

SERVICE-CENTERED MARKETING LOGIC: DIGNIFYING SUBJECTIVE VALUE
IN AN OBJECTIVIST SOCIETY

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Abstract

Today's modern societies are directed by quantitative measures which concentrate our energy on numerical outcomes at the expense of subjective values like community, genuine happiness, freedom, aesthetics, etc. This paper investigates the foundations of economic valuation and explains how a good-centered marketing logic and value system has objectified both the human and non-human world with negative consequences for the health and well-being of ourselves and our planet. I suggest that a paradigm shift toward a service-centered marketing logic can introduce subjective goals into firm practices by engaging in a relational and dynamic value creation process. With a re-evaluation of markets and the nature of value we may begin the journey away from an era of ethical scarcity and material abundance toward one concentrated on human flourishing in harmony with the natural environment.

Keywords: Marketing, Economics, Objectivity, Subjectivity, Value, Ethics, Sustainability

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Introduction

Motivation. We live in a society where data regarding our identities, behaviors, and tastes are gathered constantly. Our phones follow our cars through town, companies track our purchases, and even the trail of our gaze on a website can be added to an information repository. The scientific revolution began an era with a goal to break down our world into laws that govern both the natural and human world. The methodology that created clarity in the natural fields of biology, chemistry, and physics have been adopted for use in the social world in an attempt to predict and understand the complexity of human existence.

The method of inquiry has resulted in a mechanical understanding of the world that we have harnessed through the industrial revolution to use resources and produce at an unprecedented rate in human history. That mechanical understanding used to generate wealth and consumer goods has also been applied to the people responsible for carrying out productive activities. The objectification of our internal world has followed the objectification of the external. The result in a society where our systems direct us to reach objective standards rather than discover our own subjective pinnacle. We have lost sight of social principles and become more willing to sacrifice ethical values to achieve those quantitative standards.

Modern knowledge and tools have been organized for the purpose of the political economy that Adam Smith introduced in the *Wealth of Nations* in 1776 (Larson, 2015).

Smith's observation that economic growth led to higher standards of living imbued physical goods with the concept of utility put forth by Mill. It is this coupling of markets and pleasure that begged economics to become increasingly scientific in pursuit of the most prosperous and happy society.

In Professor Erik Lundburg's introduction of the Nobel Prize for economic science on behalf of the Nobel Committee in 1969 he observed that "economic science has developed increasingly in the direction of a mathematical specification and statistical quantification of economic contexts," (Roszak, 1). The continued quantification of existing economic theory has entrenched us in the original assumptions which define social welfare in objective ways which are then internalized by individuals.

In pursuit of this quantified well-being we have neglected positive subjective experiences. The ideology of the market that has externalized value comes at the expense of internal worth. When society measures human worth based on their test scores, paychecks, and number of social media connections we restrict the avenues for human flourishing which do not require the challenge of rebellion from societal norms. A shift in how we view the purpose of the market and the location of value is necessary to free all individuals to live as gratified experiencing subjects.

Research Question. This paper will investigate the role of economics and marketing in creating an objectivist culture which negatively impacts humankind as social and emotional beings. It will analyze and how a shift in how we think of markets and value can remedy some of the problems that arise from being experiencing subjects

living in an objective society and how the service-centered marketing logic can be used as an approach toward this shift.

Approach. This is literature review crossing the fields of economics, marketing, philosophy, and psychoanalysis. It will explain the theory of goods-centered marketing and service-centered marketing based on their perspective of the creation of value, the purpose of economic activity, and the nature of economic actors through the lens of objectivity and subjectivity. This will lay the foundation for analysis of ethical and welfare implications of the dominant marketing perspective. Then there will be a description of the experiencing subject in an objective world and how the shift in perspective to the service-centered marketing logic is a superior way for firms to improve social welfare. It will include evidence in the current economy of consumers asserting their subjectivity and seeking more relational markets.

Evidence. The evidence used for this analysis will be drawn from the history of economic and marketing thought. The framework will be built upon the theory of goods and service centered marketing proposed originally by Vargo and Lusch in their 2004 paper “Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing”. To relate the marketing ideology to objectivity and subjectivity evidence will be drawn from publications in the fields of philosophy and psychoanalysis as well as literature on current economic trends.

Expected Results. I will argue that a genuine change in marketing perspective in which producers and consumers treat each other as subjects and co-creators of value has

the potential to improve ethical and environmental practices and promote more fulfilling lives.

Background. The current prevailing marketing paradigm was built from a quantitative foundation from economics which has deeply affected our society and how we evaluate ourselves. The objectification of goods for market has translated into objectification of people. In Lush and Vargo's paper *Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing* (2004), they propose a theoretical shift from marketing as a discipline focused on things exchanged to a science of the process of exchange. This section will offer a brief history of marketing, the impact of the prevalence of quantification today, and how a shift in the marketing logic can remedy some of the ills of objectification.

Marketing at its most basic are the activities that transfer goods from producers to consumers. From the perspective of classical and neoclassical economics, marketing was primarily focused on the logistics of exchanging manufactured commodities whose value was embodied in the product (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). As marketing is rooted in the model of exchange from economics, it has historically operated from a good-centered perspective because tangible resources are the bedrock of the economics we know today.

The good-centered marketing perspective focuses on *operand resources*, like cotton, oil, and food, which must be acted upon to produce an effect, as opposed to *operant resources*, like technology, relationships, or competencies, which are used to act on operand resources (Constant and Lusch, 1994). As humanity has largely been preoccupied with finite natural resources at least for the sake of physical survival, wealth and value have been attributed to those who have been able to amass and distribute them.

This turns customers themselves into operand resources to be acted upon in order to grow individual wealth. Unlike static and finite operand resources, operand resources like skills and knowledge are invisible, intangible, dynamic, and infinite (Lusch & Vargo, 2004).

The service-centered economy is focused on operand resources. In this case the term 'service' is understood as the “application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills) through deeds, process, and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself,” (Lusch & Vargo, 2004, p. 2). The difference in nature of operand and operand resources makes the departure from a goods-centered view of marketing a fundamental shift from being made up of distinct tasks to becoming an ongoing learning process. The weight of this change can only be appreciated with an understanding of the history of marketing thought.

In its outset, the functional school of marketing’s purpose was to add utility simply via transfer of ownership of a good with inherent value from the producer to the consumer. It was not until more thorough analytical techniques of marketing management were employed to optimize firm performance that value was shifted from physical products to their usefulness as determined by the marketplace. To be successful, firms understand that goods are only valuable as they provide some use or other subjective benefit to their customers (Lusch & Vargo, 2004).

Marketing management used the four P's: product, price, place, promotion, in order to improve a firm’s performance in an attempt to change consumer behavior to purchase their good or service. They hope to coordinate these elements in order to influence potential customers to believe that they would derive value from their offering and spend money on it. The focus of marketing is to generate desire rather than pursuing

desires that are unfulfilled. Firms do not necessarily see a natural limit on how many users want and need their product and in pursuit of continued growth try to foster wants and needs that were not there already.

In spite of its economic lineage, marketing has operated with a deeper understanding of consumers than their drive for material consumption. Since the mid-20th century the marketing management school of thought proposed that firms should be customer focused, that customers are not buying things but are trying to fill needs or desires. As marketing activities evolved to meet the firms drive to generate consumer satisfaction they departed from modern mathematical economics for a better understanding of consumer psychology and deeper human values.

Due to the traditional goods-centered theory of value, firms use the information regarding the nature of their consumer in order to move their own products and services. Despite the vast quantity of market research and knowledge of deeper consumer values and needs, the dominant logic of producers is that consumers are recipients of value rather than co-creators (Tradajewski, 2014). Modern marketing activities may be relational, inbound, and subjective, but still treat customers as a means and not an end.

Although there are many businesses and organizations whose purposes are more than simply their bottom-line, the prevailing metric for firm achievement have been quantitative and financial. When firms are evaluated by limited qualities we find a compartmentalization of business and ethics which can breed social and environmental harm (Abela & Murphy, 2007). Moving away from a value ideology where utility is embedded in the tangible product provides the opportunity to attribute real worth to subjective values which are implicitly more meaningful than quantitative metrics.

In Adam Smith's 1776 treatise on political economy, the *Wealth of Nations*, Smith joined the scientific revolution which emerged from the religious era to a period dominated by laws of nature and reason (Larson, 2015). Since the scientific revolution the dominant ideology of social science has been an objectivist epistemology (Summers, 2013). In her 1976 *Introduction to Objective Epistemology*, Ayn Rand describes the necessary pursuit of objectivity based on the viewpoint that knowledge is created through rational reasoning and processing. The fields of economics and marketing are built on tools which aim to quantify and standardize the inputs and outcomes of production because it is seen as the most valid type of knowledge in our society.

Economic models are built of theories and assumptions of how individuals, industries, or nations act in the marketplace. These theories are simplified into mathematical models which attempt to prove and form predictions based on the initial assumptions. The mathematical models can be helpful to understand and project both individual decision making and the larger economy but can also be misleading. Unlike the mathematics used in the hard sciences, economic models are built on ideas or previous patterns whose relevance may only function in a particular context (Shumacher, 1989).

The practice of quantification has become common across society; just as economics has simplified happiness into a utility function, the education system has simplified intelligence into numerical test scores and the number on the bathroom scale has come to signify both health and beauty. The methods created to objectify human behavior have objectified humanity itself. We treat ourselves the way that we are treated, internalizing the numerical measures which draw away our attention from our own

subjective experiences (Summers, 2013). If we cannot see ourselves and others as subjects with complex values it is unreasonable to expect firms or consumers to act in ways that are ethical and maximize social welfare because their primary objective is quantitative and monetary.

As early economic thought placed value in an object, the industrial revolution placed human value in our ability to contribute to the monetary economy as the “L” for labor as a factor input in the production function. In the shift from a goods-centered to a service-centered marketing paradigm, the qualitative values that people have and hold become relevant to firm’s decision making. Individuals are not simply inputs in the creation of objective value but define value themselves (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). This is important because ethical actions require that we view others and ourselves as subjects with particular meanings and emotions that have real worth (Summers, 2013).

The service-centered view has different perspectives on the primary role of economic activity, the base of value, and the meaning of money in appraising firms. From the service lens, marketing is the tool firms use to constantly offer better value proposition which are developed from relationships with customers rather than a tool to generate desire for an existing thing. Value is co-created by the producer and consumer rather than imbued in the object. The measurement of a firm’s success is not in their ability to be cost-efficient and maximize profits but to provide the most net benefit to their value network. Analysis of financial performance is not the primary appraisal but can be used to assess how the firm is able to give value to their customers (Lusch & Vargo, 2004).

If firms attempt to maximize non-quantitative value from interaction between the producer and consumer they must earnestly investigate subjective value. As the self-proclaimed final bastion of the subjective individual, psychoanalysis offers an explanation of how we create meaning and therefore experience tension within an objectifying society (Lear, 1990). Based on the psychoanalytic concept of value and human nature we can begin to make different conclusions for the role of ethics in organizations and businesses. Marketing has a comparative advantage for introducing subjectivity because its practice is not heavily ingrained in mathematical models which by their nature must simplify human nature and behavior.

If operating on the inherent value perspective from goods-dominant marketing the questions of how the firm should best produce value for society do not align with typical questions of what is right and wrong. If factory has a dollar value but health does not, companies encounter tension between production value and morality. By approaching production and consumption with the goal of generating a value that is mutually created by consumers and producers there is incentive to investigate subjective meanings which enhance offerings and protect from personal and environmental harm. Rather than assuming that profitability represents the extent that a firm is producing value, the communication between producers and consumers can be a superior method to generate social welfare (Atikens & Williams, 2011).

In goods centered marketing and advertising there is an impetus to convince people to want to purchase something which already possesses its own value. They are informed by some research but can also simply make assumptions about what people need or persuading them that they need whatever the product is in order to drive sales.

We need a way to reconnect producers and consumers to decide what, how, and the quantity to produce in an inclusive and ongoing way. With transparent information marketing does not motivate a purchase, it motivates a more complex notion of value.

The dynamic nature of service-centered marketing makes it adaptive in a rapidly changing world. It is a technique which firms use to investigate and generate subjective value rather than using indirect economic indices to assess impact. Increasing sales used to be the value motive for marketers but with a more complex understanding of value, value creation can happen throughout the entire user experience. Marketing's role expands to make firms competitive when consumer power means that companies need to seem worth buying from or interacting with. It is the role of marketing in an organization to comprehend their value constellation and make choices which are ethical, engaging, and proactive.

A move towards service-centered marketing may represent a restoration of subjective worth and with it, an economic reorganization that will reward companies and organizations that are invested in values that are more than just objective. We are reaching the limits to the benefits of quantification. This type of knowledge has done incredible things for humankind but to progress further we must turn inward. Employers, employees, and the people they serve will all benefit from serving broader value propositions which not only perform a specific function but are also sensitive to their social, environmental, and political contexts. Society and our ecosystems could benefit from a greater appreciation of the values that we cannot quantify. The world in the future might look much different if we moved the location of value from statistics and dollars to aesthetics, love, relationships, or flow.

Literature Review and Analysis

This goal of this chapter is to explain the goods and services marketing orientations focusing on how each views the location of value and based on that ideology of value what are our ideas of social welfare and how do individuals, firms, and governments work to achieve that end. I will attempt to integrate theory from the fields of marketing, economics, philosophy, and psychoanalysis to evaluate the marketing orientations and their implications for the planet, ethics, and well-being.

Goods-centered Marketing

The Nature of Value. Vargo and Lusch's 2004 paper *Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing* (2004) proposes a shift in marketing paradigm inherited from economics based on the distribution of tangible resources to a social and economic process focused on intangible resources.

From economics, goods-centered marketing logic views value as embedded within a product and its purpose therefore is to facilitate connecting products with consumers to create value-in-exchange or value-in-use (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). The base for this idea of value stems from concepts of utility and resources outlined by some of the most influential political and economic philosophers: Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Thomas Malthus.

The objective classical theory of value is attributed to Adam Smith, whose adding-up theory of value summed the value of labor with that of land and capital. He began with labor theory of value which states that the real cost of something is how much labor one must exert to acquire it. The labor theory of value emerged from a focus on useful commodities whose production was constrained by materials and human labor (Theocarakis, 2010). As welfare was gauged on buying power, they measured standards of living based on material consumption and aimed to improve lives and national power through the production of goods. For Smith and Mill, among other thinkers of their age, economics was a science to be used to create social utility. By analyzing the conditions of production and allowing self-interested competition, prices will be kept low and society as a whole will benefit from a collection of accessible goods and services.

This macro level view of benefiting society from the value of labor in the production of commodities is complimented by Smith's micro level understanding of utility. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, he offers an additional view of utility that goes beyond utility in use or the Benthamite governance by pleasure and pain. He introduces the pleasure that we derive from harmony that is conditioned through our existence in society. We are born without morality but as we go through our lives and interact with other people we are rewarded and punished by the judgements of others and develop a sense of how we ought to behave.

This habituation offers an explanation for why individuals are driven to accumulate wealth, due to our conflation of our sense of well-being and rank and reputation. From *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* we find chief happiness 'arises from the consciousness of being loved' (Smith 1976b: I.ii.5.1) but the inability to quantify such

pleasure led him to use output per-capita as a measure of utility (Witztum & Young, 2013). Smith's idea of how our sense of well-being relates to the ideas of society predicts our world where wealth is equated to happiness and anything less is misfortune

Just as history has neglected Smith's nuanced appreciation of utility, Mill himself left his multidimensional concept of utility out of his theory of economics (Kaminitz, 2014). As Mill developed a deeper idea of utility that distinguished him from Bentham's hedonistic calculus by adding weight to qualitative differences between pleasures, he still complied with the classical tradition of political economy in his own theory of economics. His caricature of *homo economicus* is a reflection of his understanding of how the political economist must treat man as an abstraction from his complex self because of the nature of the political and economic science whose maxims cannot accommodate individual nuances (Kaminitz, 2014). For the sake of economic theory in the promotion of social utility, the working understanding of utility and man himself must be hedonistic and consequentialist.

Mill's desire to defend utilitarianism from the romantic critiques of the era who denounced utilitarianism for its reduction of mankind to cold and mechanical seekers of pleasure further led him to leave out the subjectivity and unique individual utility from the quantification of utilitarianism. The founding thinkers of the political economy had moral theories with rich conceptions of man and his pleasures. Unfortunately the legacy they left in the policy sphere was of the simple *homo economicus* and utility grounded in the objective functions of a product which generates a sterile satisfaction bankrupt of subjective psychological experience. It is the production of such objects that has become the organizing motive for economists and the governments they advise.

Thomas Malthus believed that wealth should only be measured by material things (Hudík, 2015). We have inherited a tradition that valorizes the worth of tangible goods and disregards those who lack them. Richness in friendships, faith, health, purpose, and self-esteem are depreciated by the powerful ideology of the goods-dominant economy.

Firm Practices and System Implications. In the modern world one does not ever have to enter an economic classroom to encounter economic terms which direct the businesses and governments whose decisions heavily influence most of our lives. Economic terms like GDP, employment, inflation, profits, and trade can all be found during a half hour stretch in the mainstream nightly news. Economic growth is an axiom of our society, from both a macro and micro perspective growth is an ideal accepted without question. Economic textbooks focus on its' main drivers and threats, praising countries with the fastest growing GDP's and diagnosing the ills for countries with constant or declining capacities for productivity. The emphasis on growth stems from the widely held inference that growing economies translate to improving standards of living, alleviating poverty, and reducing unemployment with its associated problems (Diener & Suh, 1997).

In the last century the growth in GDP was matched with astounding changes in way of life. Our conveniences today were luxuries if not unimaginable technologies only a few generations ago. Since the industrial revolution investments from both the public and private sector focused on producing physical goods because we measure quality of life based on tangible standards of living. In the United States today and in other developed countries we have benefited from this investment in economies of scale which

make us able to spend a relatively small proportion of income on necessities and basic household goods. During the 20th century the correlation between economic and social indices like literacy and life expectancy were closely connected, making it appropriate to design policy around economic measurements with the expectation of social benefits (Diener & Suh, 1997). A hundred years ago these goals were organized around getting resources and crafting goods for survival and getting everyone the physical requirements necessary to live and incrementally live better.

Governments have followed the direction of Adam Smith who posited that expanding production would also improve social welfare. Productive capacity based on physical goods informs the growth ideology that appears in economics textbooks and directs business and governments. An economy where most people are employed in industries which produce affordable consumer goods contribute to positive measurements of social indices.

Although there has been growing concern about infinite growth on a planet with finite natural resources, we have still marched on in resource extraction and exploitation (Schumacher, 1989). This ideology which resulted in the material wealth we enjoy today was pursued with a rigor which made common workers and the natural environmental victims of industrialization. The fact that today we have significant protections for workers and the environment reveals our predisposition for their misapplication. Proponents of sustainable, inclusive, or other forms of growth are aware of the environmental and social justice related issues that come with our current way of growing but are a minority in a society caught in the rapid waters of consumerism.

It is no coincidence that the objective social indicators are intimately related to economics as it is much easier to measure doctors per capita or homicidal rates than marital satisfaction or personal freedom. These objective measures functioned effectively in assessing earlier stages of development but are no longer enough for addressing the causes of measured phenomenon. We have limited the scope for how we can hold governments accountable for the improvement of society when only the quantitative is seen as legitimate and our systems built around narrow aspirations. The macro level social indicators also play a role in individual aspirations and decision making.

Economic theory posits that firms and individuals ought to rationally allocate their time and energy in order to promote personal and social welfare in line with the values of society. In this case personal utility is quantitative and grounded in long existing paradigms of how to live a good life. Aristotle, one of the great founders of western philosophical thought, concluded reason to be the particular human function to which we must cultivate in order to live well (Aristotle, 1926). The belief that rationality is virtuous has been cultivated by the academics through the ages, creating a powerful elite based on access to knowledge. We view those who seek to attend the highest ranked institutions or achieve the ideal dress size as rational in a quantitative society.

In the modern world we still embrace decisions made from the mind and discount those made from the heart, legitimizing claims based on clear evidence and sound logic. Mill's *Homo economicus* came from classical political economics when the science was focused on production and distribution. This characterization of man was more a description of the motive to acquire wealth rather than man's mental process (Hudík,

2015). The marginal revolution marked a shift towards value to the consumer in personal utility and with it a marginalist version of *Homo economicus* who is not only driven by gaining wealth, but who must also make consumption choices to maximize individual well-being through the allocation of their wealth (Hudík, 2015).

Just as microeconomics treats man as a rational utility seeking person with definitive tastes and the knowledge of how to make himself better off, our society expects us to act rationally to achieve our particular normative ideals (Deiner & Suh, 1997). As consumer spending makes up a large part of our GDP and therefore our national success, it is in the interest of firms to create ideals that encourage spending regardless of how that may negatively impact the consumer. Studies show that consumers spend more when they are sad, a phenomenon which is exploited by the multi-billion dollar beauty and diet industries who turn profits based on the cultivation of insecurities and the belief that we can buy our way to our perfect selves (Rossini, 2015).

The strategy for becoming a quantitative success in consumer industries is to make people feel some lack which can be filled by making some purchase. As we are continuously inundated with messages from companies about things that we should want, we feel an imperative to direct our lives towards a career which will enable us to consume all of the things which appear necessary for a happy life (Rossini, 2015). In a culture where rationality is held in high esteem and objectives are quantifiable, people make personal and professional choices aimed towards the objectives of wealth because of the social standing and emotional well-being that we imagine comes with it. It seems people often try to figure out how to be happy while they make money rather than how to make money while pursuing something which makes them happy.

The hyper rational portrayal of man is not ubiquitous in economics, in Brzezicka and Wisniewski's article *Homo Oeconomicus and Behavioral Economics*, they criticize the rational caricature as the greatest weakness of neoclassical economics and suggest that modern approaches will draw on our expanded idea of human nature coming from the field of behavioral economics (2014). Though they recognize that the simplification of man was necessary and useful, it is becoming outdated. It must be changed or replaced in order for the science to create realistic explanation for human decisions and macroeconomic process.

Behavioral economics introduces psychological processes to interpret economic behavior. It began as a way to understand anomalies in the neoclassical rational model but now offers a change in the paradigm of social sciences by incorporating individual psychology (Brzezicka & Wisniewski, 2014). The neoclassical approach that sees humans with self-control and optimal decisions neglects the emotional and irrational tendencies which factor into how we all make choices which are validated in behavioral economics (Brzezicka & Wisniewski, 2014).

Both the fields of behavioral economics and marketing have treated human beings more holistically than the rational frame from economic models but are used for rational directives. Behavioral economics aims to incorporate more elements of human nature to see patterns in decision making while marketing practices aim to understand and influence consumer behavior. Each discipline seeks to understand how we act and analyze what is or was, in order to direct actions and policies by firms and governments. The more nuanced appreciation of humankind that both fields provide is used as evidence to support operations that maximize quantitative metrics.

The pursuit of economic growth and the improvements in living standards that we associate with it has formed strong analytical practices and value systems organized for efficiency and maximizing utility. Today we have the technology and knowledge for incredible productivity due to a society built around our economy. Unfortunately we are now aware of how this purpose and achievement or productivity has not translated into corresponding gains in well-being (Brzezicka & Wisniewski, 2014). By harboring the location of value in goods themselves we have organized ourselves around their production, rather than the production of positive subjective experience and meaningful existence they are assumed to provide.

Behavioral economics and current marketing practice may create deeper understandings of human nature but still have the purpose of creating wealth. No longer does society evaluate us on based on traditional pioussness or our birth into a hierarchy but by how we craft our individuality in the economic world. We become producers and consumers first and social, emotional creatures second. Measured by what we make and buy because of how they have been perceived to relate to well-being. We focus on analyzing and manufacturing tangible value. We celebrate our rationality and seek achievement based on the quantitative measures of our system with the expectation that once reached, we might feel fulfilled.

Objectivist Society. The contemporary western world has been dominated by a consumer society that is guided by the capitalist system of production and consumption (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007). Culture is the knowledge, beliefs, values and systems of symbolic meaning that we use in our everyday lives. In the west, we have traditionally

found the source of meaning in religion and the established social hierarchy. The current cultural arrangement has shifted the task of self-actualization away from societal structures to the individual whose success comes from effectively navigating the prevailing economic system. We construct ourselves based on societal goals of status and wealth which we practice through labor and consumption. The dramatic extent to which goods and services have been commodified has resulted in a world where health, well-being, and personal identity are also consumable (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007).

The objectification from quantification is not limited to the economic realm. The ideology of measurability used to organize the American economy is translated into how we evaluate other realms of society. From national health reports with exclusively statistical content to political campaigns reported in percentages, we spend more time on the objective measures than information which may get to the heart of the issue like demographic differences or underlying causes (Summers, 2013).

In de Graff, Wann, and Naylor's third edition of Affluenza: How overconsumption is killing us- and how we can fight back, they describe the sickness of consumer society and how the quest for economic expansion has become central to our notion of the American dream (2005). The conquest by materialism in our world is evidenced by the fact that in America we have more shopping centers than high schools and the 70% of us that visits a mall each week outnumber those who attend houses of worship (de Graff et al., 2005). From 1970 to 1989 the number of American college students who said that it was essential or very important to "develop a meaningful philosophy of life" dropped from 73% to 47% while those with the goal of becoming

“very well-off financially” increased during the same period from 37% to 78% (Deresiewicz, 2014).

We are not unaware of or complicit in the objectification of humankind. One of the realms where there has been a pushback against quantification has been on the literal pricing of human life. This is a practice deemed necessary for public policy decision making regarding safety regulations and for insurance companies who, for example, must decide how much is reasonable to spend on a lifesaving procedure (MacKinnon, 1986). Despite the adage that human life is priceless there are teams of economists and bioethicists whose job it is to assign a dollar value to an individual's life or even individual body parts.

In Kant's The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals he states that “in the realm of ends everything has either a *price* or a *dignity*. Whatever has a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent; on the other hand, whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity” (19529, p.53). The people working on Henry Ford's assembly line can be seen as interchangeable as the materials with which they worked. Still, Mackinnon states in *Pricing Human Life* that all things equal, it is better to spend money wisely and efficiently for risk reduction or life-saving programs than to not do so (1986). Placing a dollar value on human life is the logical conclusion to an objective society.

The way that we relate to ourselves is a cultural product. In a quantitative society we are left viewing ourselves numerically. Research shows that test results in education from K-12 up to the SAT and ACT are internalized by students who treat their scores as facts about their intelligence. Their sense of worth can be defined by where they rank

amongst their peers on a test and then by the ranking of the institution of higher education that they might attend. This occurs despite the fact that standardized metrics address few of the many capabilities that they may need to live satisfying lives. We treat ourselves the way we are treated and as members of an objective society end up appraising ourselves by quantitatively measurable attributes and abilities (Summers, 2013).

It is no surprise that clinicians find that Americans assess their lives not by how they feel but by quantifiable, external standards and expect economic and material gain to transform their internal state. When asked about how patients are doing they describe their job, their house, wife and children rather than their emotional state (Summers, 2013). The social sciences are increasingly quantified. Attempts to assign a dollar value to everything is only a small part of quantitative convention. Information is judged by its objectivity and credibility is only given to information which can be proven objectively debasing the gut feelings and intuitions which come from our core selves, with particularly negative consequences for marginalized peoples with unequal access to monetary wealth.

North America has, through our mass media, asserted a cultural dominance in which happiness is a symptom of personal and social success. Depending on their financial capability, people can buy the objects which construct their sense of self and reinforce their notion of purpose. We expect finances and happiness to be positively correlated and this limits the internal flourishing of those on socioeconomic rungs. Feelings of well-being are commercialized and deemed virtuous in television shows where people are happiest when consuming a wide array of entertainment options; families look forward to vacations away and a dinner party with friends is incomplete

without sipping on a branded beverage. Consumer goods are such strong signals of well-being that the ability one has to acquire the goods and services associated with enjoyable experiences can greatly influence subjective well-being (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007).

Members of society are held by themselves and others to achieve a certain level of conspicuous consumption that, if not met, can have harmful effects on their self-esteem.

With all the time spent in the consumer society on objective elements we must ask what is being left out of our consideration. What are we sacrificing when we spend so much time producing for the sake of consumption and shopping for our personal identities?

Implications of Objectification for the Planet, Ethics, & Happiness. The results of objectification can be seen in the ever growing economic figures as we attempt to assign market value to all that we can. Part of the motivation for continuing to bestow monetary value is the good intention to account for externalities: the costs and benefits to entities who did not incur them. Although there are both positive and negative externalities, this paper is more concerned with the glut of negative impacts that flow from our society emphasizing the production of wealth. The classic example of a negative externality is a factory that emits pollution which creates health and wellness costs for the surrounding community that the factory does not take into its own cost accounting and therefore produces more than it otherwise would have. The nature of externalities make it so that the least sustainable goods are often the cheapest because desires of the present and future, human and non-human communities are not yet monetized.

Environmental economists hope to assign dollar values to aesthetic, emotional, recreational, and ecological worth in order to protect society and our ecosystems from incurring costs while others receive benefits. This noble effort is entirely appropriate for the cost benefit methodology and the scope of our globalized economy where individuals on the other side of the world with no local ties have the power to completely disrupt a local community and natural environment for their own profit. The marketization method operates under the premise that externalities are just a small problem in otherwise efficient market systems (Spash, 2010).

Our markets and economic models are engineered for optimal quantitative outcomes and our assumptions that they produce benefits for how we live has been proven to be inaccurate. Even as our measures of standards of living have increased by a factor of four we have not seen a corresponding improvement in reports of happiness. Despite the evidence for the diminishing marginal returns of wealth and consumption we continue to produce and carry on business as usual. A society in which we are led to believe that well-being can be bought has brought us to a level of over consumption that is seriously threatening the oceans, global climate systems, and local habitats which all provide environmental services critical for our survival (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007).

Proponents for ecological economics propose a need for a new paradigm of economics which recognizes “ecosystem constraints, a concern for equity, fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of economic systems and a regard for the moral standing of others both within current and across future generations of humans,” (Spash, 1999, 432). This new ideology is a necessary evolution because externality theory does not fully encompass the problems created by the current economic system. The practice of

reducing costs to maximize profits provides incentives to create negative externalities rather than internalize or avoid creating them in the first place.

The mistreatment of people and natural environments arises because of the separation between business and ethics which result in ethical tensions. In Abela and Murphy's *Marketing with integrity: ethics and the service-dominant logic for marketing*, they define ethical tension as the circumstance when two or more norms prescribe contradictory actions (2008). They explain how tensions within typical business and marketing activities are prevalent because the collection of common goals like maximizing firm profits, driving revenue growth, respecting consumer autonomy and choice, promoting employee satisfaction, maximizing total system efficiency, and cost reduction often are not entirely compatible. You cannot maximize more than one thing at a time so we need a theory and practice which is dynamic and can hold many values simultaneously.

With a value system that is based in tangible goods and quantitative metrics, we as beings with subjective opinions and emotions feel the strain to meet our many objectives. The presence of a strong reward system in the objective world leads many firms and individuals to focus their energy on the quantifiable while neglecting the subjective. As we see the physical materials, natural systems, and human workforce more as objects and less as the meanings they give us it becomes easier to act with our own self interest in mind.

We live in a culture that is ripe for the unethical because acting ethically, according to one's principles of right and wrong, requires treating the recipient of one's actions as something will be impacted beyond the material (Summers, 2013). We must

acknowledge comprehensive externalities which go beyond what we might attempt to assign monetary value. In analyzing the cutting down of a tree we not only look at the monetary value of its lumber but its role as a habitat for birds, epiphytes, lichen, mycelium; we should appreciate the power of the trees roots to prevent erosion and filter water, its ability to capture the carbon dioxide that we breathe and its aesthetic and religious value. We must not only think of a trees value that it provides today but how human, animal, and plant generations in the future will also benefit from its existence. When we can appraise a tree not by its value to a single stakeholder but as a piece in a network where it provides living, non-living, physical and metaphysical value, we can begin to appreciate the full value of things in our world.

Before arriving at the ideology of deep ecology where all living things have inherent worth beyond their instrumental use to humankind, we can begin to at least acknowledge our responsibility to our fellow man. If only for our own integrity. National scandals of fraud and unethical practices like Enron and Bernie Madoff represent the logical outcome of an objective society which allows, if not encourages, us to rationalize behavior that does not dignify the subjectivity of others as we pursue our own ends. In the last few decades the rates of academic cheating have increased greatly, a practice we know is wrong but requires empathetic understanding and respect for the rights of others to be adhered to as a moral practice (Riker, 2010). The growth in cheating is evidence of the loss of our capacity to see others as fellow experiencing subjects and with it, our moral foundation.

Not only does objectification make it easier for us to harm others, the gap between what we do and what we know we ought to do is problematic to our own well-

being. We learn from a young age ideas of right and wrong and have all felt some sort of adversity in our lives. Becoming the perpetrator of harm to others necessitates closing off a part of our humanity which values the coherence of what we believe is right and our actions. This internal tension goes deeper than the conflict for individual decisions as the quantitative world also limits our avenues for living authentically in a way that is validated by society (Riker 2010).

In a consumerist society, the purchases we make are a material reflection of our personal preferences, our self-perception, how we would like to position ourselves in society (Starr, 2004). The tight relationship between our consumption and our own identity makes it important for us to make life choices which allow us to assert our place in the economic world. With quantitative metrics defining success and value, people are left struggling to attain the right weight, test scores, or sales figures in order to feel respected by the wider culture. The many other talents and skills that people may have become marginalized unless they build their own communities in fields like social work or the arts which may be noble but an unlikely path to today's lists of the most "successful" people.

Whatever gives power in a society is what individuals will strive for and so in the United States today we strive for wealth derived from goods. Sociologist Jay MacLeod notes the intricate linking of wealth, power, and happiness which maintains our current socioeconomic hierarchy by ideologically grouping financial, social, and personal welfare. These linkages impoverish the spirit of those who lack material wealth or unequal access to routes to wealth and power (2009). The popular discourse on happiness is centered on individuals and expressions of our own freedoms. A society which

celebrates individualism but limits respect to only particular ways of being can be particularly demoralizing for those whose particular means of self-actualization are outside of the valued roles (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007).

Our individual perspective of happiness neglects the importance of the interpersonal relationships that create deeper meaning and purpose. Personal prosperity is difficult outside of harmony with others and our surrounding environment, building friction between individual freedom and social justice. Unfortunately those with the comforts of wealth and cultural dominance have little motivation for change even if they lack real purpose and meaning and those on the margins may not have sufficient resources to change (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2007).

In modern consumer societies we are left as individuals attempting to reach happiness achievable through a limited description of success rather than working together to develop a society where all people can flourish. Objectification threatens mankind on many levels. It is an ideology that threatens our natural world and our physical survival, but also the health of our internal world. We must be critical of the glorification of objective actualization and how it relates to ethics and our personal happiness.

Humanity evolved intimately connected to the natural world and fellow humans. We are complex beings who find meaning in much more than material goods or our capacity to acquire them. Since the scientific revolution Western society has fostered objectivity as a means of reaching what is valid and good. This perspective and tools used to maximize such outcomes have brought us to a period of material wealth unprecedented

in human history. Yet the sovereignty of this paradigm occurs at the expense of the many other emotional, spiritual, and social values that make up a large part of human nature.

The power of markets in our increasingly global world goes without question. We are now beginning to appreciate the impact of world markets which are driven by physical goods and objective measurements. The state of our world's ecosystems and the lack of improvements in well-being despite economic growth invites us to question whether we ought to continue operations as usual or rethink how we measure and generate value.

Service-centered Marketing

The Nature of Value. In their original paper Lusch and Vargo define the foundational premises of the new paradigm of marketing as a social and economic process. For the purposes of this paper I will not go in depth describing the premises individually but will discuss their implications in the context of how they describe value, their larger implications on managerial practices, their potential role in legitimizing subjectivity, and how they might improve overall welfare. The premises are as follows “ (1) service is the fundamental basis of exchange, (2) indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange, (3) goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision, (4) operand resources are the fundamental source of competitive advantage, (5) all economies are service economies, (6) the customer is always a co-creator of value, (7) the enterprise cannot deliver value, but only offer value propositions, (8) a service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational, (9) all social and economic actors are resource integrators, and (10) value is always uniquely and

Table 1: Modified service-dominant logic foundational premises

FP	Foundational Premise	Comment/Explanation
FP1	Service is the fundamental basis of exchange	The application of operant resources (knowledge and skills), “service,” as defined in S-D logic, is the basis for all exchange. Service is exchanged for service
FP2	Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange	Because service is provided through complex combinations of goods, money, and institutions, the service basis of exchange is not always apparent
FP3	Goods are a distribution mechanism for service provision	Goods (both durable and non-durable) derive their value through use – the service they provide
FP4	Operant resources are the fundamental source of competitive advantage	The comparative ability to cause desired change drives competition
FP5	All economies are service economies	Service (singular) is only now becoming more apparent with increased specialization and outsourcing
FP6	The customer is always a co-creator of value	Implies value creation is interactional
FP7	The enterprise cannot deliver value, but only offer value propositions	Enterprises can offer their applied resources for value creation and collaboratively (interactively) create value following acceptance of value propositions, but cannot create and/or deliver value independently
FP8	A service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational	Because service is defined in terms of customer-determined benefit and co-created it is inherently customer oriented and relational
FP9	All social and economic actors are resource integrators	Implies the context of value creation is networks of networks (resource integrators)
FP10	Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary	Value is idiosyncratic, experiential, contextual, and meaning laden

Adapted from “Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution” by Stephen L. Vargo & Robert F. Lusch, 2008, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 68, p. 7. Copyright 2007 by the Academy of Marketing Science.

phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary” (Lusch & Vargo, 2008, p. 7). I have included the table of the premises along with the author's own brief comment and explanation and will address some of the premises more in depth during this analysis.

Vargo and Lusch argue that the shift in developed markets from the tangible goods to the intangible skills and competences requires a different marketing orientation for firms to be successful. No longer is it enough to simply offer an excellent good or service. Our immense capacity to produce and consume gives consumers the ability to discern based on much more than basic cost or quality. Firms must arrive at the right place, at the right time, with the right message, and authentic character which connects to their customer (Pine, 2007). The classical methods of creating cost efficiency are product optimization are not enough to be competitive, they must be attentive to customer perceived value which comes from a broader range of competencies (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). Firms must think of their entire value creating system in order to be the best competitor.

Marketing is the best foundation from which to start viewing value differently within business as we know it because it is already concerned with the product, place, promotion, price, and more importantly the people involved in any transaction. Marketing is already sensitive to the context and relational to some extent. With an expansion and transformation of marketing as a discipline, it can have the ability to protect and deliver value rather than just sales figures. The service-centered logic is not only a new way of looking at things but also expands the scope of marketing activities so that the information gathered through marketing communication may impact all aspects of business. Information about value which will help the firm be successful.

In today's world, regardless of whether a firm produces the cheapest, most effective widget, it will not be successful if its distribution system does not make it accessible to its target customers, has horrendous customer service, or a publicity problem because of exploitive production practices. It is obvious that firm's success is not limited to the objective value embedded and profit maximization so it makes sense to organize marketing paradigm based on firm's overall ability to deliver value to their customer. It is the comprehensive offering and character that really distinguishes firms, not simply the quality of their primary product or service. The shift in marketing paradigm here does not simply impact marketing and advertising but the entire approach to business.

Outside of financial and commodity markets, exchange depends on both the producers offering and the consumers' willingness and capability of purchasing. Service-centered marketing recognizes this dual nature of consumer markets and views value in production accordingly. As there is no value in output that no one wants to purchase, we see that customers share in the ownership of value production and therefore firms only make value propositions to their potential consumers, not goods with inherent utility (Lusch & Vargo, 2004).

Operant resources are the primary source of competitive advantage and performance (which can be transmitted through operand resources) as firms must use skills and knowledge to understand the how their particular competencies meet the needs and wants of their customers. The inability to quantify operant resources makes it insufficient to reduce performance to the financial metrics primarily used in goods-centered marketing. Based on the shared notion of value, marketing must be truly

customer oriented to effectively create this more comprehensive notion of value (Lusch & Vargo, 2004).

Co-creation of value is key to service-dominant logics ability to improve society. Rather than selling goods and services which will generate value in terms of profits, firms understand that value creation occurs when their customers are better off when using a product or service (Skålén et al., 2015). In one of their follow up papers, Vargo and Lusch clarify that this co-creation extends beyond our classic idea of producer and consumer by including the economic and societal actors within the value configuration network (2008).

The value configuration network is unlike the value chain in which the many economic actors transfer benefits in one direction, it appreciates the impact that customers, businesses, suppliers, governments, manufacturers, etc., have on one another. The problem of indirect exchange of skills due to the increasing specialization invites firms to be more deliberate in how they relate to their network. For example when a company makes a sourcing decision it should not only evaluate potential suppliers based on how it will impact the company's own performance, but ought to consider their impact on other economic actors in its value constellation.

Under this logic firms must expend concerted energy communicating and connecting with their networks. In order to improve their own overall value they must act and deliver things in a way that aligns with deeper values. Considering most purchasing choices that we make are not for basic well-being and survival purposes, we can see that the value of exchange in the modern economy comes considerably from what we feel we should do, not only from what we could do (Williams & Aitkin, 2011). Consumption

choices represent the values we hold as individuals and as a society but the lack of complete information and transparency make it difficult to clearly communicate that value.

With a shift in marketing perspective it becomes key for firms to figure out what those values are and act correspondingly rather than simply managing their brand identity and public image. Especially in our technical world where information travels so fluidly, companies and organizations are already figuring out that it is more effective to be good than to manufacture that image or do damage control when scandals surface. It is evident that we will all benefit from acting in a way that is sensitive to the many values of consumers, employees, local communities, and ecosystems. This sensitivity should be apparent in all decision making and concerns can be gathered directly via existing and improved marketing communications.

This larger portfolio of value includes the intangible assets and liabilities which individuals and society care about. An important emphasis in the logic is the value of relationships beyond what is quantifiable from repeat customers. Under service-dominant logic firm the service proposition includes the social and environmental impact so firms have the incentive to build relationships across their entire network. The importance of firm identity is already recognized in the concepts of customer equity and branding which both attempt to measure the value of customer and firm relationship through loyalty and expectations. The integrated approach goes further by recognizing that societal and environmental assets are important and ought to be managed diligently (Abela & Murphy, 2008).

The interpretation of marketing should not be from the utility created by it, but by its role in the whole process of creating utility (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). In their paper *Service-Dominant Logic: continuing the evolution*, Vargo and Lusch (2008) contend that service-dominant logic can be a “generalizable mindset from which a general theory of the market can be developed,” (p. 3). It becomes the foundation for a genuine paradigm shift in marketing away from its economic science foundation towards one with a living and relational idea of value. In practice, firms will spend more time investigating how they can deliver and uphold values rather than persuading people to value something that they are not readily disposed to.

Firm practices and System implications. We have already investigated what happens when we construct our world based on the goal of improvement via increasing production of physical goods. A world where material and financial wealth are not intimately tied to happiness would change the way that our society operates. Despite the reality that the average full-time employee in the US works 47 hours a week (Saad, 2014), it is hard to imagine that spending more than half of our waking hours working is the best way to achieve a healthy and happy life. As the flaws of a consumerist society become ever more apparent it is time to suggest a better way to preoccupy society than the production and consumption of consumer goods.

Although service-dominant marketing is a relatively new approach to how firms can self-analyze and approach business, there is already research into the nature of value propositions and how firms act differently from the perspective of service logic (Skålén et al., 2015). In a study investigating value propositions and service innovation from a

service-dominant logic lens, researchers investigated eight firms to better understand the true nature of value propositions. Their concluding managerial insight was that successful service innovation relies on firm's ability to be sensitive to the customers experience and that advantage does not come from the right resources but from their integration into appealing value propositions (Skålén et al., 2015).

This study describes value propositions as promises to customers that they will be able to get value and be better off from the offering. To ensure that they will be better off they identified three collections of common practices used for resource integration: provision practices, representational practices, and management and organizational practices. These practices help in the customer's value creation by: ensuring the value proposition is fulfilled, enabling communication between relevant parties, and providing baseline working methods to coordinate it all (Skålén et al., 2015). Under service dominant logic the firm focuses on the effects of the delivered resources in their offering and systematizes collaboration with customers which can help companies avoid making decisions that run counter to customer values and generate better experiences.

The integration of customer values not only makes it important to deliver benefits but also to have managerial practices which are in alignment with the customers who they are creating value with. This can include respect of workers, energy use, community impacts, etc. When a firm's value account is filled with more than just money you have a multitude of opportunities to fill it by addressing personal and societal values. On the other hand, there are also more avenues to fall out of line. Under service-dominant marketing logic we can think of practices like environmental sustainability or community service not as a premium bonus with a benchmark of zero but find a baseline via

interactions with customers. Firms who exploit workers or natural systems could generate a value deficit despite providing high quality goods or services if their means of production goes against their customer's values. Companies must continuously be interacting with members of their value constellation to realize their desires and feelings.

In Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want, Joseph Pine describes the current trend where consumers are focused not solely on the products or services themselves but what service-dominant logic would call as the entire value proposition: how they are made, discussed, and experienced (Pine, 2007). As information regarding firm practices from every point in their process becomes more accessible, people become more discerning to what feels the most real within our increasingly fabricated world. The man behind the curtain cannot hide any longer. Firms must be willing and ready to be transparent. In order to earn trust in transparency, firms must act in accordance with the desires of their collaborating consumers. Information technology is dismantling the shroud over production and forces firms to reconsider how they actionize ethics (Abela & Murphy, 2008).

Modern practical ethics are often phrased in the negative; what practices we may or may not do, rather than the positive of what we ought to do (Abela & Murphy, 2008). Aristotle's virtue ethics was about living in virtue or excellence: up to your fullest potential as a human being (Aristotle, 1926). We need to think of ethics beyond what is good and bad but as a perpetual questioning of how to live well, remembering that our own welfare is intricately tied to that of our human and non-human environment. If the positive norm for firms is based in economic value and is only checked by a limited list of prohibitions we limit incentives for and make sacrifices of the many types of value that

human being appreciate. The role of social good practices in the current market logic is still in the context of its impact on the most commonly measured outcomes. Despite efforts to introduce measurements that are not only financial, the power of the existing mentality is difficult to overcome.

John Elkington's triple bottom line (TBL) was intended to organize thought about sustainability with the three dimensions of economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social justice (Mitchell et al., 2008). Although it became a trend in corporate social responsibility, critical analyses of corporate reports unmask the use of TBL as more for the sake of public relations than genuine improvements in organizational sustainability partially due to the ability for firms to be selective in their reporting. The literature denies that TBL reporting can be expected to lead to a genuine re-evaluation of the primary approaches to resource management (Mitchell et al., 2008). TBL strives to incite a transformation, or even a revolution, towards a more sustainable capitalism but the measurement framework alone cannot reach the core of organizations.

Service-dominant marketing logic is a process that makes maximizing the triple bottom line an imperative to provide the most value they can to their consumers and with them, society and the environment. The logic is a way of thought that asks firms to think holistically about their actions because of a more holistic appreciation of value and build in a way in which social and environmental concerns are not simply accessories to financial interests. It is not just an added measurement goal but a foundational precept to do more good. Organizations have been trained to achieve what they can measure and report but the monetary focus is so ingrained that it will take the economy more than another metric to shift away from current practices.

As the global economy demonstrates its power to radically transform people and the planet we need to interrogate the purpose of the market and how it is currently functioning. No longer can we accept the assumption that there is a direct relationship between the quantity of output and human well-being. The service-dominant lens believes that the purpose of markets is to mutually serve and directs its participants to act with that intent (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). It recognizes that value is not static nor universal and asks firms and individuals to become conscious of how their choices reflect and produce the values they hold. Of course it is not the panacea to our world's problems but can help us balance the breadth and depth of the diversity of value.

How this Framework Recognize Subjectivity. Objectification is a source and result of some of today's problems so it seems sensible to seek the solutions in its theoretical antithesis: subjectivity. Despite much research into human actions, preferences, and behaviors which hope to open a window into the mind, much of what we learn and acknowledge regarding human nature comes from the objective paradigm. Indeed this paper uses objectifying research to support arguments against this ideology. We must look outside of the preeminent areas of study to understand subjectivity.

Psychoanalysis is unique in that its subject is not material, objectifiable, nor quantifiable (Summers, 2013). It is a field distinct from psychology, which is the study of the behavior of living organisms, not the mind itself. The empiricism of psychology matches that of economics, where only what can be measured, recorded, and studied is significant. Though it would seem that psychology is the study of the psyche or mind, Summer's notes that it is a field defined by its methodology rather than the subject

matter. Psychology has succumbed to the presiding objectivist ideology and then quantifies what for us is most qualitatively unique: our psychic experience (Summers, 2013).

Both psychology and economics investigate individuals and communities based on what they do and how they are using dimensions which can be compared across a given set of people. In contrast, the heuristic branch of psychoanalysis is like the service-dominant logic which acts as a process to understand the patient's experience that does not impose a preset body of knowledge (Summers, 2013). By making marketing ongoing and relational you expand the possible learning and value creation uninhibited by dominating quantitative goals. When we press beyond the basic assumptions that people are more than logical pleasure maximizers we will expand our knowledge of human nature and be able to serve it better.

In one of the later revisions of service-dominant logic, Vargo and Lusch add the final foundational principle that “value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary” (Vargo & Lusch, 2008, p. 7). Phenomenologically indicates that the consumer perception determines the value. This is implied by how they define service as a transfer of specialized skills or knowledge for the benefit of another or the entity itself. Though there is intent to produce value, the outcome can only be determined by the potential beneficiary. They appreciate the subjective nature of value and how we as individuals in a certain cultural context construct meaning and therefore value. If we can regard people not just on the way they behave but seek to understand the meanings which create value to them, we can begin to organize our systems to make people better off in a substantial way.

The psychoanalytic therapeutic process offers a way of relating to individuals within value constellations and networks which has the goal to unlock past experience in the hope of creating a new experience. Rather than focusing the buying history of customers or suppliers there is an open ended dialogue which can be used to unlock the potentials of the mind and meaning. We can use the developmental narrative from psychoanalysis to inform the process for firms to create value propositions.

The developmental process initially proposed by Freud is similar to the story told by Adam Smith of man developing his morality through empathetic responsiveness with individuals in society (Lear, 1990). The eight foundational principle is that “a service-centered view is inherently customer oriented and relational” (Vargo & Lusch, 2008, p. 7) which obliges firms to interact with customers with the intent to understand and discover ways to improve their value propositions. This logic views value propositions both by what and how value is created. It breaks down the small quantitative channels that have historically directed business and concentrates energy toward improving the subjective experience of those within the value network.

In the simplest terms, the service-dominant logic for marketing validates subjectivity by accrediting value which does not have quantifiable evidence. It re-evaluates the driver of value, who creates it, its’ process, purpose, and measurement, creating the impetus for decision makers to recover different types of value. The rapidly industrializing and global world marked a tremendous upheaval for humankind, it is time to take stock of changes and hunt for what we have lost in our quest for material creation.

Today in the United States we have access to an incredible amount of resources and information which is overwhelming. The pace of the growth, interconnection, and

technology have outpaced our ability to think both in the short and long run regarding our own happiness and the long-term health of the planet. Our inability to sift through the glut of choices in the world necessitates some form of organization for the incredibly complex world. We build complex bureaucratic systems and hierarchical organizations to manage our scale and quantify whenever possible to measure our outcomes. This methodology was practical for the sake of production and consumers ability to choose from overwhelming options.

Vargo and Lusch's second principle states that "indirect exchange masks the fundamental unit of exchange" (2004). With the specialization of skills we lost some the direct connection between consumers and producers and with it the acknowledgement that the source of benefit is another's skills. From the service lens we consider both the micro-specialized worker who may not have any investment in the quality or purpose of the product as well as the customer who is being served based on a limited subset of their values and meanings. In the past customers were limited to 'vote with their dollar' but new social media makes it possible for consumers to be more explicit in their desires and critiques to firms.

Modern technology has succeeded in harnessing the raw materials of our planet partially by turning humans ourselves into operand resources which must be efficient and productive. The material society and the technology within it have, perhaps unintentionally, objectified humanity and the planet but can be harnessed for the good of phenomenological experience. Communication technology today makes it much easier to close the gap between producers and consumers so that we can anticipate and correct conflicts or harms that arise in business.

Trends in the modern economy towards customization are evidence of a shift towards better co-production of value. When we see that the purpose of markets is to create value across the whole network it becomes more logical for specialization not to occur in production to reduce costs but in consumption, where customers may be able to interactively design unique elements that meet their own changing needs (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The antidote to commodification, mass-customization is happening from the high tech electronic world to Build a Bear Workshop and Starbucks shops around the world (Pine, 2007). Products tailored to our personal tastes help us feel less like anonymous ants in the global world.

According to Pine, customization of a good turns it into a service, customization of a service makes it an experience, and customization of an experience takes it to a transformation. The terms experience and transformation here indicate the source of value for a firm's activity as the feelings customers get and the benefits they receive from engaging with an offering, respectively. These concepts align well with the lens of service-dominant ideology because they measure the creation of value not based on goods delivered or activities performed, but by their impact on the customer both in their emotional experience and perceived benefit (Pine, 2007).

To convert value propositions automatically to experiences or transformations it is necessary inquire into customers' needs and produce subjective value. Vargo and Lusch recognize how service logic sees tangible goods not as ends, but as applications for value propositions and anticipate the expansion of economies where firms retain ownership and simply charge user fees (2004). This paradigm extends opportunity beyond firms to peer consumers who can engage in the sharing economy.

The rise of the sharing economy is another example of how marketing thought is currently transforming. Peer-to-peer economic activities which were a necessity in communities but lost in the rapid development and household consumerism in the last half century have resurfaced, facilitated through online platforms which can connect people in order to share access to products or services. It depends on individuals thinking of value beyond the tangible and allows us to reap service benefits without the production of redundant resources. This shift in the paradigm of value has the potential to radically disrupt market economies as we know them by decentralizing economic activity (Martin, 2016).

Indeed the most common examples of companies operating in the sharing economy, Airbnb and Uber, are growing at incredible rates and are certainly unsettling the travel and transport industries. Collaborative consumption breaks down the preeminence that businesses have enjoyed as providers of valuable goods and services. Although Airbnb and Uber are extremely profitable companies in the lodging and transport industries, neither owns rooms or cars. They make money by linking those with excess time and resources to people who could benefit from them, capitalizing on the idea that sharing is also more sustainable. Not only do they squeeze extra economic value from existing assets, they also sell the added aspect of a human connection which is less natural coming from a hotel or taxi driver. These companies recognize and take advantage of consumers desire to feel at home or ride with a person like them, not just a place to sleep or the journey from point A to point B.

The sharing economy is making waves as individuals and companies take a closer look at their own capacity to create and acquire value. The organizers of peer-to-peer

network have taken reaped the benefits of the latent productive capacity of networks. They do not need to produce and promote, instead marketing becomes actualizing the potential value which each person already holds. This value can be tangible or intangible. Sites like Facebook, YouTube, TripAdvisor or Pinterest do not even their own digital content but became very successful through linkin creative individuals motivated largely by non-monetary values (Arvidsson et al., 2008).

Companies like social networks are taking notice of the profuse immaterial value in our world and subsuming it for financial gains. They provide a platform for relationships and information, a service which they are compensated for via advertisements. There has been an advance of economic subfields like the experience and sharing economies, which acknowledge an underappreciated value logic which corporations have used for classical economic gains. The sharing economy emerged from critiques of hyper-consumption but has been reframed as an economic opportunity which does create genuine value to consumers but is under threat of corporate co-option (Martin, 2016). Although participants may gain from engaging there are greater gains by the network coordinators who amass financial benefits which are often reinvested in the traditional economy that reinforces the existing value paradigm.

The service-dominant marketing logic is a science of exchange which aims to uncover the many types of value in a network and have firms organize around generating the most value for the most stakeholders. In an age where value was located in physical goods and sales were representative of a firm's value output, marketing was an activity to boost sales. A shift in perspective towards subjective value makes it the objective of marketing to manage the entire user experience. Peer-to-peer activities break down the

wall between producer and consumer and reveal some of the real source of value which makes them a good illustration for implementing service logic.

In What's Mine is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption, Botsman and Rogers describe the changing consumer mind which recognizes the value of use over ownership, community, sustainability, and the necessity for trust to enable collective use (2010). In order for transactions to occur between strangers, individuals must build a reputation capital, building confidence, and avoiding missteps which can easily be posted to web platforms. As an Airbnb host or renter you act with a sensitivity to your partner in exchange for the benefit of both. No two interactions are ever the same so members must continuously assess to get the most value from every rental.

Companies directly and indirectly enter our homes and invite us into their own spaces but do not act with the prudence which one might use when receptiveness we have in interpersonal relationships. From the service lens companies would ideally interact with their stakeholders with an awareness of subjectivity that one would expect to use as an individual in a peer-to-peer network. Customization and collaborative consumption demonstrate how consideration of important aspects of markets which were neglected in a goods-centered economy like human needs for individuality and community are highly sought after.

Beyond the consumer economy, the service or experience logic appreciates the value created by non-profit organizations, governments, and educational institutions whose reputation depends on much more than their financial statements. These institutions must appeal to the people who fund them and the people who they serve to be successful. Not only must they be intimately connected to their network, but most also

create much more than financial value; whether it is an organization providing job training, governments supporting health care, or universities producing knowledge and engaged citizens, their marketing approach recognize that there are particular operant resources that can be utilized to benefit others.

This is not to suggest that companies should all be not for profit but that we ought to question why mission and value of orientation should not be so distinct between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Service marketing is a social and economic process that orients firms to act more like social enterprises which aim to improve social and economic welfare while simultaneously producing profits and benefiting shareholders.

People want to be heard and responded to. In the digital age it is easy to communicate and the companies and organizations who focus on improving the overall relationship with the people they serve will be the most valuable. The more interactive we are, the more likely we are to reach deeper meanings and make people better off to the best of our ability. Just as firms must be meticulous in their collaborative pursuit of making decisions based on comprehensive value, we as consumers must pay attention to the gut feelings when we make spending decisions to reinforce our desire to support authentic firms.

As marketing mediates the relationship between consumers and producers, a change in its function and approach can offer the context to mutually explore and envision value. In order to reap the benefits from this lens we must get in touch with our own subjectivity independently and within dialogue with producing firms. Uncovering our own meanings and listening to our own connections with self-activities is difficult in a society with limited conceptions of success and a good life (Summers, 2013). The more

we as a society practice investigating our own deeper values the more likely we are pursue lives of meaning over profit and build a more sustainable and equitable world.

Benefits for Ethics, the Planet, and Human Happiness. Service-dominant logic offers a path to avoid from the ills of objectification that have followed a marketing logic which locates value in tangible goods and a culture that assumes that improvements in economic production translate directly into improved lifestyles. We have achieved incredible things because of quantitative methodology but now we ought to consider subjectivity as the direction for human progress. Service logic asks firms to attend to normative economics as much as positive economics; to move focus from what is, to what should be. It move beyond the metrics and practices that have been used historically to operations which generate worth which reach the breadth and depth of human concern.

This marketing lens offers a new trajectory and method for the creation of value and therefore how we relate to ourselves, others, and the non-human world. As the focus of ethical systems is how we ought to behave and relate to one another, it is important to connect the logic to the existing theoretical base of business ethics (Abela & Murphy, 2008). In *The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing and Marketing Ethics*, Williams and Aitken describe how the integrative nature of value creation and the role of reciprocal relationships offer a way to navigate the well-recognized 'stakeholder concept' of management (2011).

Stakeholder theory presumes that there is a social contract between business and society and that there are expectations and responsibilities towards the many stakeholders. This theory moves away from the classic profit driven shareholder ideology

by introducing the difficult task of deciding who is a relevant stakeholder. Parties involved include employees, customers, suppliers, government agencies, communities, perhaps even ecosystems. Deciding who and what has vested interest is the difficulty for which service-dominant logic can offer a solution that increases overall welfare. As it is inherently relational, it creates a method for relevant parties to express their own position and incorporate stakeholders which may lack voice- be it children, future generations, or nonhuman systems.

More involvement and attention given to multiple viewpoints allows for the introduction of various ethical ideologies. It has potential to democratize decision making as the new ideology of value opens the microphone to outlooks not financially and quantitatively based. Abela and Murphy laud this marketing theory for its “seamless integration of ethical accountability into marketing decision making” rather than overlaying ethical analysis to existing marketing theory (2008, p. 39). They observe the problem of compartmentalization between business and ethics which creates tension between norms and between various stakeholders in operations today.

Service-dominant logic suggests that both negative and positive ethics should be integrated into all administrative decisions through the service lence because relationships are counted as intangible assets, incentivizing firm to create a good corporate citizenship record (Abela & Murphy, 2008). If we can tune into our subjectivity and are willing to respect others’, people may act more justly towards both people and the environment. Building trust in close proximity through direct and reciprocal exchange makes immoral actions more difficult than if the victims were at a distance.

Counteracting some of the depersonalization of current market practices can help humanity experience ourselves as part of nature rather than an outsider who must conquer it. Our domination of nature has given us a feeling of unlimited power which we have used to battle nature without realizing that in victory, we would find ourselves on the other side (Schumacher, 1989). On every scale we are experiencing the damage we are doing to the environment. From pesticide caused cancer to polluted river ways and a changing global climate, there is a mass of evidence which must lead to a tipping point in our production paradigm or the fitness of our ecosystems.

If we can appreciate value created from our relationship with the natural world rather than our possession of it, we will protect against the collapse of the physical, social, economic and spiritual values provided by our planet. Ecosystems are resilient and non-human life in an altered form will continue long past the reign of *homo sapiens* and *homo economicus*. We must decide how to treat the environment so that we may live well rather than fighting for dwindling fish stocks and clean water. The economic valuation of ecosystem services has not yet proven powerful enough to provide protection for our future generations from the unknown impacts of anthropogenic changes. We know that we ourselves and the earth have more than instrumental value. It is time that we act accordingly.

The modern economist operates under the assumption that the man who consumes more is better off than the man who consumes less (Schumacher, 1989). Therefore marketing is beneficial because it generates desire for purchasing. We know that this logic applied to a goods-centered view of value makes it impossible to continue improving lives on a resource limited planet and that the measurements of standards of

living do not translate exactly into reports of happiness. It is evident that we need a new system of value to deliberately make genuine improvements in lives. Viewing value more comprehensively we can see marketing as an opportunity to consumers to express their values and challenge producers to address them, both in what and how they produce. A system which attempts to create sincere subjective value ought to seriously investigate the character of well-being and from this inquiry legitimize many different ways of being.

We all know that satisfying material needs and wants is part of our happiness portfolio but it is not the whole story. After reaching a certain income level, research has shown that the most sustainable form of happiness comes from achieving goals which are self-chosen and fitting of the individual (Summers, 2013). Yet there still seems to be a hegemony of economic power over happiness which may require a new ideology of market and value creation to free individuals from a paradigm that equates monetary wealth with well-being and absolve people from societal expectations which may keep them from pursuing a life of their greatest meaning.

Although the market has institutionalized an individuality and non-responsibility which removes the buyer's concern about anything other than our personal price and pleasure, we are by nature social creatures whose prosperity is tied to that of the world around us. Cultivating relationships as we act as both producers and consumers within our eco-sphere can generate harmony and the concordant happiness that comes with it. Each of us acts on both sides of transactions and can appreciate how businesses conducting themselves in accordance with the values that drive consumers has the potential to make us better off.

The co-creational process and mutual dependency which are the foundation of service-dependent logic compel firms “to work together with their customers and stakeholders to foster relationships that are socially cohesive, sustainable and, ultimately, for the benefit of all,” (Williams & Aitken, 2011). This marketing lens validates that many types of non-quantifiable value that we perceive. What a society values, it cultivates there. Moving beyond quantitative valuation will shape a society which recognizes subjectivity and organizes around the production of human flourishing rather than material goods. As the department responsible for managing a firms entire interaction with the people it serves, the marketing paradigm is important to a firms overall delivery and evaluation of positive and negative impacts.

Summary

Since the scientific and industrial revolutions the ideology of objectivity, monetization, and materialism have emerged from the West and influenced the far corners of the globe. Society has structured itself around quantitative measures with particular concern over those which construe wealth and power. Economics is the obsession of modern societies which for the last hundred years has focused on the production of tangible goods which has alleviated millions from poverty and led to technological advances that have improved lives. (Shumacher, 1989). The preoccupation with productivity and maximization has found efficiency in numbers and to some extent reduced ecosystems to commodities and people to labor inputs. The objective outlook has overshadowed the aspects of the planet and our peers which has made it easier to treat them as dispensable resources for quantitative value rather than integral parts of harmonious systems which give life and meaning.

Still, as economic theory defined how we measure social welfare, our society focuses on economic growth because it has been conflated with authentic well-being despite the fact that reports of happiness have not risen with standards of living. As social creatures our view of self is formed considerably by the culture around us. The consumer culture does not ask us what makes us come alive but instead we find that companies have the incentive to make us believe we can buy our way toward some constructed perfection, regardless of the negative impacts we may make in the process.

We have internalized society's objective view of value at the expense of many other things which we find significant. The experience and sharing economies are trends which demonstrate some of the untapped value that consumers perceive. No longer can marketing be a one way street where brands simply control the narrative about their value but are subject to commentary by anyone with internet access. As consumers today have a plethora of purchasing options we have become sensitive to the bombardment from marketing and advertising. We do not want to be compelled by companies messaging so firms need a new way to manage their relationships to their consumers and value networks.

We are simultaneously consumers, producers and citizens with our own vested interests which we have increasing capacity to demonstrate. We can reward organizations whose practices we appreciate and have the power to disgrace others with our dollars and our public reviews. In order for firms to be competitive and successful they must operate with goals and values as broad as those held by individuals. Love, community, belonging, sustainability, freedom, health, and faith are amongst the many components of meaningful lives which are not captured in the quantitative metrics and are therefore devalued by our current business paradigm.

Economic methods of quantification can only produce economic meaning: profits and statistics (Schumacher, 1989). Lusch and Vargo's proposal for the evolution from goods-dominant marketing to service-dominant marketing offers a shift in methodology which hopes to direct our society to make concerted efforts to make fulfilled people rather than rich ones. The service-centered marketing paradigm views value as co-created and relational, asking firms to engage in an ongoing process with members of their value

constellation so that they can be direct in their formulation of value and not rely solely on quantitative measurements. It offers a different perspective of markets as whole and provides guidance for businesses and organizations on what and how to produce.

The perspective orients the main mission of firms toward the subjective benefit they give to their customers rather than evaluating the outcome based on market measures. It overcomes the conflict between traditional business goals of profitability and system efficiency with ethical considerations like respecting consumer autonomy and employee satisfaction. Markets exert powerful influences on society but have been too focused on the money rather than the value that currency is supposed to represent. The service perspective places the real source of value at the center.

The most effective firms in the modern age will listen more than talking and ask more than tell. They must deliver more than just a premium product or service at a good price and consider grander social and environmental benefits which consumer voices expect. At the same time they must cultivate their reputation capital by acting ethically, sending waves of benefits through their network. The same technology that brings us close to people across long distances has created distance between the people close to, us or even our inner selves. It is time that we utilize the communication technology to build united and resilient communities rather than to dismantle them.

Marketers and people making decisions on all levels should deliberately evaluate the needs and impacts of their choices in their value constellations. The complexity and specialization of society today makes it daunting to discriminate based on more than relatively easy elements of price. Still, if we as a society hope to preserve ecological

functions and improve the lived experience of all people, it is necessary to be more conscious of how we relate to the world around us.

The profundity of the mind and the environmental limitations of the world will stop us from reaching prosperity via the materialistic routes. We are awakening to the limits of how far a quantitative economic culture can take humankind. We need to move away from the deterministic science of economics, validate subjective experience and begin to organize society around making individuals, communities, and entire ecosystems live to their fullest potential. The service-centered marketing lens can

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