SÖYLEŞİ

INTERVIEW WITH DR. CHRIS HACKLEY ON CRITICAL THEORY, SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM AND MARKETING

Interviewer: Zafer YILMAZ*

Chris Hackley, Ph.D. MSc BA BSc PGDip PGCE MBPsS is a Professor of Marketing, School of Business and Management at the Royal Holloway University of London. He established the Marketing Teaching and Research Group as the founding Chair of Marketing at Royal Holloway, in 2004. The group has since grown from three to some twenty full-time, permanent faculty, including five Professors. He served as Chair between 2004-2010 and again 2018-19 during the SBM reorganisation when the group was re-designated as a Department.

He designed and launched the MA Marketing at Royal Holloway in 2009-10 as the inaugural PD, and he now teaches several successful Master's level marketing programmes including an MSc in Digital Marketing. Prior to his appointment at Royal Holloway, Dr.Hackley was Senior Lecturer, Head of the Marketing Group, and Director of the MSc Marketing at Birmingham Business School, The University of Birmingham. Before then, Dr. Chris Hackley held full-time academic posts teaching marketing and management subjects at Aston Business School, Oxford Brookes University, and Derby University. He also taught Psychology as an Associate Lecturer for the Open University for a few years.

Hackley's research, teaching, and supervisory interests include advertising and promotion, critical marketing, and qualitative research methods. His recent books include Rethinking Advertising as Paratextual Communication, published by Edward Elgar in

* Graduate Student, Bandirma Onyedi Eylul University, Department of New Media and Communication, zaferyilmaz@ogr.bandirma.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-0348-8238.

Interview

April 2022: Advertising and Promotion (5th Edition) published by Sage in 2021 (both with Rungpaka Amy Hackley) and Qualitative Research in Marketing and Management (2nd Edition), published by Routledge in 2020. His research publication includes some 200 refereed papers, books, and conference papers.

Chris Hackley's Ph.D. from Strathclyde University (AACSB) drew on a discourse analytic method from qualitative psychology to explore the management of the creative development process in top advertising agencies. His other qualifications include Marketing (MSc), Business Studies (BA), Social Science (BSc), Psychology (PGDip), and PGCE.

Hackley is interested in hearing from potential Ph.D. candidates who wish to critically explore aspects of consumption and marketing communication using interpretive approaches to qualitative data sets. So, we reached out to Dr. Chris Hackley and conducted a comprehensive interview on Critical Theory, Social Constructionism, and Marketing. At the end of the interview, you will find a bibliography of some of the sources that Dr.Hackley refers to and/or that will help to deepen the discussion.

Dr.Hackley, I had the opportunity to read some of your works in which you deal with Marketing in terms of Critical Theory and Social Constructionism. I would like to express that I have benefited immensely from your mind-opening evaluations. There is not yet a well-established academic literature in Türkiye that looks at Marketing from these perspectives. To introduce your arguments to the Turkish academy, I have some *difficult* questions for you.

Firstly, let me say thank you for the interest you have shown in my work Zafer. I have had some professional contact with the vibrant Turkish Marketing academic community over the years (last in person in 2019 when I was privileged to give a keynote to the MMRA at Ege University, Kusadasi) and I am pleased to contribute to your initiative.

What do you think about the proposition "Marketing first of all markets the marketing ideology itself"?

I think there are two dimensions to this question. Firstly, in Andrew Wernick's sense of a pervasive promotional culture, consumer marketing markets itself as a system of values and relationships. We are taught, as it were, to organise our subjectivity as 'consumers', and through our engagement with media (and especially, advertising, in all its forms) we learn the idiom of promotion. Guy Debord's Society of the Spectacle also comes to mind as a metaphor for consumer culture. Apart from the self-evident truth that this pervasive consumer culture can be psychologically unhealthy and ecologically unsustainable, I don't think I have anything to say about it that hasn't been saying better by others. In the UK and Europe, the 'critical marketing' literature deals with the ideology of consumerism and its implications (see Tadajewski et al).

The second dimension, which I think is the sense you mean, concerns marketing as a form of management education that promotes itself as a way, or rather as *the* way, to understand and talk about management, organisations, consumers, and markets. I have argued that marketing as popularised in Philip Kotler's textual style can be seen as an ideological form of communication in a number of respects. I tend to favour Terry Eagleton's work on ideology to point to the way marketing textbooks deploy ideological strategies such as, for example, universalising the benefits and virtues of marketing, normalising the idea of marketing as a system ("We are all customers now") and valorising (and also mythologising) the role of the marketing manager. As a matter of common sense, I think we know that markets do not serve all circumstances, such as public goods, health, security, and so on, markets also generate losers as well as winners, and the marketing manager is often a marginalised figure in many organisations, yet this reality tends to be minimised or silenced in the Kotler genre of marketing text in favour of a proselytising style as if the task of such texts is a political one to promote the benefits of marketing to counter the doubts of cynics. Of course, this is an odd rhetorical positioning today since marketing ideology has more or less swept the globe across both private and public sectors, yet the defensive tone, the idea that doubters need to be resisted or convinced, remains as part of its ideological character.

As marketing academics, we find ourselves locked inside this ideological frame, sometimes having to defend it when students point out that, actually, we don't hold a magic formula for commercial success, and we cannot guarantee that our graduates will be given as much professional respect when they join the workforce as, say, accountants, operations or logistics specialists. In fact, our graduates find themselves locked in the very same ideological frame, with work colleagues who might sometimes question what, exactly, the specialist knowledge and skill set that they bring to the table.

The thing standing between marketing and irrelevance is the idea that marketing is an essential function for all organisations and therefore requires dedicated management roles- although the idea of marketing's essentiality and universality has in fact been produced as taken-for-granted common sense by marketing texts and gurus. Clearly, branding, salesforce management, aftersales, promotion, design, distribution, and pricing are important areas for consumer goods and services organisations, as are, for example, intellectual property, market dominance, technological innovation, supply chain power and logistics, labour availability, investment availability, manufacturing productivity, after-sales and customer service operations, and quality management. The idea that 'marketing' is not only a distinct role and function but a superordinate role and function over all these other functions is the rhetorical achievement of the marketing gurus since the 1960s. This is not to suggest that putting a 'marketing manager' in charge of everything would necessarily be a bad thing- but the fact that the idea is acceptable at all is an ideological achievement.

One of the most striking disconnections created by marketing ideology occurs because the marketing manager is lionised as the hero of the organisation, of the consumer, and of society, in Philip Kotler's influential textbooks, yet when marketing graduates enter workplaces, they find that their role and authority are deeply contested.

So, to return to the question, marketing seems to be an ideological system that poses as a system of knowledge, and its workers and students are recruited as ideologists perpetuating the doctrine. Of course, academics in marketing re-negotiate the terms of our engagement, since our role is to question and to encourage students to question in order to develop their intellectual skills, of which more below.

Another argument from the first question, "marketing markets the marketing industry as a whole". To what extent can marketing be independent of the marketing industry?

I think marketing textbooks, education, and courses are, oddly, quite independent of the marketing industry. Myself and many teachers in the field constantly refer to current case issues in marketing, but we and our students often articulate these cases through the lens of the general marketing concepts (and strategy concepts that have been borrowed by or borrowed from, marketing, Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning, the Marketing Mix, market orientation, AIDA models of advertising communication, environmental audit, portfolio analysis, etc., etc.).In marketing practice, one finds that there is often little or no reference to this conceptual vocabulary- rather, marketing practitioners articulate their experience of their work through their own metaphors to reflect the particularity of marketing as it exists in many different contexts that cannot be captured by the one-size-fits-all marketing concepts. For example, I researched my Ph.D. in London advertising agencies and the absence of the conceptual vocabulary of marketing texts in strategy discussions was striking- this has also been the experience of others (some listed below). So, there is a strange situation occurring in which marketing education and textbooks, and marketing practice, are somehow interdependent yet also disconnected.

A template discourse of marketing, e. g. the argument that "anyone can solve 'any problem' in '7 easy steps "... "Anyone, any problem, and easy solutions...", why does marketing need such populism and solutionism?

It is an interesting question to which I don't have a good answer. I think Philip Kotler, Peter Drucker, and Theodore Levitt found some success with a proselytising style of management guru-ism in the 1960s. They seemed to take the position that the marketing concept was so counter-intuitive that it had to be sold hard and in a rhetorically dramatic way. Perhaps their timing was good and people in the West were looking for a simple way to understand the post-WWII world and the rapid and disorientating growth of consumer culture. Marketing, as a brand of management guru-ism, resolved an ideological dilemma in the West (to use Douglas Holt's notion that he applies to cultural branding)- scarcity was becoming a thing of the past, employment and affluence were

rising, but with this came a lot of things that made people feel uneasy, including extravagant consumption that looked a lot like waste compared to the privations of the war years, and new styles and fashions of living and consuming that looked rather like social unrest to older people.

There was also the unsettling logic of Edward Bernays and his candid admission that he saw manipulating the masses through consumption as the key form of social control of Western democracy. Marketing, at least Kotler's vision of it, came along to reassure the world that actually booming consumption was a good thing that would benefit all, improving market efficiency, making people happier and more fulfilled, and making organisations more effective in the service of consumer wants and needs. The ideological dilemmas raised by post-war affluence could be resolved by the doctrine of marketing. Historian Roland Marchand has written interestingly about how the effects of markets and big corporations were initially met with distrust and dissent in post-war America. It was the ad agencies who were conscripted to sell an ideology of marketing and consumerism to the American public. Marchand's work demonstrates that, even in America, the implications of corporate power, consumerism, and marketing were not initially accepted without question- questions were asked in Congress about the negative impact of rapidly growing corporate brands on the economies and employment of small-town America. Acceptance of these implications was not freely given- it had to be manufactured, through marketing.

You use the concept of marketing ideology. What is your ideology definition? Is a mainstream or critical, ideology-free marketing rhetoric possible?

I touch on this above- I use Terry Eagleton's scheme of ideology, and no, ideology-free marketing is not possible, in my opinion. Indeed, it is part of the achievement of the popular marketing discourse that it constructs a technical, value-neutral discourse of marketing and markets which has become a taken-for-granted vocabulary. In popular writing, 'you' are encouraged to segment 'your' market to position 'your' brand differentially from competitors and satisfy consumer needs and wants, whether the context is health care, sport, energy drinks, or charities. What could possibly be controversial about that? It's just a way of talking about marketing, after all.

But, not only does it elide the many technical controversies about marketing methods that call into doubt the functional effectiveness of such a conceptual scheme (see, for example, Douglas Holt on cultural branding or Byron Sharpe (author of "How Brands Grow") on why positioning, targeting, segmentation and differentiation are redundant concepts), it also marginalises the issue of how such initiatives impact resources, supply chains and quality of life through a gross oversimplification of the marketing process that is, really, a caricature. The caricature of management and marketing produced by marketing ideologists has been an effective device for popularising the genre of popular marketing texts and educational content, but at a cost, since there is a striking lack of verisimilitude in the way marketing is talked about and taught using this vocabulary compared to the complexity and nuance of real business situations. The radical reductionism of conceptual frameworks such as the Four Ps is deeply misleading yet also seductively simple.

In the *Journal of Marketing Management*, my recent paper (Hackley, 2022) deals with how I as a marketing academic have tried to negotiate space for what I see as pedagogic integrity within the ideological frame of marketing, and I see myself occupying a space somewhere between the idealised revolutionary pedagogy of Marxist critique and a more pragmatic approach based on the individual personal development of marketing students. In that commentary paper, I refer to another paper by Gross and Lamaanen (2022) that addresses the same dilemma but comes to a somewhat different conclusion.

As for a definition, I am not fond of definitions, especially as ideology is a complex and variable affair that has many elements. In fact, I think I have written somewhere about how marketing texts use definitions themselves as ideological strategy, delimiting what can and cannot be said about areas of marketing. However, I'll try since you ask. I think ideological communication often has important elements that are implicit rather than explicit and which mask the source, the motivation for, and the value assumptions that underpin the communication. Of course, such a definition places many techniques of contemporary marketing communication squarely in the realm of ideology, such as branded content, other forms of sponsored content, and native advertising. As an aside, I think marketing practice has become increasingly candid about its use of ideological techniques of communication in the last 20 years. It is interesting that such techniques would not be admitted in earlier times because of the risk that marketers would be

criticised for being manipulative, a charge that really stung the industry since Vance Packard's '*Hidden Persuaders*' was published in America in 1957. Today, people seem less exercised by the idea that marketing is manipulative, even fascinated by its techniques of manipulation, although mainstream marketing texts still emphasise the use of explicit marketing and communication on rational consumers.

I use the idea of implicit communication as a tool for my teaching since it asks students to deconstruct communication to examine the assumptions, values, and interests that may be unstated. A key element of conventional marketing logic is the idea that needs and wants are articulated by consumers and served by organisations, and this places marketing activity within the scope of regulation and rationality. In fact, consumers are often less than rational in their (our) choices, and much marketing communication is implicit rather than explicit and therefore difficult or impossible for regulators to regulate. One can take many obvious examples, such as the implicit suggestions of advertisements (such that a soap or car brand will make one more attractive or grant one membership of an elite social group), and then move to other, subtler examples (Judith Williamson's 1980 book on the semiotics of advertising remains a classic study of advertising ideology).

I make the point to my students that when I invoke ideology in my teaching, I am not simply asking them to critique marketing in a one-dimensional way. I don't argue that marketing is necessarily bad per se. I don't advocate that central committees are more effective or morally superior methods of resource allocation than markets. Rather, I am trying to show students important ways in which marketing works that are ignored or obscured by typical marketing textbooks, as a way of helping them to be more critical thinkers and, therefore, if they choose to become marketers, more effective professional marketers.

I teach courses on advertising and branding in which ideological thinking is useful to challenge the naïve assumption expressed in so many basic marketing textbooks that advertisements merely channel (explicit) communication to targeted audiences to inform their rational decision-making. Of course, advertisers are expert ideologists, and they draw on ideologies of gender, social status, identity, and also myth and symbolism to make brands resonate with ill-defined yet somehow compelling meanings. I also refer to

propaganda, which overlaps deeply with ideology (Edward Bernays's book Propaganda makes this clear, and of course, the term Public Relations which Bernays coined is ironically a euphemism for propaganda), but I think propaganda has heavy associations with outright untruths and rather un-subtle forms of political communication which are not necessarily characteristic of marketing communications, so I think ideology is the more useful and flexible term in talking about marketing and advertising.

What do you think could be the source of the marketing industry's confidence that it can solve democracy, public service, and even the fight against bad habits in society? And in what contexts marketing could contribute to the "real solution"?

I think one cannot underestimate Professor Philip Kotler's influence as the source of marketing ideology, through the textual innovation of his original and much-copied textbook (*Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, and Control*, first published in 1967) and the synthesis of the normative marketing management paradigm the book achieved. Kotler's Ph.D., though, was in sociology, and he (genuinely, I think) saw marketing as a discipline and science of exchange that could solve social problems of resource allocation, want, and even solve the externalities (as economists call them) of consumption such as environmental damage, waste, or health issues. By all accounts, Kotler still seems to feel that his work and his discipline are part of the solutions rather than part of the problems.

To critics, the idea that marketing can solve problems that were created by marketing seems preposterous. In the UK, we have gambling and alcohol ads, or cigarette packaging stamped with cautionary notes (on cigarette packs, 'Smoking Kills', or on gambling ads 'When the Fun Stops, Stop' with a web address for addiction treatment, in spite of no evidence for the efficacy of such counter-messaging in the context of massive promotional budgets). Nonetheless, Kotler's vision of marketing as a social good persists, and his development of social marketing, in particular, remains a paradigm for health and safety policy in many countries.

The broader problem with social marketing is that all the solutions are framed within a discourse of free markets and autonomous consumers, and it is this very discourse, this way of thinking about production and consumption, that lies at the heart

of the systemic problems of consumption, according to critics. Alcohol, processed food, and cigarette industry marketing budgets are huge, and it is hard to imagine how relatively tiny resources devoted to persuading people to drink less alcohol, eat healthier food, or stop smoking cigarettes would make much of a dent in the marketing power of these industries unless accompanied by other, especially legal, measures. In Western democracies, industry lobbies are well-resourced and well-organised and usually manage to blunt legal measures before they are implemented. Currently, in the UK, the gambling industry has boomed since restrictions were removed on gambling advertising, and the industry has now become thoroughly normalised as a benign leisure pursuit with a ubiquitous presence around the sport on TV. Around half the football teams in the English Premier League are now sponsored by gambling brands. Inevitably, with the growth in the industry, rates of gambling addiction and consequent suicide have also tragically risen, in spite of (rather tokenistic) efforts to insert disclaimers at the end of gambling ads.

However, anti-marketing or 'de-marketing' initiatives such as advertising bans are not necessarily successful either. For example, for more than a decade there has been a UK TV advertising ban on junk food ads aimed at children. There has been no improvement in UK childhood obesity rates since the ban. Children watch more on the internet than TV these days, and the processed food industry has gained a secure hold over British palates by promoting high-fat, salt, sugar, and processed food over the course of 40 years.

Social marketing is, then, a highly problematic idea, yet it seems that it is all we have since bans and prohibitions on marketing in various sectors do not sit easily within liberal democratic systems and, in any case, don't necessarily work very well or have unpalatable consequences for employment or wealth creation. Solutions must be generated case by case through close attention to social statistics to justify policies, meaningfully enforced and detailed regulatory systems, and a holistic approach that acknowledges that while marketing may have created the problem, it is not so easy to roll back the effects of marketing at a stroke to eliminate the problem.

Is marketing education (formal, e.g. universities) and training (less formal, e.g. certificate programs) dependent on the market or is the market dependent on marketing education and training, which do you think is more decisive?

I think marketing education and training constitutes a global market that has recruited huge numbers of students and driven vast investment and expansion in the university and college sectors around the world since the 1990s. The 1990s is the time when I estimate that the boom in business and management education really started to accelerate beyond the USA. As an example, the MBA degree was created in 1908 at Harvard University, but the MBA qualification did not appear in Europe until 1959 (at Insead) and the august London Business School did not launch its MBA until 1987. By the mid-1990s, MBAs and Business Schools started to appear in almost every university and college in the UK to meet the rising student demand. Universities were, of course, interested in the money from student fees, they were not creating new business and management courses because they suddenly realised that the world needed better managers. Business and Management could generate fees as high as medical or engineering courses but with none of the overhead, and with much lower entry requirements. As educational establishments came under the influence of market ideology, they responded to the new financial pressures by resorting to, market ideology.

The revenue is very attractive. Harvard Business School charges circa US$250,000 fees for its two-year MBA and generates annual revenue of around US$1 billion, a sum greater than the GDP of some countries. Harvard may be financially the cherry at the top of the business studies tree (although not necessarily top of the business school and MBA global rankings) but its extraordinary fees and revenue reflect the financial Leviathan that business and management education has become as the Harvard halo effect transmits its munificence to the estimated 17,000 business schools across the world. Arguably, marketing and strategy have been the most important subjects driving the growth in reach and prestige of business and management education around the world, helped by the success of global selling popular management books such as Peters and Waterman's 'In Search of Excellence' in the 1980s.

I think the marketing education market is somewhat but not entirely driven by the marketing labour market. Of course, since marketing ideology has been broadened to embrace every employee of every organisation (according to Evert Gummesson at least),

then it is difficult to find a job sector for which a marketing qualification would not be ostensibly useful. I have often found well-qualified medical doctors and engineers on MBA courses, and if I ask them 'why on earth are you paying good money to study this nonsense' they tend to defend their choice, explaining that business is fascinating, and it will help them in their career development as managers in their sectors.

Management and business studies are probably the world's most popular undergraduate subject choice (I am currently writing a book on this subject and working through various data sources, but this is a reasonable supposition when one includes combined degrees with business as a component) and within this, marketing and accounting are the most popular subjects. Hence, marketing education is a powerful ideological vehicle promoting the values and assumptions of the managerial marketing paradigm regardless of how many of its graduates actually end up working in marketing professions. The number of students pursuing a marketing education may, of course, reflect the success of marketing ideology and its claims of relevance in almost any employment sector.

I think the content of marketing education is oddly disconnected from marketing practice. Employers typically complain about the quality of graduates they hire whatever the graduate's degree background and marketing graduates often report that the particularity of their professional role renders the generalised solutions proffered in their marketing education redundant. Marketing education seems to be over-reliant on the clichés and generalisations of the Kotler paradigm, and marketing practice doesn't seem to be particularly noticed.

As an aside, in my own ongoing research into advertising agencies, I have found people with marketing qualifications to be a tiny minority compared with graduates in the humanities, social sciences, or maths. I found this interesting since in many ways I see the advertising industry as having a key role in as marketing ideologists, although it might just be a feature of the ad industry norms in London and New York where I have conducted most of my interviews in agencies.

What can a critical and social constructionist view contribute to marketing?

My view that I express in my recent Journal of Marketing Management paper (2022) is that the contribution of critical marketing perspectives is twofold. It benefits students' liberal education, and also their vocational education. Their liberal education is benefited by acquiring the transferable skill of critical thinking (or 'crap detection', as I express it in the above paper). As for vocational skills, well, a marketing professional who is capable of critically evaluating competing claims, evidence, and arguments, and who can generate and argue for original points of view, will be a more capable and effective marketing professional than one who can only cite the standard models in response to every situation whether they are relevant or not. Of course, in this, I am assuming a Western, liberal style of organisation in which the opinions of junior staff are deemed useful, to a point, even if they contradict the view of more senior staff.

I think the social constructionist viewpoint can be a useful component of a critical perspective in the sense that it acts as a counterpoint to the implicit stance of naïve realism that pervades popular marketing textbooks. I have read marketing textbooks that champion the Kotler style and claim that they, like Kotler's texts, 'avoid' theory by talking only about marketing 'reality', as if a text can directly access reality and theory is not real. Such philosophical naiveté is very characteristic of the Kotler textbook style and I think that a mention of Burrell and Morgan's (1979) sociological paradigms is useful for marketing students not only for gaining a critical perspective on standard textbook representations of marketing management but also for the research projects many students have to do as part of their courses and for which their a-theoretical marketing management education does not prepare them.

Regarding your allegorical joke, "marketing can be known only by revelation, not by intellect", do you think there is a relationship between the marketing training industry and post-truth?

I made that comment in the context of marketing textual styles that lack intellectual rigour or evidence and merely emphasise the positive ideology of the marketing concept, as if its efficacy requires no evidence and is, rather, a matter of faith. In this way, the

critical interrogation of marketing principles is positioned as a lack of faith and therefore inadmissible.

This rhetoric reminds me a little of UK politicians who voted in favour of Brexit, leaving the European Union, the single market and the customs union, which of course has been an unmitigated disaster for the UK economy, yet they cannot concede the stupidity of Brexit or risk losing political capital, so they insist that Brexit was right, but the implementation has been wrong, or they simply deny that any negative economic outcomes could possibly be attributable to Brexit. The marketing concept seems to have a similar self-confirming logic and marketing texts sometimes display the same tautologies rhetoric.

I think marketing education in universities is not necessarily a matter of indoctrination because I think most educators see their role as not merely vocational but a matter of educating the whole student (see the recent Journal of Marketing Management special issue on critical marketing pedagogy I mentioned above), hence classroom teaching of popular marketing principles is probably accompanied by a great deal of scepticism, questioning and critique. At least I hope so. I think executive education and professional training in marketing have a more realistic approach than that articulated in typical mainstream textbooks, so I don't think there is a need for denial. Post-experience management students, in any case, arrive in class with plenty of sceptical baggage as their business experience has taught them that solutions are not so simple as they appear in the textbooks. As Giles Marion and others have pointed out, though, absorbing, and assimilating critique is part of marketing's ideological force. The standard marketing concepts remain as objects to be critiqued.

For example, Kotler's standard marketing model, namely the idea that organisations must discern (through market research) the needs and wants of their customers and then align the organisation's resources to satisfy those wants, is evidently flawed when one looks at the countless cases of business successes that conducted no market research and made no attempt to discern a want to satisfy. Rather, consumers don't know what we want until we see it, as evidenced by the Sony Walkman, Model T Ford, Facebook/YouTube/Google, each of which did not follow the standard marketing model but, rather, innovated, and then realised that customers liked the innovation and set about

fully exploiting it. Some students will retort 'no, these examples prove the efficacy of the marketing concept because, self-evidently, these firms are successful because they satisfy consumer wants and needs". So, we have the marketing concept as an inviolable tautology- all counter-evidence is turned into evidence of its relevance.

Could mainstream marketing rhetoric, such as "guru-ism", have paved the way for contemporary populist politics, especially in the West?

This is a big question, answers to which must be highly speculative. My inclination is to answer 'yes' because I've been looking at marketing rhetoric for many years and I see current issues within that frame. But clearly popular marketing texts, education, and ideology are relatively minor elements in the greater scheme of things.

Enteman (I think) wrote in the 1990s about managerialism being the ideology of the age, while Ritson and Elliott have written about advertising being a 'super-ideology'. Marketing itself may not have been the most important source of ideology, but merely a parasite that flourished on a larger body. Technology has of course played a role, social media have been instrumental in the spread of populist politics, and the rise of emotional and judgemental political discourse has been highly facilitated by the design of social media algorithms. The endorphin rush of likes and views was deliberately designed to be addictive, and extreme or aggressive opinions generate more social media traffic than sober analysis. One might say that marketing had a hand in this since the social media platforms had to find ways to make money from their traffic and it turned out that their solution was to become advertising businesses. The fact that this was accepted (eventually) by users and regulators might have owed something to the spread of market logic as a taken-for-granted and inevitable part of every quarter of life.

I would say that marketing rhetoric captured something of the Western Business Zeitgeist of the 1960s when economic growth seemed endlessly possible, managers were the new heroes and organisations would rule the world in the benign cause of making us all happier and more comfortable. Critics describe marketing discourse, or rhetoric, as a prime carrier of the ideology of economic neoliberalism. I'm not sure about that, as ideas of neoliberalism really became talked about a lot twenty years after Kotler crystallised the rhetorical style of marketing management. But I guess that we can say that marketing

rhetoric assumed a number of things also assumed under neoliberalism, such as the rule of law, individual freedom of choice (in consumption, at least), economic growth as the primary driver of human progress, and market-based capitalism as the governing ideology of resource allocation. When the logic of this kind of thinking was extended, for example when shareholder value become the ultimate arbiter of business success regardless of externalities, we started to see major flaws in the thinking resulting in disasters such as the banking crisis of 2008 blame for which was laid at the door of business schools by many commentators since many of the bank managers and financiers responsible for the sub-prime mortgage scandal in America had MBAs from top schools rather than banking or finance qualifications.

So, I think the global success of popular marketing ideas, concepts, and rhetoric occurred partly because the genre fitted well with broader ideological trends, supporting and articulating a particular idea of market capitalism as a benign activity that universally benefits the human race. Perhaps I'm contradicting myself here since minimising or dismissing the influence of marketing rhetoric also points to an important feature of ideological rhetoric, specifically that it becomes pervasive partly because it can be dismissed as inconsequential or trivial, just as many people dismiss advertising or business studies as trivial and not worthy of note. As I noted above, another feature of ideological rhetoric is that it is able to assimilate critique without changing its character, and marketing rhetoric is able to do this precisely because it is so platitudinous and circular. In conclusion, I think marketing rhetoric has been and remains a highly influential carrier of market ideology, but alongside many other cultural trends and technological developments that have brought us to the present parlous state of global affairs.

Dr.Hackley, I would like to thank you very much for this extremely valuable contribution.

Thank you, Zafer. I think the bibliography also will help to contextualise the comments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ardley, B. (2011). Marketing theory and critical phenomenology- exploring the human side of management practice, *Marketing Intelligence and Planning,* 29(7), 628-642. https://doi.org/10.1108/02634501111178668

Bernays, E. L. (1930). *Propaganda,* New York: Horace Liveright

Burrell G. ve Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational*

Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life, London: Ashgate Publishing

Eagleton, T. (1991). *Ideology: An Introduction*, London: Verso Books.

Gross, N. ve Laamanen, M. (2022) 'Hey, you there! Marketing!' On ideology and (mis)interpellation of the marketing educator as subject, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 38(3-4), 309-332, DOI: 10.1080/0267257X.2021.1944896

Gummesson, E. (1991), Marketing- orientation Revisited: The Crucial Role of the Part-time Marketer, *European Journal of Marketing*, 25(2), 60-75. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569110139166

Hackley, C. (2003). 'We Are All Customers Now...' Rhetorical Strategy and Ideological Control in Marketing Management Texts. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(5), 1325-1352. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00382

Hackley, C. (2009). *Marketing: A critical introduction*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446288511

Hackley, C. (2022). Crap detecting. Autoethnographic reflections on critical practice in marketing pedagogy, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Commentary, 12.10.2022 https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2022.2132754

Holt, D. (2004). *How Brands Become Icons: The Principles of Cultural Branding*, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press

Holt, D. ve Cameron, D. (2010). *Cultural Strategy: Using Innovative Ideologies to Build Breakthrough Brands*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Kotler, P. (1967). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Kotler, P. ve Zaltman, G. (1971). Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change. *Journal of Marketing*, 35(3), 3–12. https://doi.org/10.2307/1249783

Levitt, T. (1960). Marketing Myopia, *Harvard Business Review*, 38, 45-56.

Marchand, R. (1985). *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940,* California: University of California Press

Marchand, R. (2001). *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business*, California: University of California Press

Marion, G. (2006). Research Note: Marketing ideology and criticism: Legitimacy and legitimization, *Marketing Theory,* 6(2), 245-262 https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1470593106063985

Skalen, P., Fougère, M. ve Fellesson, M. (2008). *Marketing Discourse- A critical perspective*, London: Routledge.

Svensson, P. (2007). Producing Marketing: Towards a social-phenomenology of marketing work, *Marketing Theory* 7(3) 271-290

Tadajewski, M. ve MacLaran, P. (Ed.) (2009). *Critical Marketing Studies,* (3 volume set), London: SAGE Publications Ltd. https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/critical-marketing-studies/book233060#contents

Wernick, A. (1991). *Promotional Culture: Advertising, Ideology and Symbolic Expression*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd.