

**MARKETING RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT: AN ASSESSMENT FOR MARKETING MANAGEMENT.** Myers, John G., William F. Massey, Stephen A. Greyser. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980.

Many writers have noted a basic controversy about what is often referred to as "basic" research in marketing. Some believe that this type of research has been virtually irrelevant to marketing management practice, and that it is of little present or potential use to marketing professionals, while others feel this area of scholarship is an essential impetus for the advancement of marketing practice. This conflict of perspectives is noted by the authors as the major factor leading to the formation of the Commission on the Effectiveness of Research and Development in Marketing Management (ERDMM Commission), "a group of eighteen distinguished academic and professional people in marketing." Reporting materials generated by the Commission, plus discussing current journal articles and the authors' own "insights and experiences," this book attempts to present a broadened viewpoint of the role and value of academic marketing research to a system of "marketing research and development" or "marketing R & D."

In many ways, the thoughts, ideas and perspectives presented in this book should be of interest to any scholar of business practices, and some sections provide interesting material that might be incorporated into any consumer behavior or research course offering. The very idea of "marketing research and development," metaphorically similar to production research and development but pragmatically distinct, gives an interesting and different framework for analyzing the process by which new marketing knowledge is developed and eventually utilized in marketing practice.

There are some basic weaknesses to the book's format. Written like a cross between a research report (which, in a sense, it is) and an undergraduate text (which it definitely is not), it is very repetitive. Each chapter has a drawn out three page introduction outlining chapter content, often restating the organizational plans and rationale found in the preface, and each chapter ends with basic text-style summaries.

There are also errors of information reported; a book about research should not have easily correctable research errors. Some are minor, such as their noting that the University of Illinois grants a Ph.D. in Advertising through a School of Advertising. (In fact, it is a Doctorate in Communications through the College of Communications.) Some are major; for example, the authors discuss opinions of ERDMM Commission members as if they were facts, simply because they can quote certain members as holding a common view; plus the authors assume that their random survey of American Marketing Association members gives a representative sample of marketing teachers and practi-

tioners in terms of their research, education, and professional philosophies.

The book's most severe shortcoming, however, could be labelled a research error of overgeneralization. The analysis and inquiry conducted by the ERDMM Commission and the authors is really more narrow than some of their discussions and conclusions might lead the reader to believe. The ERDMM Commission was purportedly born out of concern for differing views towards the value of basic marketing research. Accordingly, analysis should logically look at why so many people believe the bulk of such research is irrelevant, why such negative perspectives exist, and the history of marketing scholarship that gave rise to such differing perspectives. Or so one would expect. Instead, Myers, Massey and Greyser undertake a simple discussion of marketing research as conceptualized and presented in what they consider the major marketing journals. The inquiry is very narrow. While they mention the different backgrounds of people in marketing research, their main sources are all of one research paradigm. They fail to present other research paradigms; at best, the fact that such views exist is merely mentioned. They talk of problems of nonbusiness academics not getting directly involved in marketing research, yet they fail to recognize with more than a mention, the activities and value of highly interdisciplinary bodies with strong marketing related activities other than the Association for Consumer Research. No mention is made of the American Academy of Advertising. They fail to assess the views of marketing academics who read journals by asking, "Who won a 'pub' this issue?" For evidence of the growth of marketing thought, or growth of marketing research, textbook titles and journals are listed and counted.

Therein lies what might be a frustration for many readers. The book could have presented so much on the value and worth of academic research and insights from differing research paradigms. The value of different perspectives is mentioned, but the research analyzed is all of the types appearing in *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, and *Journal of Consumer Research*. The assumption throughout is that marketing research need only serve the business community and the profession, *not* the academic community and scholarship. If you agree with that assumption, and if you agree that the standard of quality research is in terms of what is acceptable to the editors of the three journals noted above plus *Harvard Business Review*, then your frustration might be virtually nonexistent.

The above, however, are merely limitations and personal frustrations felt while reading the book, limitations with which many readers (e.g., business Ph.D. behaviorists) might disagree. Overall, the book presents an interesting analysis of the growth and use of marketing research (though narrowly defined), some insightful comments on differing perspectives between some leading academics and practitioners, and a new approach for viewing the relationship

between basic marketing research and the practice of marketing. Despite the limitations, the book should be important reading for many practitioners, academic researchers, teachers of research courses, and scholars of marketing and advertising practice.

HERBERT J. ROTFELD  
Pennsylvania State University

Marketing Research and Knowledge Development by Myers, Massey and Greyser,  
reviewed by Herbert J. Rotfeld, *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 10 (#2, 1981), p. 44-5