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Journal Item

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Social Marketing: Social Change SPECIAL ISSUE EDITORIAL

Social Marketing Transformed: Kotler, Polonsky and Hastings reflect on social marketing in a period of social change

Sally Dibb
Professor of Marketing
Open University Business School
Open University
Milton Keynes MK7 6AA
Email: Sally.Dibb@open.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)1908 652787

Marylyn Carrigan
Professor of Marketing
Faculty of Business, Environment and Society
Coventry University
Priory Street
Coventry
CV1 5FB
Email: marylyn.carrigan@coventry.ac.uk

Since its academic 'birth' in 1971 (Kotler and Zaltman, 1971), social marketing has been transformed. Through forty years of research and practice social marketing has grown from the earliest attempts to improve individual well-being by harnessing marketing principles (Wiebe, 1951-52) to its current status as an innovative approach to social change (Andreasen, 2003). This special issue on Social Marketing: Social Change charts the field's progress, captures its transformation and highlights its legitimacy as an area of study in its own right.

The academic origins of social marketing can be traced to Kotler and Levy (1969) who argued for a broader remit for marketing, one that superseded toothpaste and soap; challenging detractors (Luck, 1969; Bartels, 1976) who believed that this would divert marketing attention away from critical issues. Although social marketing is no longer controversial and has found ''its true nature'' namely, changing behaviour (Andreasen, 2003, p. 296), there is still further to go. While social marketing is increasingly recognised to be an effective way to change people's behaviour, providing a fuller critique and understanding of marketing processes and outcomes, the potential for doing so has been far from fully realised. Growing government and policy maker interest in the potential of behavioural economics and 'nudge' to improve social and individual well-being (Haynes et al., 2012), offers social marketers a significant opportunity to demonstrate the breadth and depth of what the field can offer over and above nudge initiatives.

In recent times, social marketing has been the subject of much scrutiny and critique, with the consequence that this is an exciting time to be a social marketer. French et al's (2012) examination of difficult questions about core social marketing concepts is one of a number of publications which surface the tough political issues surrounding the field. Such dialogue

is to be encouraged as we believe that engaging scholars in critical debate will underpin the development and deepening of social marketing. Our special issue further develops that debate and discussion. We suggest that the time is right to push back against those who have positioned the field as a 'special case' and bring social marketing into the marketing mainstream.

In preparing this special issue, from the outset our aim was to showcase social marketing research to the mainstream marketing readership, many of whom may not yet have engaged with the area. We position social marketing and our special issue not as a 'curiosity' but as evidence of the growing status of the field. A number of clear markers justify this stance. These include, but are not limited to: the launch in 2011 of the Journal of Social Marketing from the Emerald stable; the thriving World Social Marketing Conference; the establishment of several social marketing research centres, including the Institute for Social Marketing at the University of Stirling, ISM-Open at the Open University, and the Bristol Social Marketing Centre at the University of West England; the founding of the National Social Marketing Centre; the emergence of a growing number of university courses and training programmes in social marketing; as well as the fact that social marketing at the time of writing renders 1,310,000,000results on Google; 2,090,000 on Google Scholar. The overwhelming response that we received to the special issue call, with more than 70 submissions from around the world, is a further endorsement of social marketing's legitimacy. This special issue of the European Journal of Marketing is therefore a timely opportunity to present new insights into social marketing and to examine the latest leading-edge theoretical, empirical and methodological progress in the field across consumer and organisational markets.

The current global economic and social market turbulence reinforces that this special issue is timely. Lazer and Kelly (1973) view social marketing as being ''concerned with the application of marketing knowledge, concepts, and techniques to enhance social as well as economic ends [and] … with the analysis of the social consequences of marketing policies, decisions and activities.'' Marketers seek to influence consumer behaviour, yet much ill health and many social problems are caused by human behaviour (Hastings and Saren, 2003). Social marketing puts these two phenomena together but, rather than diverting marketing's attention away from critical issues, social marketers use marketing insights to address social behaviours. As such, social marketing bridges the social and commercial worlds, can bring mutual understanding and can ''broker a way forward'', by "exploiting its twin understanding of the good and the bad that marketing can bring to society'' (Hastings and Saren, 2003, p. 315).

Perhaps three overarching themes best encapsulate the state of academic social marketing to emerge from and run through the special issue:

- Social marketing should rightly be considered as part of the marketing mainstream. Rather than debating whether the field is actually part of marketing, academics need to accept this fact and move forward to handle the challenges that it brings.

- A developing and deepening of social marketing's capacity to change behaviour is taking place, although untapped potential remains. Social marketing is increasingly being applied in new settings and to new behaviours; is likely to involve multiple stakeholders working together across a range of upstream, midstream and

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downstream interventions; and is embracing new technologies and marketing theories.

- The relationship between social marketing and commercial marketing remains challenging and complex. Acknowledging these issues is helping to surface ethical and political challenges which the field and those who work within it need to consider.

These themes are addressed in both the competitive research papers included within the main body and also by three reflective pieces incorporated into this editorial. When gathering material for the piece we could think of no better way to capture the transformation which social marketing has enjoyed, to understand the challenges faced and to consider its future trajectory, than to seek the views of three distinguished world-leading experts from the field. Initially we approached Philip Kotler (*S.C. Johnson & Son Distinguished Professor of International Marketing, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University*), one of marketing's founding fathers and a pioneer of the social marketing field. We then invited Michael Polonsky *(Alfred Deakin Professor and Chair in Marketing, Deakin University)*; and Gerard Hastings (*Professor of Marketing, University of Stirling and Open University*). We feel privileged and honoured to be able to include their fascinating and profound contributions in this editorial and hope that you enjoy their reflections as much as we have.

We begin the reflective pieces with the excellent contribution by Philip Kotler, who provides an informative narrative charting the progress of social marketing over more than forty years. Providing an important moment of reflection on 'the journey so far', his description of origins and stages of development of social marketing is particularly illuminating, as is his discussion of the relationship between social marketing and other forms of social action. The development of the term 'social marketing', Kotler explains, was partly a defensive move to reflect that the marketing field could readily deliver against social as well as commercial aims. Kotler frames his discussion around the following questions: How did social marketing start? What stages did it pass through? What is the relation of social marketing to other forms of social activism?

My Adventures with Social Marketing

Philip Kotler
S.C. Johnson & Son Distinguished Professor of International Marketing
Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

How Did Social Marketing Start?

Before there was social marketing, there was marketing. Marketing theory and practice have played a key role in the success of companies in market-driven economies. It is not enough for a company to develop a product and make it available to the general public. The company has to take a number of key marketing steps. It has to incorporate features of quality and performance that would make the Product attractive to the intended market. The company has to set a Price that the intended buyers can afford. The company has to make the product available in Places that the buyers would find accessible and convenient. And the

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company has to engage in Promotion aimed at the intended market to inform and persuade them. This set of steps constitutes the backbone of commercial marketing and is summarized as the 4Ps.

As a professor of marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, I worked with my marketing colleagues to refine marketing theory and practice so that companies could be more efficient in carrying out their marketing tasks. We believed that the central requirement for success was arriving at an understanding of the decision making mindset of the intended customers. We needed a solid theory of how consumers make their buying decisions. We needed to understand the role of consumer perceptions, motivations, beliefs and values.

In 1965, I had written an early article:

> Philip Kotler, "Behavioral Models for Analyzing Buyers," *Journal of Marketing*, October 1965, Vol.29, Issue 4, pp. 37-45

in which I distinguished four general models of consumer choice making, namely 1. The Marshallian model, stressing the role of economic motivations; 2. the Pavlovian model, stressing social learnng; 3. the Freudian model, stressing psychoanalytic motivations; 4. the Veblenian model, stressing social-psychological factors, and 5. the Hobbesian model, stressing organizational factors. These models represented radically different conceptions of human behavior and carried vastly different interpretations of how to influence consumer decision making.

At the time, most academic marketers were engaged in studies of specific commercial markets such as automobiles, toys, housing, clothing, and sundry other markets. Markets and marketing were booming. Professor Sidney Levy and myself began to ask the following question, "Can marketing philosophies and tools work to sell other things besides commercial products and services?" G. D. Wiebe (1951-52) had raised an interesting question many years earlier: "Why can't you sell Brotherhood like you sell soap?"

We started to think about this. Then in 1969 we published:

> Philip Kotler and Sidney J. Levy, "Broadening the Concept of Marketing," *Journal of Marketing*, January 1969, Vol. 33, Issue 1, pp.10-15. (Winner of the 1969 Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation Award for the best 1969 paper in the *Journal of Marketing*.)

This started the *broadening movement in marketing*. Sidney Levy and I argued that marketing can be applied to marketing places (cities, regions, nations), people (celebrities or creating celebrities) and causes (eat more nutritious food, exercise regularly). Our position was opposed by some influential academic marketers who felt that this broadening would dilute and confuse marketing but when a vote was taken in the academic community, most academic marketers favored the broadening movement.

But still there was no such term as "social marketing." I had earlier used the term "societal marketing" in my 1967 *Marketing Management* book by which I meant socially responsible marketing by companies, now known as CSR (corporate social responsibility).

In 1971, two years after the broadening article, Professor Gerald Zaltman and I at Kellogg published the first article using the term Social Marketing. We put the word "social" in front of marketing to suggest that not all marketing can be criticized. There is a subset of marketing practices that marketers and citizens can approve of that seeks to achieve a social

purpose rather than a monetary gain. We published:

> Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman, "Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change," *Journal of Marketing*, July 1971, Vol. 35, Issue 3, pp. 3-12. (Winner of the 1971 Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation Award for the best 1971 article in the *Journal of Marketing*.)

This article put social marketing on the academic map. We made the point that social marketing involves much more than communication, that social marketers use all 4Ps. The best illustration of its application was the work of PSI (Population Services International) that was founded in 1970 to improve reproductive health using commercial marketing strategies. PSI undertook to evaluate the different contraceptive product offerings for birth control (Products), make sure that the products were available in distribution (Place), selling at an affordable price (Price), and accompanied with sufficient information and promotion (Promotion).

Social marketing received a further push from the publication some years later of one of the first books on Social Marketing:

> Philip Kotler and Eduardo Roberto, *Social Marketing: Strategies for Changing Public Behavior*, The Free Press, 1989.

What Key Stages Has Social Marketing Passed Through?

I see social marketing as passing through four key stages to reach its present level of development.

Stage 1: Focusing on Behavior

The first key stage was to clarify the *objective result* that social marketers should pursue in developing their social marketing plans. This was missing from the original article. The original article defined social marketing as: "Social marketing is the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated *to influence the acceptability of social ideas* and involving considerations of product planning, distribution, pricing, communication, distribution and marketing research." The phrase "to influence the acceptability of social ideas" is not very clear; it could include attitude change, behavior change, emotional change and other meanings.

So the first stage that social marketing had to pass through was to define more clearly the intended result of a social marketing plan. Increasingly, social marketers are centering their attention on behavior, not attitude. An attitude change is not the same as a behavior change. The intention to stop smoking is not the same as stopping smoking. We now argue that social marketing aims to effect behavior, either by eliminating or weakening an undesirable behavior or maintaining or strengthening a desired behavior. The measure of success in the short run is how many desired behaviors were influenced by the campaign. The measure of long run success is how many desired behaviors were maintained for a long time.

Stage 2. Modeling the Planning Process

The second stage was the decision to develop a *process view of social marketing planning.* Nancy R. Lee took the initiative in this stage to propose a preliminary model of the steps in social marketing planning. She invited many prominent social marketers to review, evaluate and improve the steps in the process. She then published the following ten step model of the social marketing planning process:

1. Background, purpose and focus
2. Situation analysis
3. Target market profile
4. Marketing objectives and goals
5. Target market barriers, benefits, and the competition
6. Positioning statement
7. Marketing mix strategies
8. Evaluation plan
9. Budget
10. Implementation plan

Stage 3. Three Levels of Social Marketing

The third stage arose when Professor Alan Andreasen (2005) proposed three levels of social marketing practice: downstream, mid-stream, and upstream social marketing.

Most social marketing research and application has been focused on *downstream strategies* to influence the behavior of the target market, say smokers, drug abusers, poor eaters, non-exercisers, and so on. Professor Andreasen proposed that a second level of attack is to focus on influencing the peers of the target market. The peers include friends, relatives, acquaintances, and role models who might bring a positive influence to bear on an individual or group. Professor Andreasen then added a third level, namely those organizations and institutions that play an important role in supporting an undesirable behavior or that can play some positive role in supporting the desirable behavior. In the case of obesity, the soft drink and fast food industries sell products that promote the undesirable behavior leading to obesity and public health departments and regulatory agencies exist to support desirable behaviors.

Clearly social marketers have neglected mid-stream and upstream social marketing. Upstream social marketing is particularly challenging because it involves approaching a great number of organizations and motivating them to participate in often a "crusade" to accomplish a large positive social purpose. These organizations must be prepared to face strong opponents who have a major financial interest in continuing their support of the undesirable behaviors.

Stage 4. Incorporating the Social Media into Social Marketing

The digital revolution has opened up many new channels of influence and communication. The traditional channels of communication – newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and billboards – remain important especially to reach mass audiences. The new digital channels of communication – including Facebook, Google +, Twitter, Linkedin - now offer paths to reach very specific individuals. Add to this that search media such as Google and Yahoo have made it easy for most people who are interested in behavior change and remedies can look up tons of information on anything that bothers them. A person with poor eating habits leading to continuous weight gains can go to a countless number of sources to find answers, tips, suggestions.

All said, social marketing has evolved through four stages and will certainly evolve further as its academicians and practitioners encounter new problems and solutions. Now it is time to look at how social marketing relates to other forms of social activism.

<u>What is the Relationship Between Social Marketing and Other Forms of Social Action</u>**?**

Social marketing is involved in the broad study of *social change*: its manifestations, causes, and influences. There are many individuals, groups and organizations who try to influence society to move in one direction instead of another. Such groups can be said to be engaged in *social action*. They are seeking to use their knowledge, skills and power to improve living conditions and life on the planet. I will briefly distinguish and comment on five levels of social action.

1. Social persuasion.…aimed at influencing attitudes and beliefs

The most pervasive form of trying to influence social change is when people engage in efforts to persuade others to consider or adopt a different attitude or belief. It can take place in face-to-face engagements or through the use of online or offline media. The ultimate goal might be to change behavior but the immediate goal is to influence people's attitudes and beliefs.

2. Social technology….aimed at passively influencing behavior change

Technology is playing an increasing role in supporting behavior change. Most automobiles will buzz the driver to put on seat belts and some automobiles even have installed automatic seat belts that leave no choice to the driver. Some automobiles can't be started if the driver has alcohol on his or her breath. Some physicians will set up automatic phone calls to remind patients to take their pills. We can expect more technological changes to be harnessed in the future to support behavior change.

3. Social marketing…...aimed at actively influencing behavior change

We would position social marketing as a more formal discipline with explicit processes and tools for bringing about desirable behavioral changes.

4. Social movements....aimed at influencing large scale behavioral changes through collective action

Social movements describe large scale efforts of pressure groups to deal with difficult social problems. The movement might start small but gain adherents and sometimes spread very fast. Among the best known social movements are the labor movement that led to the formation of labor unions, the ecology movement that led to "green" and "climate change" organizations to reduce air and water pollution, and the consumerism movement that led to more regulation on the safety of our food, water, and drugs. There is a growing movement today to liberalize the use of hard drugs and reduce the imprisonment rate and criminal behavior associated with banning addictive drugs. We occasionally witness peace movements and political change movements (such as "Arab springs") in different places and times.

5. Social conditioning...influencing behavior change through social engineering

Different theories and practices have been proposed for bringing up future generations of people who would have the "right" behaviors and attitudes. At one time, the Swedish government mounted a major effort to use their school system to inculcate the students not to smoke, say no to drugs, minimize alcohol consumption, eat more nutritiously, and exercise regular. The key was to use *social learning theory* which involves reinforcing right behaviors with rewards and discouraging wrong behaviors with punishments. B.F. Skinner's approach was called *behaviorism* and offered a methodology to bring people into good habits through the use of conditioned stimulus and response.

Conclusion

My musings hopefully reveal some history about the beginnings of social marketing, four of the major highlights in its evolution through time, and an effort to position where social marketing stands in relation to other disciplines aiming at social action to improve life around the world.

The second contribution comes from Michael Polonsky, who is Alfred Deakin Professor and Chair in Marketing at Deakin University in Australia. Michael is a prolific and leading author in the field of environmental and social marketing, recognized for his collegiate approach to research, and a recipient of many awards, including the *Elsevier Distinguished Marketing Scholar Award 2010* by the Society for Marketing Advances. Polonsky reflects on three questions we pose about the current and changing state of social marketing. The first concerns the way in which social marketing is developing to reflect the changing times in which we live. In posing this question, we are conscious of the transformation that social marketing is undergoing from its traditional focus on health issues. As Fox and Kotler (1980) predicted, today's social marketers are concerned with an ever broadening range of behavior change applications. They are also drawing on a wider variety of 'upstream' and 'mid-stream' interventions in addition to those that were traditional targeted 'downstream' at individuals. Those who have followed social marketing's progress will be familiar with these developments which are readily apparent by comparing and contrasting Andreasen's papers on social marketing from 1994, 1997 and 2002.

Our second question concerns the state of social marketing's relationship with commercial marketing. The somewhat uneasy relationship between these two forms of marketing motivated this question. While some marketers see social and commercial marketing ideas as closely integrated, others are critical of the negative social outcomes that can arise from commercial marketing activities and question whether these differing interests of commercial and non-commercial stakeholders can be bridged (e.g. Andreasen, 2002; Andreasen, 2012; Hastings & Angus, 2011; Hastings & Saren, 2003; Peattie & Peattie, 2003). Polonsky has an interesting take on this issue, in which he argues that the "distinctions between social marketing and commercial marketing are artificially created".

Finally, we ask whether social marketing can claim a distinctive theoretical domain. Social marketers have sometimes struggled to identify the distinctive theoretical contribution of their field with the result that it is often positioned as an adjunct to 'traditional' marketing. Andreasen (2012) argues that social marketers have not adequately responded to Kotler et al's call to broaden and incorporate social marketing within the wider marketing field. Hastings and Saren (2003) propose that social marketing needs to be founded on an understanding of the positive and negative contributions that marketing can bring, while authors such as Lefebvre (2011) encourage social marketers to discover and incorporate concepts and techniques from other disciplines to conceptualise and 'transform' the social marketing model and discipline. Polonsky suggests that social marketing's positioning as a

kind of poor relation is inappropriate, arguing that traditional marketing has something to learn from social marketing applications.

Three Social Marketing Questions

Michael Polonsky
Alfred Deakin Professor and Chair in Marketing
Deakin University

1) How is social marketing changing to reflect the changing times in which we live? Professionalism within the social marketing sector has been clearly recognized as having come of age with the UK's establishment of *The National Social Marketing Centre*. This arose after the realization by policy-makers that social marketing can be applied in diverse contexts, much wider than initially envisioned and moving significantly beyond health promotion, thus warranting governmental support. As the scope of social marketing widens, the definition and practice also expands to facilitate changes in behavior and attitudes that address more broadly the issues of individual and societal wellbeing. For example, some social marketing campaigns are now sponsored by non-profits and are related to commercially focused behavior changes such as reducing software and movie piracy and 'buy local' campaigns.

While the scope of issues being addressed has changed, social marketing has also been in the forefront of seeking to adopt the newest technologies. This willingness to be innovative may be related to the fact that many campaigns and appeals frequently relate to leveraging social influence to bring about changes in behavior, and what better way to do this than through social media? Social marketing is rapidly integrating new approaches such as consumer-driven content. For example, in Australia health prevention organizations/departments have had target audiences design advertisements or campaigns, usually selected though national competitions in the targeted communities (such as competitions for young people to craft drink driving messages targeting youth). Such initiatives are of course also being adopted by consumer goods firms, but to a lesser extent. Resistance to embracing consumer-driven content may partly arise because commercial firms wish to maintain control of their brand and message. Social marketers and their issues are more focused on making a difference and, thus, more accepting of alternative approaches, especially when the alternatives are seen to cut better through the clutter in the commercial and social marketing domains, thereby increasing effectiveness and returns on investment. The fact that social marketers generally have more constrained budgets with very targeted objectives (as compared to commercial marketers), means that social marketing is generally willing to look more favorably at a range of innovations. Another outcome of the constraints in social marketing is more partnering between non-profits as well as between non-profits and for-profits, as a way to gather the additional resources and expertise held outside the non-profit sphere.

Social marketers also understand that issues around social behavior change are more complex than switching brands of toothpaste. Social marketing, therefore, requires the development of an integrated approached addressing both upstream and downstream stakeholders simultaneously. Unfortunately, occasionally when social marketing is undertaken by governmental bodies a fragmented approach can be applied, as each body sees their role as targeting very specific aspects of issues without any oversight of the broader issue. For

example, weight gain and managing the weight-loss industry fall under the domain of health authorities, food regulators and communication regulators, just to name a few. As a result, there is often a lack of integrated coordination amongst social marketers within each responsible body, which prevents a comprehensive coverage of the social marketing in regard to the issue of obesity. In these cases, each department designs social marketing activities targeting only one or two of the relevant stakeholders, and producing programs that are not necessarily complementary. Developing integrated inter-departmental or interagency solutions is a challenge for social marketers of all types, but is especially problematic when dealing with governmental bodies with differing statutory obligations. That issue needs to be addressed more effectively.

2) What is the state of social marketing's relationship with commercial marketing?
The question of how social and commercial marketing relate continues to be debated. One might think of the alternative positions as depicted by the following set of diagrams, with commercial and social marketers both arguing as if they are separate and unrelated domains (Figure 1A). At the other extreme, there are those who would argue that social marketing is a sub-set of the commercial marketing approach (Figure 1b).

1a

1b
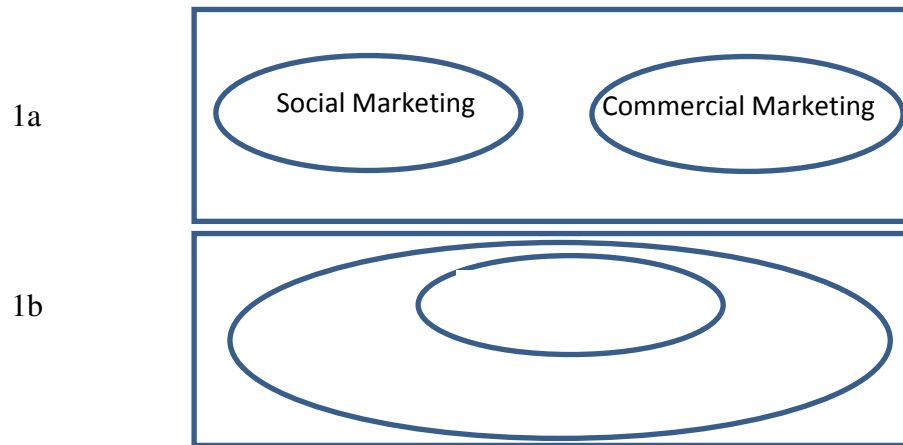
However, I see them more as intersecting approaches and philosophies. However, even when people agree there are linkages, there is still debate about how much they overlap, that is, as in 1c, 1d or somewhere in between?

1c

1d
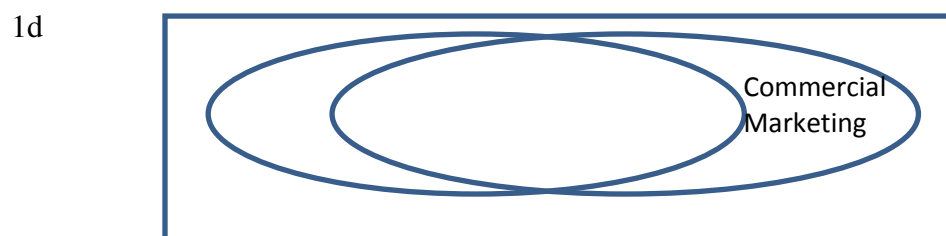
My perspective is that social and commercial marketing are concerned with changing the behavior of a targeted audience, whether it be to buy more of a given brand of soft-drink OR to drive less irresponsibly. In both instances, marketers seek to change behavior, attitudes and intentions in a way that is more beneficial for the individual and society. Thus, in reality commercial and social marketing are the same (Figure 1e), but the distinction is in the emphasis, as applies in almost all marketing situations. Thus, we might think of commercial marketers focusing on the benefits to the self, and social marketers focusing on the benefits to society. However, in reality, both social and commercial marketers are focusing increasingly on both types of benefits.

1e

> Social Marketing
> &
> Commercial Marketing

Commercial marketers are realizing that they have a broader responsibility to consumers and to society more widely. That is, commercial firms are clearly acknowledging that they have to enhance individual wellbeing, as well as utility and want-satisfaction (this approach is often referred to as transformative marketing). The result is that modern marketers are increasingly focusing on how they can improve consumers' quality of life and also address consumers' personal goals/motivations. In this way, commercial marketers are meeting consumers' core functional needs as well as providing augmented, transformative improvements, which have a deeper benefit. Take, for example, bread. There are increasing varieties of bread within one brand, which integrate an impressive range of attributes unrelated to those we might consider traditional for the staple food, "bread", such as added calcium, Vitamin C, Omega 3 and/or folic acid. These added ingredients are promoted as enhancing the value-adding attributes of the core product. If one looks at the marketing of augmented goods, there is a strong link between how social marketing programs are undertaken, that is, they are asking people to modify their behavior and to make more 'responsible' choices with long-term benefits, although the advertising is not often phrased in this way in commercial marketing. One could possibly even argue that the increased interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) within marketing is an attempt to integrate societal values into marketing activities. Firms seek to persuade consumers to select brands not only based on their functional value but also on their wider societal benefits, that is, to make a purchase that meets consumers' needs *and* benefits society.

Social marketers have traditionally drawn on the benefits of changes in behavior accruing to the individual as well as to society, although the distinction is sometimes more subtle. For example, anti-smoking promotions predominantly focus on the benefit to the individual of adopting less unhealthy behavior, but also focus on the personal benefits of behavior change, such as looking less-unattractive and being around (i.e., not succumbing to a terminal illness) as one's children grow up. In many instances the benefits of behavior change relate directly

to the smoker and their family while, in fact, the societal benefits of changes are infrequently discussed. For example, there are few (if any) promotions that emphasise that stopping smoking does, in fact, have national benefits from the reduction in health costs and increased employee productivity and, therefore, it is Anti-National to smoke!

In regard to developments in social marketing, there are new commercial products that clearly split the difference between commercial and social goods. Some of these goods such as fair trade products and hybrid automobiles, promote themselves on both their societal wellbeing and want-satisfying attributes. Other products have arisen designed to benefit the individual and their wellbeing and, on one level, could be classified as commercial social marketing vehicles, for example, water saving devices, solar energy and patches to quit smoking. These products implicitly have societal and individual dimensions, simultaneously. In fact, it may be either the desire to improve oneself or the environment that drives their purchase (i.e., behavior change).

Thus, I think the distinctions between social marketing and commercial marketing are artificially created. It may be that, in reality, the question is one of emphasis, that is, whether the focus is on the individual or society? It may even be that they are not mutually exclusive but, rather, two dimensions that can be emphasized to varying degrees.

3) Can social marketing claim a distinctive theoretical domain?
The overlap of social and commercial marketing (as discussed above) would seem to suggest that few distinctions can be made between the two types of marketing. However, social marketing does have a number of approaches that can be better applied than those developed within commercial marketing. Possibly the most important one is the recognition that social marketing needs to take a network perspective, that is, to focus on upstream and downstream activities, although, as also discussed earlier, a network approach may not always be easily applied. The complexity of antecedent drivers and inhibitors in shaping consumer behavior is not always well understood or considered in consumer or business marketing.

The fact that marketers need to understand and engage with the upstream forces and actors that shape the environment is critical for marketing practice, and, increasingly plays a role in public policy and marketing. In other words, governmental bodies are recognizing that they can shape the antecedents to issues of concern rather than just focus on changing behavior (i.e., engaging in the issues). For example, in Australia attempts have been made to change smoking behavior through changes in pricing (i.e., higher taxes) and even consumption opportunities (for example, some jurisdictions have banned smoking in parks and beaches, not to mention in restaurants and nightclubs). The Australian government has also sought to impede demand by restricting marketing through plain packaging, and prohibiting the display of cigarettes in retail outlets. Taking a multi-pronged approach dealing with consumption, distribution and promotion, they are seeking to better address the behavior as well as the antecedents to the behavior, although even more complex activities are required to eliminate smoking.

Systems-wide approaches have traditionally been used less in consumer marketing, although changes in commercial thinking are occurring. For example, the Service Dominate Logic perspective, takes a co-production approach, which involves multiple actors in creating consumer value. This approach begins to integrate wider network thinking in the conceptualization of value creation, which is something that social marketing has long since developed.

Possibly the biggest academic challenge for social marketing when creating theories that can be applied more widely, is that social marketers have used terminology that is different to similar concepts within commercial marketing, thus precluding its easy adoption in consumer or business marketing. In this way, social marketers have sought to differentiate themselves (as in Figure 1A), rather than see themselves as part of the wider marketing domain. As with all marketing, the focal emphasis in social marketing is on value creation, thus, the artificial distinctions may simply be where the value accrues from the behavior (or behavior change). However, there are complexities associated with the fact that, traditionally, social marketing benefits could not be measured using simple, short-term impacts. It could be said that social marketing often has more extended benefits. For example, stopping smoking improves the individual's health, reduces future medical expenditure (by the individual and the government) and increases business productivity. These are significantly greater benefits than simply saying X people have stopped smoking as the result of campaign Y. It also has greater impact than merely reporting the firm's sales, market share and share value performance!

Gerard Hastings OBE who is Professor of Marketing at the University Stirling and at the Open University has been at the forefront of social marketing endeavor for thirty years. He is the founding Director of the Institute for Social Marketing (ISM) at Stirling and also helped establish the Institute for Social Marketing (ISM-Open) at the Open University. ISM has developed world-leading expertise in health-related areas such as smoking cessation, responsible drinking and health eating amongst others. Hastings' provides a thoughtful and critical reflection on commercial marketing, in which he describes the "uncomfortable truths" that placed marketing "at the centre of [the] economic vandalism" of the global financial crisis. Despite his searching critique, Hastings believes that there is hope for "marketing as if people matter", provided that the needs of people and the planet are returned to the fore.

Marketing as if People Mattered

Gerard Hastings
Professor of Marketing
University of Stirling and the Open University

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose

The challenges facing the world - and therefore social marketing - have not changed in the last decade; they have just become much clearer and massively more pressing. They combine two major threats – corporate power and anthropogenic climate change - and one dauntingly ambitious opportunity: empowered social change. These challenges have fundamental implications for our discipline, how it relates to commercial marketing and its theoretical – indeed philosophical - underpinnings.

Marketing as oxymoron

The global financial crisis, on-going since 2008, has confirmed some uncomfortable truths about the power and influence of big business. These concerns are not new. Think of the

United Fruit Company fomenting war in Guatemala, or the Chicago School aiding and abetting Pinochet's brutal dictatorship (Klein, 2007). Recall also that John Steinbeck (1993) was warning us about the rapacity of the banks back in 1939, and Eisenhower (1961) of the threat from the 'military industrial complex' a generation later.

What is novel is that recent events have brought these anxieties much closer to home for us in the wealthy minority world. What could be glossed over as historical anomalies in faraway places have suddenly become all too clear and present dangers. The injustice of bankers' bonuses and boardroom braggadocio sitting alongside negative equity and brutal austerity is now as obvious to us as was the unfairness of a wealthy corporate exploiting the indigenous people of Latin America to Pablo Neruda (1950). At the very least, the inadequacies of our political economy are more difficult to ignore.

The shock is the greater because consumer capitalism was riding so high at the end of the last millennium, having seen off the competition from communism. The first stirrings came with Enron, but the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and the ensuing revelations of greed, venality and corruption of too-big-to-fail corporations, exposed the ineffable hubris in Fukuyama's notion that 'the ineluctable spread of consumerist Western culture' had brought us to 'the end of history' (Fukayama, 1989). Far from being some kind of ideological denouement, the final peak of human development, a corporate-led consumer culture is rapidly revealing itself to be a dystopian nightmare.

The fact that marketing is at the centre of this economic vandalism makes life particularly uncomfortable for our discipline. It was marketers who sold the subprime mortgages, the easy credit and the slew of superfluous products that were bought with the ensuing debt. This is marketing as oxymoron; marketing as deceit; marketing as nightmare. How can an MNC proclaim its consumer orientation whilst living by the rule of the fiduciary imperative (Bakan, 2004), systematically avoiding tax (Bergin, 2013) and presiding over an unprecedented increase in boardroom pay (Executive Pay Watch, 2011) - none of which are remotely in the consumer's interest? The enrichment of Big Tobacco's shareholders does nothing for newly ensnared generations of smokers; the unbuilt public infrastructure will never be offset by cheap online DVDs or ubiquitous coffee (even when it comes in Starbucks bucket-like Trenta servings [Zimmer, 2011]) and widening inequalities harm everyone – even the rich (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010).

Nonetheless, for most of the world, this is marketing - a perception which for us in social marketing presents a major image problem. If our core offering is perpetually being traduced for all to see, our brand too will be damaged. In particular it will be undermined among fellow professionals – the public health doctor who sees the daily evidence of the harm done by tobacco, alcohol and fast food marketing or the social worker whose austerity budgets have been cut yet again even despite the marketing-abetted widening of inequalities.

Weathering the change

The second massive threat to be thrown into relief since the turn of the millennium is climate change. The burgeoning evidence of irreversible anthropogenic planetary harm is the ultimate game-changer. Our unsustainable lifestyles and business models based on perpetual growth have to be challenged and changed. Whether the cataclysm comes today, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, it will surely come: infinite expansion in a finite world is a logical impossibility.

As with the travails of the financial sector, the role of marketing in perpetuating this profligacy is all around us – the BOGOFs, the ubiquity of outlets, the supermarkets with 40,000 product lines, the promotion in every conceivable channel – all purportedly to ensure

our satisfaction but actually to keep us dutifully shopping. Underpinning it all is the philosopher's stone of marketing: customer service.

A recent staffroom conversation illustrates the hazards at play. A colleague was bemoaning the wonders of Amazon Prime, which reliably delivered her books within 24 hours - bemoaning because she fervently wanted to boycott the company because of its tax avoidance practices. But the service is so good she explained. She had ordered countless books from them and they always came so fast – no other provider, even the university bookshop, could match them. Then the conversation turned to reading the books. Between her job, two small children and the part time degree she was doing, how did she manage to get through them all? And did she read them within 24 hours of their arrival? Our colleague looked uneasy. Then a suggestion was made that if she really objected so strongly to Amazon's financial planning - and other providers couldn't deliver the desired book on time – maybe she should just wait, or even do without it. Our colleague looked genuinely shocked.

The discussion was unpicking the alchemy of customer service which conjures whims into wants then needs and, before we know it, indignant entitlement. In isolation it is disturbing; en masse it is catastrophic.

The UK food market provides a shocking case in point. A third of the national crop of vegetables never makes is out of the field because, though perfectly edible, 'they do not meet exacting marketing standards for their physical characteristics, such as size and appearance'. And up to half of what does get to the shops and thence to our larders is then thrown away because 'commonly used sales promotions frequently encourage customers to purchase excessive quantities'. The total waste across the developed world amounts to some 160 billion tonnes of perfectly good food. These are the words and calculations, not of some political fringe group, but the UK's Institute for Mechanical Engineers. Its report is just the latest chapter in a mass of evidence showing that we are rapidly consuming ourselves to extinction.

Enter David

Social marketing is at risk of being simultaneously undermined and overwhelmed by these forces.

It is being undermined because the very word marketing has become synonymous with sharp practice and deceit. My colleague Alan Tapp is fond of pointing out that at a party nobody every hugs the marketer.

Social marketing is at risk of being overwhelmed because this marketing juggernaut is never going to be counteracted by our well-intentioned initiatives - our budgets, manpower and influence are dwarfed by even a modest MNC. In a world where ASDA is bigger than Sweden, Apple has outgrown Poland and 91 of the largest economies are companies not countries (Bendell, 2011) it is foolhardy to think our litter picks and healthy eating initiatives – brilliant though they often are – will ever match David's sling shot and bring down Goliath.

The solution is twofold: we have to seek distance on the one hand, and reclaim marketing on the other.

Innocence by dissociation

We have to separate ourselves from the unacceptable practices of MNCs recognising that the problems that keep emerging are not occasional aberrations but symptoms of systemic flaws.

Amongst other reality checks this means recognising corporate social responsibility for the cosmetic confection that it is. Eli Black, the CEO of United Fruit was a great advocate of

CSR, as was Kenneth Lay of Enron. Shell's devotion to the same cause has, as consecutive investigations by Christian Aid (2004) and Amnesty International (2011) have shown, gone hand in hand with its despoliation of the Ogoni people's lands for twenty years. And let us not forget Starbucks, Google and a roll call of other blue chip companies which, along with Amazon, have all recently been exposed for non-payment of UK corporation tax. The coffee chain's website insouciantly proclaims (Starbucks, 2013):

> We've always believed that businesses can – and should – have a positive impact on the communities they serve. So ever since we opened our first store in 1971, we've dedicated ourselves to earning the trust and respect of our customers, partners (employees) and neighbours. How? By being responsible and doing things that are good for the planet and each other.

The first duty of any responsible citizen is to pay his or her taxes; the first duty of the corporation is to boost the bottom line. No wonder Christian Aid (2004) felt compelled to conclude that:

> corporate enthusiasm for CSR is not driven primarily by a desire to improve the lot of the communities in which companies work. Rather, companies are concerned with their own reputations, with the potential damage of public campaigns directed against them, and overwhelmingly, with the desire – and the imperative – to secure ever greater profits.

The siren calls back

Still, it might be argued, we don't need to fight Goliath, just get him on our side. And this need not mean becoming naïve CSR handmaidens – adult partnerships are possible and can deliver large scale benefits. The buying power of a major multinational can make a big difference: McDonalds' move to free range eggs improved the lives of a lot of poultry. So we social marketers should be focused on collaboration rather than combat. The insurmountable problem, as both we and Christian Aid have already rehearsed, is that the corporation is not free to collaborate with us in any meaningful sense. It is required by the fiduciary imperative to put the interests of stockholders ahead of all others – the planet, the public or we social marketers. American chickens might have lived in more comfort thanks to progressive management, but two thirds of the US public are still overweight or obese. Leave aside for a minute the physical and psychological dysfunction such blatant over-consumption represents – just think of its utter unsustainability. And then add this marketing driven waste to that already underlined by the mechanical engineers.

We have long ago accepted that working with tobacco companies is unacceptable. The harm they do - killing half their loyalist customers - is too heinous and the chances of them seeing the error of their ways and voluntarily abandoning tobacco too slim. Every-increasing consumption is doing for our planet just what a tobacco company does to our lungs, and the chance of a corporate conversion to shrinkage is equally remote. So in this wider sense we also have to maintain our distance.

In a world where so much power and resource resides in the corporate sector this is an extremely challenging commitment. But then the problems of market greed and the planetary degradation are unprecedented.

A return to classic marketing

Enough of the gloom; marketing also brings us great hope.

It was not invented in business schools nor is it the preserve of the corporation. It predates both by several millennia and is a force for decency and progress. It has its origins on the

African Savannah and it is about doing deals. When the first human being recognised that her chances of survival were enhanced by cooperation – that combining her tracking skills with another's strength and a third person's cooking know-how made things better for all three – so marketing was born. The win-win, the mutually beneficial exchange, the self-sustaining relationship are all marketing ideas that combine to form the glue of social cohesion. You still see it today in independent high street shops, small business and real markets where power structures have not become distorted and genuine need satisfaction is properly modulated by mutual benefit. Marketing in this form – what a beverage multi-national might call 'classic marketing' - is the very stuff of human society. How it migrated from this noble beginning to the depths of the Marlboro Man and the subprime mortgage is a matter for historians; making clear the difference between the two is a matter for us.

People are at the heart of this difference: classic marketing is about respect. Respect for people's needs, both individual and collective, but also our individual and collective responsibilities. This is crucial given the challenges we now face. Corporate marketing has served the interests of a small elite by pretending to lionise the needs of the individual; classic marketing can and must overturn this selfish agenda and balance the satisfaction of genuine individual needs with collective and planetary needs (Stiglitz, 2011).

Respect is a mutual concept: it presupposes responsibility. In classic marketing consumers think not just about satisfying their own needs, but also of the repercussions of doing so. This begs questions which corporate marketers prefer to hide – about the ethics of the supply chains, the politics of 'terminator' seed technology or the sustainability of arctic oil which only global warming has made accessible (McCarthy, 2011). If I insist on getting my new book in 24 hours even though I am unlikely to read it for weeks, I know I will damage smaller operators who simply cannot deliver this level of service. In this sense classic marketing makes life more difficult, but it treats us as adults.

So it should be with social marketing. The truly wicked problems we now face demand more than nudges and off the shelf solutions. They require us all to take responsibility and get engaged in finding intelligent ways forward. I have spent a lot of this paper lambasting the corporate sector, but it is also true to say that they do what they do with our blessing. The waste in UK supermarkets would stop tomorrow if we voted with our pocket books. The core job of social marketing is to encourage this type of critical thinking and empower people to act on it – knowing that, in the short term at least, it may well make life more difficult. Being a citizen has always been more complex than being a consumer; the consolation is that it is also infinitely more rewarding.

The theory of social change

The need to put people and the planet back at the centre of marketing has important theoretical implications. We still have to understand individual behaviour and how this can be changed. So exchange theory and psychological models such as Stages of Change remain pertinent. But it is equally important to look at theory that explains social behaviour. Theories like Social Norms, Social Ecology, Social Epistemology and Social Capital all help us to understand how people can work together to bring about change.

Inevitably this pushes us to think politically, to contemplate 'the complex or aggregate of relationships of men (sic) in society, especially those relationships involving authority or power' (Collins, 1979). The head of the health promotion agency with which I worked in the 1980s was fond of saying 'if you are in public health, you are in politics'; I would echo his words: if you are in social marketing you are in politics. Real progress on climate change will come not from interventions but from activism, and it will be sustained through social

movements - the 'organized effort by a significant number of people to change (or resist change in) some major aspect or aspects of society' (Scott and Marshall, 2009).

<u>Marketing as if people mattered</u>

The word effort is important: this will not be easy. This brings us back to that vital difference between corporate marketing on the one hand, and classic and social marketing on the other; the difference between the consumer and the citizen. Corporate marketing does everything it can to make our lives easier (always assuming we have money of course): the watchword is user friendly. Comforting slogans, celebrity endorsements and reassuring branding add an emotional balm to this 'because you're worth it' spoiling. However, as Richard Sennett points out, 'user friendly makes a hash of democracy. Democracy requires that citizens be willing to make some effort to find out how the world around them works. Few American proponents of the war in Iraq, wanted to learn about Iraq (Scott and Marshall, 2009).

A core function of social marketing is to reverse Sennett's epithet and do all we can to enhance, if not democracy, then public engagement and agency. We need to recognise another key difference with corporate marketing: we don't have ready-made solutions which we can package, distribute and price-promote. The wicked problems we now face demand debate and discussion not pat answers; active co-creation not passive consumption.

A big call you might say, a lot of effort. But, in the words of the Chinese curse, we live in interesting times and the challenges we face are immense; if we don't get this right our children will inherit the whirlwind. It will be immensely difficult, but it is also eminently possible: 'never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has'[1]. If social marketing is about anything it is about people: we know that people are at the heart of our work, that progress builds on mutual understanding, develops with respectful win-wins and is sustained by fulfilling relationships. The core social marketing challenge is not, then, to nudge, seduce or cajole people into behaving in line with our prescriptions; it is to mobilise and empower them to change the world.

The Papers

The seven competitive papers included in this special issue comprise a mix of empirical and conceptual work. Reporting on research from England, Scotland, Australia, Kenya and the Netherlands, they incorporate a variety of qualitative and quantitative research traditions and embrace a range of downstream, midstream and upstream studies. Taken together, they provide an interesting mix of new insights into social marketing's theoretical, empirical and methodological progress across consumer and organisational markets.

The first contribution is from Lindridge, MacGaskill, Ginch, Eadie, and Holme, who are concerned with how to develop effective social marketing communications in the face of growing socio-economic health disparities. Their paper supplements knowledge about the influence of economic, social and environmental influences on this issue, acknowledging the need for integrated solutions involving multiple stakeholders when tackling complex social

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[1] These words are often attributed to the American Anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901-78), but some dispute this claim and no precise citation is available.

marketing problems.   This observation is synergistic with Polonsky's comments about social having 'long since developed' a 'network' or 'multi-pronged' approach to tackling behaviour change, involving a range of upstream and downstream activities. By applying the Social Ecology Model (SEM) Lindridge and colleagues apply the Social Ecology Model (SEM) to better understand how the interrelationship between individuals, the environment and institutions operating within it influence health-related behaviours. They report on Childsmile, a social marketing programme that aims to improve the oral health of children in Scotland. The study combines qualitative interviews and mini-focus groups with healthcare stakeholders and focus groups with parents and carers drawn from lower socio-economic groups in disadvantaged communities.

Newton; Newton, Turk, and Ewing are concerned with a fundamental question which has perhaps been taken for granted: is it appropriate to use commercial marketing tools to tackle social marketing problems? Their paper examines the ethics and fairness of applying audience segmentation in health-related social marketing interventions and grapples with the kinds of tensions between social and commercial marketing which Hastings also explores. Decisions about whether interventions should be targeted on the basis of need or cost-effectiveness arise when segmentation is applied in this manner. Questions about justice and fairness also emerge. The Kenyan study, which gathers data from 1600 respondents who segmented according to educational status, examines support for the use of antiretroviral therapies. The authors apply two ethical frameworks to organise their analysis (the theory of just health care – TJHC and integrative social constructs theory - ISCT).

Schuster, Drennan, and Lings examine consumer acceptance of technology-based self-service (TBSS) in the health setting. They note that the trend previously for service delivery to be handled remotely initially seen in commercial settings is now being considered in health-related settings. Their focus is on whether services which previously might have been delivered face-to-face will be acceptable if offered remotely via technology. Such a trend reflects Polonsky's observations about social marketing needing to embrace innovative approaches and to be 'in the forefront of seeking to adopt the newest technologies'. Schuster and colleagues consider attitudes towards TBSS among young adults suffering from mental health problems, conducting 30 depth interviews with potential adopters of self-help mental health support services offered via a mobile phone.

Reinforcing Polonsky's views about the applicability of social marketing "…in diverse contexts, much wider than initially envisioned and moving significantly beyond health promotion"; Harries, Rettie, Studley, Burchell and Chambers examine the application of social marketing ideas to sustainable energy consumption. Specifically, they question the value of the social norms approach in increasing the persuasiveness of social marketing communications, the efficacy of which is contested in relation to sustainability. The paper's emphasis on downstream behaviour change is typical of many social marketing applications; its distinctiveness lies in how the influence of social norms is studied in this particular context. Reflecting Kotler's view that the long-term success of social marketing will be judged by its impact on long-term behaviour changes, the authors seek to push the boundaries in relation to effective social marketing practice. Quantitative data on actual electricity consumption patterns provide the benchmarks for consumers who are subjected to different types of feedback about their energy use. The research team considers whether and how the provision of feedback about energy consumption influences future behaviour.

Kolk, Vock and Dolen's paper explores consumer responses to social marketing alliances between corporates and non-profit firms. Like Hastings, the authors recognise that the corporate efforts to help society exist alongside and are shaped by the need to achieve economic benefits. Social alliances between corporates and NPOs are, they say, seeking 'win-win' outcomes for both parties. While various studies have considered such collaborations, Kolk and colleagues focus on how consumers perceive such allicances. Their field study involved 216 participants recruited in public places in the Netherlands who were grouped according to their Social Value Orientation (SVO). They found differences in how those categorised as prosocials and proselfs evaluate social alliances, with these differences accounted for by how individuals perceived the corporate abilities of the firms involved. The findings suggest that using such alliances for social marketing purposes can be a "double-edged" sword, engendering support from some consumers but disidentification from others.

Embracing the growing literature on customer value, Zainuddin, Russell-Bennett and Previte examine whether health care clients should be viewed as active participants in their care delivery. Evidence shows that good health is supported by self-care behaviours and by successful interactions between health care clients and providers. The authors argue that just as in commercial settings, more active interaction between these parties might lead to the creation of service value. The quantitative study they report of Australian breast cancer looks beyond the technical/clinical aspects of treatment, revealing interesting insights about the process of value creation between health customers and their health care providers. In this regard, the paper aptly illustrates Polonsky's argument that social marking has already embraced the kind of thinking which underlies value creation and aligns with Kotler's view that social marketing is an area in which traditional marketing ideas can readily be applied.

The development trajectory for social marketing, a consistent theme in each of the world expert commentaries, is central to the final paper by Gordon, who calls for policy makers and other stakeholders to unlock social marketing's full upstream potential. Gordon argues for a more systematic approach to upstream social marketing and suggests that much more can be done to alter the structural environment in which pro-social change is sought. Drawing on the topical case of minimum unit pricing of alcohol in Scotland, he compares and contrasts the upstream marketing approach with the more systematic and successful methods used in relation to tobacco control. The paper concludes with forward-looking guidelines through which Gordon suggests social marketing's potential can better be realised.

Overall, the contributed papers demonstrate that there are many layers to social marketing. Although many of the above authors point to some of the challenges and weaknesses identified in previous research, they also collectively highlight fundamental ways in which social marketing can deliver an innovative approach to behaviour change for marketing academics and marketing practitioners. We are certain that the articles featured in this special issue help to advance social marketing theory as well as offer valuable implications and recommendations for managers, practitioners and policymakers.

We end this editorial by offering our thanks to Nick Lee for granting us the opportunity to edit this special issue. We'd also like to give particular thanks to Richard Whitfield and Laura Wilson for their expert assistance and guidance throughout the whole editorial process. Not only would we like to thank the twenty four authors, and three expert commentators for their interesting and thought provoking contributions, we would also like to thank everyone

for their patience and co-operation throughout the publication process. This special issue received a large number of excellent submissions, not all of which we have been able to publish in the special issue. Without the time, effort and constructive comments of the many reviewers from around world involved in the process, we could not have delivered the special issue – so, a special thanks to you all.

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