marketplace should drive the corporation, and that within the corporation, marketing is everybody's business.

In Chapter 2, "The Globalization of Markets," Levitt presents the argument that yields the great controversy of this book. He postulates that the power of technology is driving the future of marketing to be globally oriented. Operating multinationally with separate products and marketing programs for separate countries will be replaced by global markets with shared wants and behaviors. Levitt cites such products as steel, cars, motorcycles, cola, banking, and software as examples of markets that have already reached this plateau. Others will follow, argues Levitt, as "The New Republic of Technology" homogenizes the world and allows for world-standardized products with the resultant scale advantages to global producers. This view is asserted with great persuasion but also has evoked much disagreement.¹ The book is worth reading just to be at the heart of this discussion. This reviewer will leave it to you to make your own judgment.

The rest of this book is much less controversial, but no less interesting. In Chapter 3, "The Industrialization of Services" argues that services can now be efficiently carried out on a large scale. Chapter 4, "Differentiation—of Anything," echoes a long standing Levitt theme that differentiation is the essence of competition, and that even commodity products can be meaningfully differentiated. This theme continues in Chapter 5, "Marketing Intangible Products and Product Intangibles." Here Levitt

¹For example see, "The Ad Biz Gloms Onto Global," *Fortune* (November 12, 1984), pp. 77-80; and Dennis Chase, "Global Marketing The New Wave," *Advertising Age* (June 25, 1984), pp. 49-74.

argues that differentiation for competitive advantage comes to those firms that understand the tangible and intangible aspects of their products. Levitt consistently views customers as the true asset of a firm. This theme is advanced in Chapter 6, "Relationship Management," where the process of managing this asset is discussed.

In Chapter 7, "The Marketing Imagination," Levitt weaves a thread that ties all aspects of this book together. He argues that all the other areas discussed in the book require marketing imagination to move forward. It is creativity as "no amount of modern marketing science or heavy analysis" can drive the process alone. Thus, we have vintage Levitt at work here. He sees marketing driving the corporation and creative insight being the critical driving force of marketing.

The book finishes with two chapters that seem to be afterthoughts to the main thrust of the book: "Marketing and Its Discontents," and "Addendum on Management and the Post-industrial Society." They are in themselves very interesting but do not add to the overall theme and thrust of the book.

This is a book that can be thoroughly enjoyed as one reads it, as it is full of the creative insights that mirror the creative genius who fathered it. It is also, however, very limited in a number of ways. It lacks any true empirical support for its positions, doesn't recognize anecdotal evidence that contradicts its point of view, and fails to develop some arguments (especially related to globalization) in enough depth. It will likely be a great success with marketing managers (its target audience), but be considered limited by academics. This latter group should take it for what it is: pure, enjoyable, speculative, creative, Levitt.

Second Review by Alf Walle, University of Akron

During the past decade, interest in macro-marketing has grown profoundly; the models, orientations and "paradigms" which stem from our special interest have proven to be particularly useful for dissecting the impact which marketing exerts upon specific societies as well as how marketing must adjust to local conditions. The emergence of international business

as an area of increased visibility and significance potentially transforms macromarketing from a sleepy, backwater retreat into a thriving and bustling Bastian of scholarly credibility and pragmatic significance.

Little did I expect and much do I regret marketing's potential retreat from rich macro-oriented scholarship to a new hyperbolic era of