

# Scientific progress in marketing

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## Serving science via intelligent discussion

Hunt (1983) notes the distinction between writing “on” the philosophy of science and writing about the “use” of the philosophy of science, and he remarks that a fundamental aspect of understanding the use and unity of the philosophy of science in marketing research “stems from the common acceptance by the sciences of a methodology for the justification (confirmation, validation, corroboration) of knowledge” (p. 20). Consistent with this comment, Mario Bunge (Hunt 1983) states “Science has not the monopoly of truth but only the monopoly of the means for checking truth and enhancing it” (p. 83).

This issue of the *AMS Review* is about such scientific progress in marketing. Probably the best way to open this issue is with a quote from Paul Surgi Speck (Hunt, 1983, p. 348):

A science is served in many ways: by intelligent discussion and fresh proposals, by the extension or completion of previously presented theories, by the fair-minded and unflinching evaluation of current proposals, by justly protesting, blowing the whistle, and pointing out that this kingly theory or that is not wearing a shred of evidence, by sometimes synthesizing and sometimes isolating, by daring to be explicit and—ironically—by daring to be suggestive. It is

when scientists and philosophers of science cannot make up their minds as to which role they are playing or—what is worse—try to fill several roles at once, that matters go awry. Then the Ivory Tower and the Tower of Babel sound disturbingly alike.

As you begin reading the articles in this issue, you will see that Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain in the first article serve science in their arguments against the use of the multiple indicators, multiple causes (MIMIC) model to operationalize formative variables. That is, the authors attempt to be fair-minded in their evaluation of the model and, importantly, they are daring when they submit to having their perspective critiqued by three prominent scholars in the field. In opening themselves up for such an evaluation, they open themselves not only to appraisal but they also take the risk of opening themselves to public criticism, as the commentators in this issue were not asked to play nicely or agreeably.

By engaging the commentators to review the opinions of Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain in their article “The MIMIC Model and Formative Variables: Problems and Solutions,” the *AMS Review* is enabling an intelligent discussion to occur about formative models. The commentaries found here by Roy Howell (“Conceptual Clarity in Measurement—Constructs, Composites, and Causes: A Commentary on Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain”), Edward Rigdon (“Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain: An Excellent Point...But What about the Iceberg?”), and Adamantios Diamantopoulos (“MIMIC Models and Formative Measurement: Some Thoughts on Lee, Cadogan& Chamberlain”) are both complementary and harsh. The commentaries are basically discussions about the work by Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain—

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and, in the nature of a topical conversation, Lee, Cadogan, and Chamberlain needed to offer a response to the thoughts and opinions of the three commentators.

The articles in this issue are about the use of the philosophy of science in marketing, via checking and enhancing the truth behind the scientific process examined here. As such, the contents of this issue offer an intelligent discussion that truly serves marketing science. The nature of the discussion and debate will likely

become required reading for many marketing theory courses.

### Reference

Hunt, S. D. (1983). *Marketing theory: The philosophy of marketing science*. Homewood: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.