

When IMP-Don Quixote Tilts his Lance Against the Kotlerian Windmills:

BtoB marketing deeply changed during the last 25 years,

BtoC marketing too

Bernard Cova

ESCP-EAP

79, Av de la République

75011 Paris (France)

Tel/fax : 04 91 53 06 02

bcova@escp-eap.net

&

Robert Salle

E.M.LYON

23, Av Guy de Collongue

BP 174

69132 Lyon Ecully Cedex (France)

Tel: 04 78 33 77 74

salle@em-lyon.com

Submitted as a competitive paper for the 19th Annual IMP Conference,

Lugano, 4th-6th September 2003

VERSION 30-06-03b

**When IMP-Don Quixote Tilts his Lance Against the Kotlerian Windmills:
*BtoB marketing deeply changed during the last 25 years, BtoC marketing too!***

Bernard Cova & Robert Salle

Abstract

Twenty-five years ago a number of researchers interested in industrial markets were struck by the fact that the prevailing view in BtoC marketing literature was of a world that didn't tally with their own experience. It just wasn't so. As a consequence, since its very first papers, the IMP Group broke with BtoC marketing and its kotlerian pillars such as 4P's and S-O-R models. Twenty-five years after, it appears that in IMP's minds BtoC marketing still relies on these pillars, as emphasized by some of its major thinkers. However, this representation of BtoC marketing tends to be outdated. Indeed, "Kotler is dead" as declared metaphorically by Stephen Brown in his unusual contribution –signed under the pseudo of Alan Smithee– which concluded the 1997 special issue of the *European Journal of Marketing* on Postmodern Marketing. In doing so, Brown wished to highlight that for the group of BtoC marketing researchers who espoused the postmodern philosophy, Kotler's textbook did not represent anymore the dominant theory of marketing but just a moment in the history of the discipline. Following the 'Consumer Behavior Odyssey' initiated by Russell Belk in the late eighties, BtoC marketing researchers progressively have taken their distance with the 'kotlerite' – e.g. Kotler on Marketing Management – to investigate very diverse topics through a bulk of rejuvenated methodologies. The vast majority of their works first appear in consumption-oriented journals such as the *Journal of Consumer Research* or *Consumption, Markets and Culture*. But, their contributions are now integrated in the major marketing and management journals and they affect profoundly the way of representing consumers, markets and marketing strategies including the contents of the more recent textbooks.

Why the IMP community still relies on the old kotlerian stuff? As for any social grouping, the IMP community needs rituals to assert and reassert its existence and the adherence of its members. In fact, the stereotyped vision of BtoC marketing is invoked as a ritual scapegoat in most IMP conference introductory speeches or roundtables. In this way, it serves as an artefact to

accomplish the main IMP ceremony ritual: the annual conference. This stereotyped vision of BtoC marketing is also put into play in the rites of passage of the the IMP community: most of the newcomers ritually quote the differences between BtoB and BtoC as they are emphasized in the 1982's founder book of the IMP Group. If this ritual vision adds consistency to the life of any member of the IMP community, we wonder if it does not lead to scientific fragmentation. A fragmentation which does not help to point out some interesting post-kotlerian BtoC contributions. Thus, this paper is aimed at producing an overview of advanced BtoC marketing contributions and the way they can be helpful for BtoB marketing research. Times have changed. Kotler is dead! And we don't have to continue in tilting our lances against his windmills.

Introduction

Twenty-five years ago a number of researchers interested in industrial markets were struck by the fact that the prevailing view in BtoC marketing literature was of a world that didn't tally with their own experience. It just wasn't so. As a consequence, since its very first papers, the IMP Group broke with BtoC marketing and its kotlerian pillars such as 4P's and S-O-R models. Twenty-five years after, it appears that in IMP's minds BtoC marketing still relies on these pillars, as emphasized by some of its major thinkers (Ford *et al.*, 1998, p. 4): "most textbooks concentrate on the marketing of consumer goods, whether non-durables such as hair care products or durables such as televisions. Their view of marketing is of a manufacturer, in isolation from other companies, that develops a marketing mix of product/service, price, promotion and distribution... The marketing is seen as the active party in this process and its customers are essentially passive. They merely respond by choosing whether or not to buy the products that are offered to them (e.g. the S-O-R model)". However, this representation of BtoC marketing tends to be outdated. Times have changed. Kotler is dead! And IMP researchers don't have to continue in tilting their lances against his windmills. This paper presents some of the advances in BtoC marketing and BtoC marketing research in order to stimulate IMP thinking and to suggest cross-fertilization between the two bodies of literature much in the way Gomez Arias and Bello Acebron (2001) did in their *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing* article¹. Our contribution is focused on two major BtoC marketing recent contributions - consumers experience and consumers representation - whereas Gomez Arias and Bello Acebron's article proposed a global overview of postmodern marketing literature

"Kotler is dead" as declared metaphorically by Stephen Brown in his unusual contribution – signed under the pseudo of Alan Smithee (1997)– which concludes the 1997 special issue of the *European Journal of Marketing* on Postmodern Marketing. In doing so, Brown wishes to highlight that for the group of BtoC marketing researchers who espoused the postmodern philosophy, Kotler's textbook does not represent anymore the dominant theory of marketing but just a moment in the history of the discipline. Following the 'Consumer Behavior Odyssey'

¹ The aim of Gomez Arias and Bello Acebron (2001, p. 7) article was "to fill the existing vacuum in the business-to-business marketing literature and provides a framework for the use of postmodern research methods in industrial markets".

initiated by Russell Belk in the late eighties (Belk *et al.*, 1989), BtoC marketing researchers progressively have taken their distance with the ‘kotlerite’ – e.g. Kotler on Marketing Management – to investigate very diverse topics through a bulk of rejuvenated methodologies. The vast majority of their works first appear in consumption-oriented journals such as the *Journal of Consumer Research* or *Consumption, Markets and Culture*. But, their contributions are now integrated in the main marketing and management journals (see, for example, Brown, 2001 and 2002; Brown, Kozinets and Sherry, forthcoming; Kozinets, 2002) and they affect deeply the way of representing consumers, markets and marketing strategies including the contents of the more recent textbooks (Arnould *et al.*, 2002).

B2C marketing: Kotler is dead! Welcome Pottermarketing!

As Brown states (2002, p. 6), in relation with Harry Potter’s success, “mainstream marketing has become so obsessed with rigor, quantification, and scientific rectitude that it has lost sight of the importance of magic, mystery, and imagination. We need to restore the balance somewhat, and the way to do that is to take a look at the boy wizard who has captivated the hearts and minds of readers the world over – and turned marketing on its head”. Another way to say that, is the one used by Thompson (2000, p.134) to summarise the current consumption as the pleasure of “being immersed in McDisneyfied banalities”. Highlighting “the growing quest on the part of the contemporary consumers for immersion into varied experiences” (Firat, 2001, p. 113), postmodern researchers put to light the fact that the consumer goes to market to produce his/her own identity and therefore “seeks to experience immersion into thematic settings rather than merely to encounter finished products” (Firat *et al.*, 1995, p. 52). Taking up the argument of sociology, marketing now considers experience as a central element of the life of today’s consumer, a consumer who is looking for meaning: “for the postmodern consumer, consumption is not a mere act of devouring, destroying, or using things. It is also not the end of the (central) economic cycle, but an act of production of experiences and selves or self-images... The way to enhance and enchant life is to allow multiple experiences, to be sensed emotionally as well as through reason, utilizing all the aspects of being human... Life is to be produced and created, in effect, *constructed* through the multiple experiences in which the consumer immerses” (Firat and Dholakia, 1998, p. 96). The roots of this so-called experiential consumption (as opposed to

functional consumption, Addis and Holbrook, 2001) which erases the boundaries between production and consumption, must be sought in the growth of services, for which the good that is purchased is an experience –a service encounter- rather than a material object. Its main feature is to grant space to emotions and to re-enchant every day life. This leads to an experiential approach to marketing which recognises the importance of variables that have previously been neglected: “the roles of emotions in behaviour; the fact that consumers are feelers as well as thinkers and doers; the significance of symbolism in consumption; the consumer’s need for fun and pleasure; the roles of consumers, beyond the act of purchase, in product usage as well as brand choice, and so forth” (Addis and Holbrook, 2001, p. 50).

In the experiential perspective, the consumption experience “is no longer limited to some pre-purchase activity (the stimulation of a need, the search for information, assessment, etc.), nor to some post-purchase activity, e.g. the assessment of satisfaction, but includes a series of other activities which influence consumers’ decisions and future actions” (Vézina, 1999, p. 62). Consumption experience is thus spread over a period of time which, according to Arnould *et al.* (2002), can be divided into four major stages:

- The *pre-consumption experience*, which involves searching for, planning, day-dreaming about, foreseeing or imagining the experience;
- The *purchase experience* which derives from choice, payment, packaging, the encounter with the service and the environment;
- The *core consumption experience* including the sensation, the satiety, the satisfaction/dissatisfaction, the irritation/flow, the transformation;
- The *remembered consumption experience* and the *nostalgia experience* activates photographs to re-live a past experience, which is based on accounts of stories and on arguments with friends about the past, and which moves towards the classification of memories.

Thus, for marketing, a consumption experience can be memorable if not extraordinary, allowing the consumer to exploit all his/her senses (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999). This experience can produce emotions (in marketing, emotional experience or emotion is often cited as the heart of the consumption experience) and also transformations in individuals. “Some industry experts argue that economic value now turns on more than a high-quality product or

good service delivery: it turns on engaging customers in a memorable way – offering them an experience, or even better, transforming them by guiding them through experiences. These experts argue that economic value increases as offerings move from commodities to transformations... When offering experiences marketers are concerned with staging the experience – making it memorable and personal” (Arnould *et al.*, 2002, p. 423). As a consequence, marketing is not just the sober-sided discipline advocated by Kotler and other CRM’s defenders (Brown, 2001); marketing is more about experiencing glitz, glamour and fun. And consumption is as much hedonic as utilitarian (Addis and Holbrook, 2001), as much sacred as profane (Belk *et al.*, 1989).

As demonstrated by Stephen Brown, “mainstream marketing, as a rule, aims to make life simple for the consumer getting the goods to market in a timely and efficient manner, so that they are available where and when they are wanted, at a price people are prepared to pay. ‘Pottermarketing’, by contrast, deliberately eschews the here-it-is, come-and-get-it, there’s-plenty-for-everyone proposition by limiting availability, delaying gratification, heightening expectation, tantalising the consumer, and, not least, intimating that stock-outs are a very real possibility” (Brown, 2002, p. 12). In line with this magic-like marketing which escapes the positivistic trapping of modern marketing in favour of the mysterious and imaginative substance of postmodern marketing, another major trait of non-kotlerian marketing approaches is the focus on the micro-social level of consumption; the one of interaction between people, whether face-to-face or in large gatherings. It is the forgotten level in consumer research (Bagozzi, 2000) which has been mainly devoted to the individual and macro-social levels of analysis; “consequently both group and non-problem solving behaviours have been neglected” (Sherry, 1995, p. 12). At this micro-social level, to consume is, above all, to create social links, to build a societal frame through consumption experiences (Desjeux, 1996). Consequently, it is at this level that have been introduced the concepts of tribes (Cova and Cova, 2002) or communities (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001) of consumption in order to bring into focus blurred or fuzzy micro-groupings of people in today societies. A tribe, in the postmodern sense of the term, is a group of individuals who are not necessarily homogenous (in terms of objective social characteristics), but are inter-linked by the same subjectivity, the same emotions and capable of taking collective action, short-lived but intense. It is therefore more than a simple aggregate, it is a group forged

by the interdependence of its members. Indeed, “fans are devoted, loyal consumers who invest more of themselves in their consumption and, therefore, who expect more from it. Very similar processes may drive consumer involvement, interest, affinities, belief in, and loyalty to particular products or forms of consumption” (Kozinets, 2001, p. 85). Where the notion of tribe achieves a break with kotlerian marketing is in the comparison with the concept of segmentation, which until recently was thought to provide reliable consumer profiles to the marketer: a segment is defined as a group of homogeneous persons -they share the same characteristics- who are not connected to each other; a segment is not capable of collective action, its members are simple consumers.

So, the so-called tribal marketing approach (Cova and Cova, 2002) has virtually rejected such concepts as consumer segments, market niches and life styles, i.e. the very macro-social constructs that underpin kotlerian marketing management. The unit of reference used in tribal marketing is more a micro-social cohort of individuals who share similar experiences and who consume. Then, for a company, it is not just a question of serving a tribe, it is a question of being a member of it. Here, the idea of partnership between the company and the tribe is a crucial dimension of the tribal approach. If we consider the tribe an actor capable of collective action such as are industrial districts or industrial networks, it is possible to incorporate the tribal experience into the company model: customers are co-developers of tribal experiences and tribal competencies that can be mobilised by the company. The recognition that tribes are a source of competencies forces marketers to lower the boundaries of the company (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2000): the tribe is not outside the company, it's part of the company network just as the company is part of the tribe.

B2C marketing research: The representation is in crisis. Welcome poetry!

It is also to be noted that BtoC marketing researchers have intensively investigated and tested very diverse qualitative methodologies to gather data such as market-oriented ethnography, netnography, auto-ethnography or introspection (Arnould *et al.*, 2002; Kozinets, 2002; Sherry, 1995). They did the same at the level of analysis and interpretation of the so-called ‘consumption narratives’ issued from this kind of qualitative data-gathering (Thompson, 1997). In fact, in the

eighties and early nineties, much disciplinary debate in consumer research has centred on the most appropriate way to collect, analyse and report data. However, this debates has focused on the way in which scholars *conduct* data-gathering and analysis rather than on the way in which they *represent* it (Stern, 1998a). Representations was simply taken as a ‘given’ (something just there), not something that has to be studied. On the contrary, starting with the late nineties, BtoC marketing researchers have tried to deal with the so-called ‘crisis of representation’ (Brown, 1999) that has challenged contiguous disciplines over the last decade. The debate has extended to the problematics of writing and reading consumer research (Stern, 1998b). Traditional or conventional research papers seem increasingly insufficient as vessels for representing our understanding of markets.

Starting with the idea that marketing research is inherently representational² (see figure 1), the question that is asked is by some consumer researchers (Brown, 1998 and 1999) is how can we possibly represent marketing phenomena without resorting to representation? The notion that we can somehow capture or portray external reality is called into question by postmodernists. For them, marketing researchers should seek to adopt more expressive modes of expression such as aesthetic ones: “marketing has much to learn from aesthetics in general and the world of literature in particular... Artistic endeavour is somehow capable of articulating the inarticulate, speaking the unspoken, instantiating the incipient, enunciating the embryonic, of rendering the inchoate coherent, of bringing order out of chaos” (Brown, 1998, p. 76). They advocate the use of stories and essays. In fact, “even moderately well-written essays literally leap off the page (*well, okay, leap metaphorically*) and make you feel part of the experience” (Brown, 1998, p. 242). They communicate the inherent excitement - the rapture - of the subject matter. Brown (1998, p. 248) recommends to marketing researchers: “next time you sit down at your desk, remember that third-person, passive-voice, unadorned modes of expression are a custom not a command, a convention not a condition, a choice not a covenant”.

Thus, the debate is not on the most appropriate way for scholars to collect, analyse and report data but on the way in which they represent it. Indeed, to communicate the essence of some of

² “Marketing research exercises comprises a representation (verbal delivery) of a representation (written report) of a representation (data analysis) of a representation (respondents' response) of a” (Brown, 1998, p. 73).

our most meaningful research experiences, the precise, linear language of science may be unsuitable, especially when data-gathering is based on a sort of ethnography (Sherry and Schouten, 2002). Long before consumer researchers, some social scientists have begun to resist the authoritative voices of realist ethnography (Lincoln and Denzin, 1994), experimenting at times with alternative modes of representation in order to achieve a multivocal and reflexive understanding of informant/respondent realities. Something of this resistance is now surfacing in the consumer research literature. The shift from ethnographic realism, with its emphasis on the thick description of social worlds, to a cultural phenomenology that captures what it feels like to be present in those social worlds is now at the heart of the BtoC marketing research (Sherry and Schouten, 2002; Stern, 1998b). The notion of cultural phenomenology is supposed to breach the barriers between writer and reader as it privileges emotionality and strives to present unmediated personal experience. The goal is evocation rather than representation.

Insert Figure 1: Marketing research and the representational steps

The proposals advanced by consumer researchers to answer this problem of representation build on phenomenology:

- Stern (1998b) advocates the careful use of “consumer voices” in marketing research by clarification of narrative conventions (the choice of naming conventions, assigning names or not to consumers in the text), inclusion of silenced ‘others’ and encouragement of experimental modes of narrative expression such as open narratives (presenting the raw material of researcher field notes), dramatic scripts or interactive constructions. Such consumer voices are today largely used in consumption narratives of research texts included in the *Journal of Consumer Research* but their use needs to be improved;
- Sherry and Schouten (2002) illustrate how the writing and close reading of poetry can take researchers directly to the heart of consumption. As all representations are partial, partisan and problematic, they advocate for new distinctive criteria: writing should be evocative, empathic, caring, emotionally honest, etc... Indeed, “poetry language always resist reducing felt meaning or lived experience merely to clinical terms that would distort or transform phenomena” (Sherry and Schouten 2002, p. 220) and poetry is now appearing in mainstream social scientific journals such as the *American Anthropologist*.

IMP and BtoC marketing

IMP: a postmodern tribe in search of extraordinary experiences?

In front of these exciting contributions of BtoC marketing researchers, we wonder why the IMP community still relies on the old kotlerian stuff? In fact, as for any social grouping, the IMP community needs rituals to assert and reassert its existence and the adherence of its members. This is reinforced by the fact that the IMP community is much more like one of these postmodern ephemeral tribes that are constantly in *statu nascendi* rather than *essendi*, brought again and again into being by the repetitive symbolic ritual of the members but persisting no longer than the power of attraction of these rituals (Bauman, 1992). Thus, the stereotyped vision of BtoC marketing is invoked as a ritual scapegoat in most IMP conference introductory speeches or roundtables. In this way, it serves as an artefact to accomplish the main IMP ceremony ritual: the annual conference. This stereotyped vision of BtoC marketing is also put into play in the rites of passage of the IMP community: most of the newcomers ritually quote the differences between BtoB and BtoC as they are emphasized in the 1982's founder book of the IMP Group.

Twenty-five years ago, at the very beginning of the IMP odyssey, the use of the BtoC scapegoat appeared to be necessary to build and cement the community in front of the American Marketing Association and its "local subsidiaries". More than just a mythical scapegoat, at that time, BtoC marketing constituted itself as a real opponent to any divergent stream. Other communities such as services marketing faced the same situation and solved it in a similar way: the setting up of a regular conference that helps to strengthen the community network through the use of consumer goods marketing scapegoat. Twenty-five years after, these marginal communities have grown and have found a place to live in the marketing scientific landscape, e.g. the marketing textbooks. Their contribution is already received and integrated in the marketing knowledge. So, how can we explain the continuity of this ritual? Several explanations can be advanced.

First of all, we can hypothesize that the vast majority of IMP researchers still believe that BtoC marketing is the one described in Kotler's textbooks of the early seventies. This supposes that

IMP researchers are so focused on BtoB exchanges and relationships that they do not find an interest in BtoC matters. Consequently, they limit themselves to the basic principles of marketing. We hardly believe that! We prefer to think that as IMP founders partly³ root their legitimacy in their past struggle against the marketing mainstream, they pass on to young researchers the image of BtoC as the ‘enemy’. This leads these young researchers, involved in the particular IMP school of thought to restrict their view to the BtoB context. This limitation of the scientific horizon by a school of thought reduces researchers’ uncertainty and allows them to focus on a narrower field of research - which is likely to be more efficient in term of written contributions. But, at the same time, it restricts those who would be tempted to invest different areas. This is a major issue for our community: how can IMP progress (Young, 2002) without the rejuvenation brought about by young members? Is this myopia a symptom of a larger problem of the IMP Group which could be in a process of institutionalisation that reduces its ability to evolve? Is this approach either a symptom of a larger problem of the IMP Group which could be in a process of institutionalisation that reduces its ability to evolve or an opportunity to strengthen the huge amount of contribution made by the IMP community?

However, it seems that IMP Group is facing another issue that could be explained by the maintenance of the kotlerian scapegoat and ritual. “Malcolm Cunningham indicated that is his impression that *‘IMP conferences were not as interesting as they used to be... IMP research therefore, must be revolutionary. But like dancing, it should be adventurous, enjoyable, and interactive. An I thought the excitement and fun of research must be fractured and displayed at each of the conferences. This in my view, is tending to recede and is lacking in the world. It’s become a bit dull and predictable. We don’t say WOW when we go to a (IMP) conference’*” (Young, 2002, p. 314). One of the reasons could be that the conference lacks greater and greater consistency, e.g. the scapegoat is no longer credible. IMP members know that the marketing landscape has evolved and that BtoC marketing is no longer an ‘enemy’; on the contrary, some attempts to re-encapsulate the different marketing trends in a meta-theoretical fashion are progressing. IMP must admit that the WOW will hardly come now from its old-fashioned rituals. Today, excitement, fun and adventure in IMP could be the result of sub-tribal research

³ Fortunately, the main drivers of their legitimacy are to be found in their scientific contribution.

programmes that try to re-enchant research through shared emotion among a small number of persons.

IMP extraordinary experiences: some suggestions

The WOW factor comes from an extraordinary experience. If IMP members search for this kind of extraordinary experiences, if they search for something magical and mysterious, IMP research must avoid being sober-sided and predictable; it must reintroduce magic, glamour and fun. Among the multiple tracks that could lead to re-enchantment of IMP research and to turn it more '*adventurous, enjoyable, and interactive*' as requested by Malcolm Cunningham in order to drive us to make '*interesting journeys*' as advocated by Hakan Hakansson (Young, 2002, p. 314), we propose two of them based on what we initially presented in this paper. The aim is not to argue for an integrative approach or a kind of '*Grand Theory*' (Cova, 1999) but rather to build IMP theory with reference to an updated model of BtoC marketing and then to point out what could stimulate our research. In the IMP community, we are used to search in other disciplines and research fields (physics, geography, political economy, sociology...) inspiration for concepts, models and methods, why not do it with BtoC marketing?

If we look at the major concepts and models put forward by BtoC marketing today, we can easily make a parallel with those developed by the IMP Group during the last two decades. Needless to say that we are not referring to the relationship marketing and the shared nightmare of CRM! No! We think to such concepts as experience which can be roughly related to interaction: the consumer in the experience is no longer seen as a passive actor but is cast in the role of a producer of his/her identity through the interaction with products and services (which can be conceived as 'actors' according to the sociology of innovation, Callon, 1989); the purchase is just an episode in the consumer experience with a brand, a product, or a service. We are also referring to the concept of tribe which can be related to the network: consumer experiences are not taking place in a social vacuum, every experience is embedded in a societal context, e.g. a network of persons. This stands for the A-Actor of the ARA model. And when the tribe of consumers plays the role of co-developers of experiences, it stands for the R-Resources of the ARA model. Concerning this inter-individual level of interaction and network, let's remember what Kristian Moller stated in 1993 at the 9th IMP Conference in Bath: "The IMP Group has

produced rather longwinded conceptualizations with relatively weak theoretical connections to available background in the sociology and social psychology of organizations. Although the researchers embrace the idea of voluntarism of the part of managers, they have not incorporated individual intentions into their analysis to any notable degree”.

On the side of methodology, we have the feeling that BtoC marketing researchers went a step further in the development of their thinking through the notion of representation. Where some IMP researchers emphasise the abductive approach to case research without really questioning the way to represent their results, BtoC marketing researchers are investigating alternative ways to represent them: e.g. to develop essays, to tell stories, to write poems in order to represent business relationships. It is in this way, and not through the writing of very rational case studies plus some well-designed network analysis, that we could create and sustain the interest in IMP conferences. The WOW factor could derive from a sort of representation that at the same time makes us feel part of the experience and communicates the inherent excitement of the subject matter (Brown, 1998).

Conclusion

Times have changed. “Kotler is dead”! And we don’t have to continue in tilting our lances against his windmills.

Two simple recommendations could be derived from our paper:

- Give up using an outdated vision of BtoC marketing in our rituals because we have a lot more to share with newcomers in the IMP community!
- Grasp the opportunity of recent methodological developments in BtoC marketing! Perhaps, we could derive some new ideas from them.

We hope that these humble suggestions - which could have been written as a long poem - could allow us to help Malcolm in his search of WOW at IMP conferences.

References

Addis, M. and Holbrook, M. B. (2001). "On the Conceptual Link Between Mass Customisation and Experiential Consumption: An Explosion of Subjectivity", *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, Vol. 1, N° 1, pp. 50-66.

Arnould, E., Price, L. and Zinkhan, G. (2002). *Consumers*. New York, McGraw-Hill.

Bagozzi, R.P. (2000). "On the Concept of Intentional Social Action in Consumer Behavior", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 27, December, pp. 388-396.

Bauman, Z. (1992). "A Sociological Theory of Postmodernity" in Beilharz, P., Robinson, G. and Rundell, J., eds, *Between Totalitarianism and Postmodernity*. Cambridge : MIT Press, pp. 149-162.

Belk, R., Wallendorf, M. and Sherry, J.F. (1989). "The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 16, June, pp. 1-38.

Brown, S. (1998). *Postmodern Marketing 2: Telling Tales*. London: Thompson.

Brown, S. (1999). "Marketing and Literature: The Anxiety of Academic Influence", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 63, January, pp. 1-15.

Brown, S. (2001). "Torment Your Customers (*They'll Love It*)", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 79, N°9, pp. 83-88.

Brown, S. (2002). "Marketing for Muggles: The Harry Potter way to Higher Profits", *Business Horizons*, Vol. 45, N°1, pp. 6-14.

Brown, S., Kozinets, R.V. and Sherry, J.F. (forthcoming). "Still Ahead, A Look Back: Reconnoitering Retromarketing", *Journal of Marketing*.

Callon, M., ed. (1989). *La science et ses réseaux: g n se et circulation des faits scientifiques*. Paris: La d couverte.

Cova, B. (1999). "Industrial Marketing in a Postmodern Era". In Ghauri, P. N., ed., *Advances in International Marketing*, Vol. 9. Stamford: Jai Press, pp. 109-129.

Cova, B. and Cova, V. (2002). "Tribal Marketing: The Tribalisation of Society and its Impact on the Conduct of Marketing", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36, N 5/6, pp. 595-620.

Desjeux, D. (1996). "Scale of Observation: A Micro-Sociological Epistemology of Social Science Practice", *Visual Sociology*, Vol. 11, N  2, pp. 45-55.

Firat, A.F. (2001). "The Meanings and Messages of Las Vegas: The Present of our Future", *M@n@gement*, Vol. 4, N 3, pp. 101-120.

Firat, A.F. and Dholakia, N. (1998). *Consuming People: From Political Economy to Theaters of Consumption*, London, Routledge.

Firat, A.F., Dholakia, N. and Venkatesh, A. (1995). "Marketing in a Postmodern World", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 29, N 1, pp. 40-56.

Ford, D., Gadde, L., Hakansson, H., Lundgren, A., Snehota, I., Turnbull, P. and Wilson, D. (1998). *Managing Business Relationships, IMP Group*. Chichester, John Wiley & Sons.

Gomez Arias, J.T. and Bello Acebron, L. (2001). "Postmodern Approaches to Business-to-Business Marketing and Marketing Research", *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, Vol. 16, N 1, pp. 7-20..

Kozinets, R.V. (2001). "Utopian Enterprise: Articulating the Meanings of *Star Trek*'s Culture of Consumption", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 28, June, pp. 67-88.

Kozinets, R.V. (2002). "The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXXIX, February, pp. 61-72.

Lincoln, Y. and Denzin, N. (1994). "The Fifth Moment". In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2d Ed., Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y., eds, Thousand Oaks, Sage, pp. 575-586.

Möller, K.E.K. (1993). "Interorganizational Marketing Exchange: Metatheoretical Analysis of Current Research Approaches", Proceedings of the 9th IMP Conference, Bath, UK.

Muniz, A. M. and O'Guinn, T.C. (2001). "Brand Community", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 27, March, pp. 412-432.

Pine, B.J. and Gilmore, J. (1999). *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage*, Harvard, HBS Press.

Prahalad, C.K. and Ramaswamy, V. (2000). "Co-opting Customer Competence", *Harvard Business Review*, January-February, pp. 79-87.

Schmitt, B.H. (1999). *Experiential Marketing: How to Get Customers to SENSE, FEEL, THINK, ACT and RELATE to Your Company and Brands*, New York, The Free Press.

Sherry, J.F., ed. (1995). *Contemporary Marketing and Consumer Behavior: An Anthropological Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, Routledge.

Sherry, J.F. and Schouten, J.W. (2002). "A Role for Poetry in Consumer Research", *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 29, September, pp. 218-234.

Smithee, A. (1997). "Kotler is Dead!", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 31, N°3/4, pp. 317-325.

Stern, B.B., ed. (1998). *Representing Consumers*. London, Routledge.

Stern, B.B. (1998a). "The Problematics of Representation". In Stern, B.B., editor, *Representing Consumers* London: Routledge, pp. 1-23.

Stern, B.B. (1998b). "Narratological Analysis of Consumer Voices in Postmodern Research Account". In Stern, B.B., editor, *Representing Consumers* London: Routledge, pp. 55-82.

Thompson C. J. (1997). "Interpreting Consumers: A Hermeneutical Framework for Deriving Marketing Insights from the Texts of Consumers' Consumption Stories". *Journal of Marketing Research*, XXXIV (Nov), pp. 438-455.

Thompson, C.J. (2000). "Postmodern Consumer Goals Made Easy !!!!". In *The Why of Consumption*, eds., Ratneshwar, S., Mick, D.G. et Huffman, C., London, Routledge, pp. 120-139.

Vézina, R. (1999). "Pour comprendre et analyser l'expérience du consommateur ", *Gestion*, Vol. 24, N°2, pp. 59-65.

Young, L. (2002). "Whither IMP. Or, is it, 'Wither' IMP? A Commentary on the Plenary Session for the 18th IMP Conference", *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, Vol. 1, N°3, pp. 309-316.

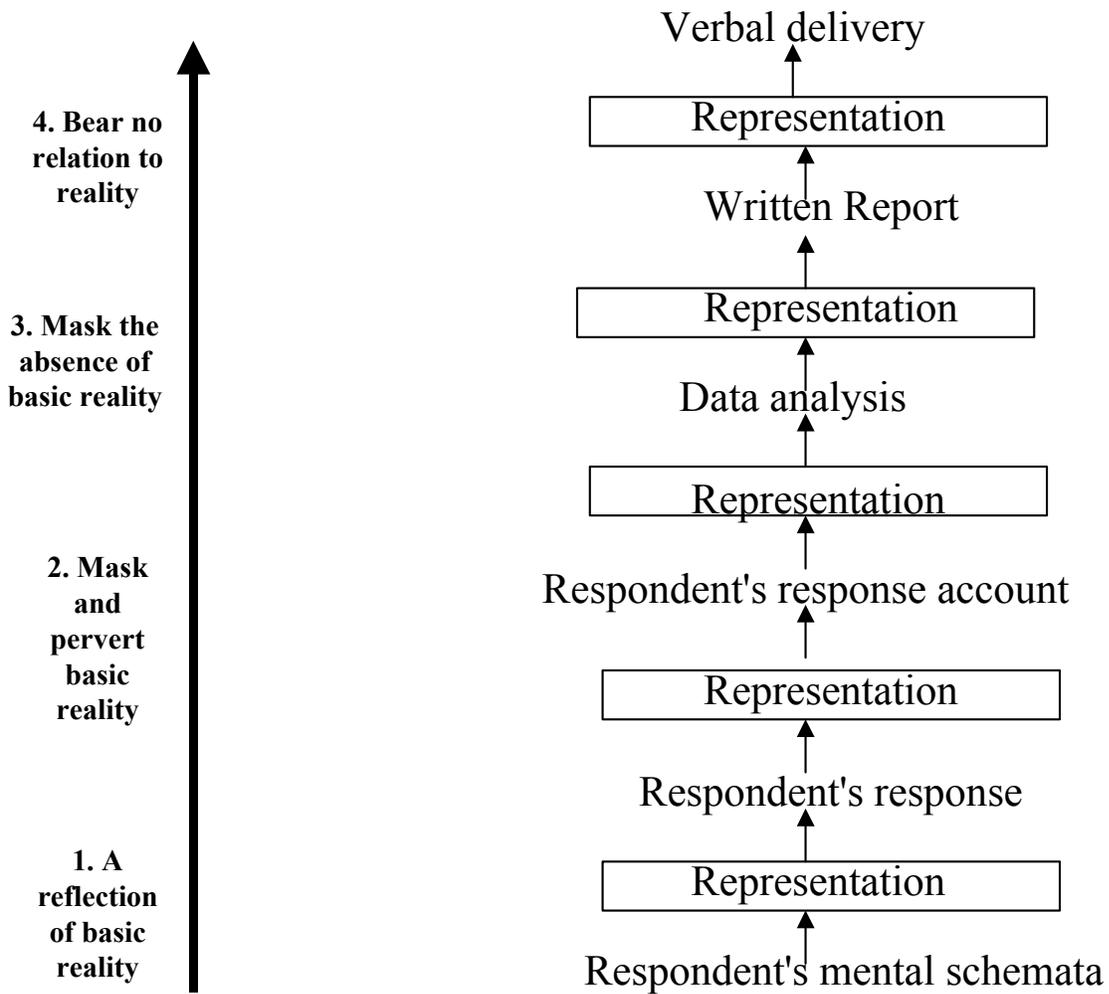


Figure 1: Marketing research and the representational steps

Adapted from Brown 1998, pp. 73-74