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[to cite]:

Morris B. Holbrook (1986) , "Whither ACR? Some Pastoral Reflections on Bears, Baltimore, Baseball, and Resurrecting Consumer Research", in NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 13, eds. Richard J. Lutz, Provo, UT : Association. Pages: 436-441.

<http://acrwebsite.org/volume13>

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Advances in Consumer Research Volume 13, 1986 Pages 436-441

WHITHER ACR? SOME PASTORAL REFLECTIONS ON BEARS, BALTIMORE, BASEBALL, AND RESURRECTING

Morris B. Holbrook, Columbia University

[The author thanks Russ Belk, Geraldine Fennell, Beth Hirschman, Rich Lutz, and Rich Yalch for their helpful comments of this paper. He also gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the Columbia Business School's

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more, Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere, I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude, And with forced fingers rude Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year
constraint, and on occasion dear, Compels me to disturb your season due ("Lycidas," John Milton, 1634, p. 74.

I'd be pretty dumb if all of a sudden I started being something I'm not (Yogi Berra, quoted by Cla

Against the rules, yes, Boo Boo. But I am a nonconformist bear (Yogi Bear, quoted by Clark 1984 p. 10).

We have the obligation of pressing the unpleasant questions,...the embarrassing questions, the tall tales. Being so privileged as we are, it is almost our damn job not to ask the nice questions, not to ask the comfortable questions (George Steiner, quoted by the New York Times 1985, p. 22E).

ABSTRACT -

The Bad News Bears return. Hattie pays for the Baltimore Sun. The buyer goes downtown. The consumer researcher Lou comes home. The shepherds weep no more.

THE BAD NEWS BEARS RETURN

The Bad News Bears are back! Only this time, they are wearing baseball uniforms, reading poetry, and playing on the radio.

Last year, in an ACR session entitled "The Vices and Virtues of Being Relevant: Perspectives on Consulting," I presented a paper examining the forces that push consumer research toward managerial relevance, comparing these pressures to the discipline to Goldilocks, and retelling the ancient tale in a new version that bore deadly consequences for our fairytale.

When the bears returned to the cottage from their day in the woods, they found Goldilocks peacefully sleeping. They immediately did what any self-respecting bears would do. They killed her on the spot (Holbrook 1985a, p. 154).

In his presentation, Jack Jacoby took exception to my distortion of this beloved fable and generously supplied me with an ending that contains what he regards as the appropriate ending:

Goldilocks woke up with a start. She ran to the window and jumped out. and the three bears never saw her again (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books 1982 p. 23).

Though I doubt that whether Goldilocks is "killed on the spot" (my account) or simply "never seen again" (the account of the much difference to those who loved her dearly, I have learned one thing--namely that, as a metaphor for the fatality of the Three Bears story fails to do the trick. Besides, I've always liked bears and mean them no harm.

LYCIDAS IS DEAD

So what we now need is a story that really is sad--by anyone's standards--but, to preserve our optimism, one that we can think of no sadder but ultimately more hopeful tale than John Milton's elegy on the death of Lycidas in which the poet's Friend, unfortunately drowned...on the Irish Seas":

Bitter constraint, and on occasion dear, Compels me to disturb your season due, For Lycidas is ere his prime, Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer. Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew his worth, and build the lofty rhyme. He must not float upon his watery bier Unwept, and welter to the wind, Without the meed of some melodious tear ("Lycidas," Milton 1637, ll. 6-14).

I shall therefore take "Lycidas" as my symbol for the potential premature demise of consumer research--Lycidas, the beautiful shepherd boy who has drowned beneath the sea and "sunk... beneath the watery floor" (l. 167). This is my year's comparison of commercialization and overzealous managerial relevance to sinking like a stone in water:

We can pursue knowledge like beauty for its own sake...or we can wrap our feet in utilitarian slippers and perform soggy pirouettes beneath a sea of managerial practicalities. As Charlie the Tuna found to his dismay, the pursuit of Truth and Beauty gets nowhere on the ocean floor. Sorry, Charlie. Practitioners want tunas with good taste. They want tunas that taste good (Holbrook 1985a, p. 30).

As soon as business intrudes into science, one hears complaints from scientists about loss of academic

freedom and interference with scholarly integrity. Yet, in my experience, one seldom hears such voiced in the context of business schools or among consumer researchers. Apparently, we are like water. We have so long been submerged under the influence of business sponsorship that we don't notice it any more Usually, we swim in the tide of corporate sponsorship without really noticing the ebb and flow of the invisible currents that steer us (Holbrook 1985b, p. 153).

Milton's poem contains numerous cases of water-ant-light, sea-ant-sun imagery. In this spirit, then, let me begin in this case, the Baltimore Sun, that town's daily newspaper.

HATTIE PAYS FOR THE BALTIMORE SUN

Once upon a time, in a story told and retold by my mother-in-law, one of her friends named Miss Lee moved from near Charlottesville to the city of Baltimore. Miss Lee had grown up in the patrician luxury of the Virginian country with servants, and the good things in life. In her later years,

Miss Lee took her loyal and devoted housekeeper called Hattie and went to a small apartment to be near her doctor. Miss Lee enjoyed the cultural stimulation of the urban environment; but Hattie, who was less well-educated, found it difficult. The arrival of the newspaper boy asking to be paid for delivery of the paper pushed Hattie over the edge. She came to her bedroom in tears and cried:

"O, Miss Lee, I can't stand it no more. Back home, when I needed eggs, I just went to the hen house and grabbed up a few; now I need to place an order with the delivery man and wait two days. Back home, when I wanted milk, I could just go out to the barn and get me some from the cow; now I have to call the milk company and pay them to come and bring it. Back home, when I had to fix vegetables for supper, I could just go out to the garden and pull some up right out of the ground; now I have to carry a shopping bag full of money all the way town to the grocery store. And now--Lord, Lord --there's a man there at the front door who says he's here to collect for the sun."

At one level, Hattie had missed the point. She had failed to recognize that the "Sun" in question was a newspaper at the center of our solar system. But, at a much more profound level, Hattie had grasped one key issue better than we do. We, ourselves consumer researchers, attend ACR conferences, and ponder the future direction of the Association.

Hattie understood, metaphorically, that consumers want to enjoy the sunshine and that marketers want to collect for the sun. Marketers want to charge them money for their consumption experiences. In other words, Hattie recognized the difference in perspective between consumers and marketing managers and by extension, therefore, between marketing research and consumer research. The consumer's perspective, Hattie knew, centers in consuming and in phenomena related to the consumption experience. Presumably, consumer research should reflect those interests. By contrast, marketing research does and definitely does not. Marketing manager's concern for buying behavior and for phenomena related to purchase decisions and their implications. Hence, as Hattie instinctively recognized, consumer research and marketing research differ fundamentally in orientation.

I like marketing. I spend many of my waking hours worrying about marketing and trying to teach MBA's what I know about marketing strategy and the solution of marketing problems. But still, even though I deeply believe that marketing is (or should be) the most worthwhile business activity, many of us in marketing are in the position of trying to collect for the sun. Our concerns as marketers may differ from the concerns that inform the activities of consumers. It follows that marketing research and consumer research are and should be different sorts of things.

To repeat, I regard marketing as a noble profession. If I did not, I could not stand up and teach it for a living. I want my students to go out and practice good marketing management and make lots of money. I want my students to go out and succeed on the job. I would even let my son marry a marketing woman. Further, as Levitt (1960, 1962) has taught us, that marketing often involves a large component of customer orientation and, therefore, that any decent piece of marketing research eventually be relevant to some marketer somewhere, some way, some time. But, as Levitt's critics have insisted, customer orientation must be tempered by some concern for the firm's skills, strengths, capabilities, resources, costs, and risks. That, ultimately, we arrive at what is sometimes called the profit orientation, the survival orientation, or the "managerial" orientation.

truer sense of that abused term).

This marketing orientation, by focusing on internal considerations of the firm's profitability, differs fundamentally from the consumer view. Accordingly, the research intended to serve the consumer does and should differ fundamentally from consumer research. Consumer research emerges from the perspective of the (value-seeking) consumer and marketing research from the (profit-seeking) marketing manager.

But, already, I have used such terms as "consumer," "consumption," "buying," "business," and "marketing" -- words that are endless sources of confusion in our discipline and that occasionally have even led to the abandonment of consumer research by its erstwhile most devoted friends and to the redefinition of consumer research by some of its most illustrious spokesmen.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
11. 50-51).

THE BUYER GOES DOWNTOWN

A spectacular case in point appeared in a recent statement by Ralph Nader, surely one of the consumer's most prominent spokesmen.

"I don't want to use 'consumer' anymore," Mr. Nader said. "I want to use 'buyer.' You don't go downtown to consume--you go downtown to buy" (Molotsky 1985, p. 1).

Nader's claim was "that people ought to use their buying power to bring them to parity in dealing with large corporations" (p. 44). But, however well-intentioned, his treatment of "consumers" as people who "go downtown to buy" ends up ignoring the fact that consumers are not just buyers and that our research should reflect this fact. Besides purchasing, consumers also engage in consumption involved in the acquisition, usage, and disposition of the products they consume:

consumer behavior is the acquisition, consumption, and disposition of goods, services, time, and money units.... It encompasses much more than just the purchase of products and/or services by human beings (Sheth 1975, p. 979).

Most definitions of consumer behavior shackle us by confining attention to purchase.... purchase is a particular form of acquisition.... Consumption must be given greater salience.... disposition...appears to have been completely neglected. This neglect should be rectified (Jacoby 1978, p. 94).

in addition to choice behavior, we must encourage research on procurement behavior..., on consumption behavior...and on disposal behavior (Sheth 1985, P. 1).

Hence, as these warnings suggest, the use of "buyers" to signify "consumers" encourages dangerous misunderstandings that have afflicted our own literature.

But the confusion between "buying" and "consuming" is not the only terminological problem that threatens us. The meaning of the word "marketing" itself. On the wall outside my office, I have an old New Yorker cartoon. It shows the President of Marketing with a man coming out of the door, carrying a shopping basket, and clearly heading toward a store. This cartoon serves to remind us that our language carries at least three meanings of the word "marketing": the sense of "going to market" or "shopping," belongs to the discourse of housewives or househusbands and focuses on the needs of the customer. The second, "marketing" as a set of managerial responsibilities concerned with exchange processes and the removal of gaps between producers and end-users (McInnes 1964), adopts the perspective of practitioners and focuses on the usage that prevails in both academic and management circles (Marketing News 1985). The third, "marketing" as a set of phenomena involving interactions between customers and managers (with an equal emphasis on the viewpoints of both), is called "business" or "commerce" and constitutes a vaguely delimited area in which we all participate to some degree.

A similar confusion surrounds the natures of "marketing research" and "consumer research." Some of the smartest people in the two are essentially the same thing. For example, John Farley (current Executive Director of the Marketing Science Institute) has argued that

my office the other day and assured me that there is no difference between consumer research and marketing research and their intersection is the null set. As we shall see, the 1985 ACR Call For Papers by Rich Lutz (this year's Conference) is a good example of two. Again, one might interpret Jack Jacoby's (1985a, b) position as blurring the distinction somewhat. Geraldine, a friend from the world of consulting, also seems to suggest that marketing research and consumer research are (in my view) indistinguishable insofar as "marketing's central assignment" involves "responding to consumer wants in a competitive environment." Thus, in their comprehensive review of marketing R & D, Myers, Massy, and Greyser (1980) suggest that

in the early 1960's...marketing research became, in effect, "consumer research," and the emphasis was on developing theories of consumer motivation and behavior or consumer decision processes (pp. 12-13).

These examples reflect a prevalent conception based on considerable common sense. Indeed, compared to the marketing research and, say, biophysics, marketing and consumer research do seem almost identical. Further, the two may exhibit nothing more than one side of the age-old debate between those inclined to see the One and the Many, and those inclined to see the Many of the Many.

Almost 2500 years ago, two Greek philosophers named Heraclitus and Parmenides represented opposite sides of a debate that we still grapple with millennia later. This controversy concerns what Hare (1982) calls the problem of the One and the Many, and the fact that people adopt contrasting world views. Some see everything as different and changing. Others see everything as the same:

Two great philosophers...took up opposite points of view on the problem of 'The One and the Many.' Heraclitus...emphasizing the diversity and changeability of the Many at the expense of the One... Parmenides, by contrast,... went to the opposite extreme, denying the reality of appearances altogether...and...concluded that, in spite of appearances, the universe is really solid throughout and unchanging (pp. 12-13).

Clearly, those who insist that "buyers" and "consumers," "marketing management" and "business," or "marketing research" are the same things adopt a Parmenidean view of our discipline. They receive support from a 2500-year-old tradition. Yet I believe that they blur some important distinctions, fudge some key contrasts, and thereby encourage a wish to revive the spirit of Heraclitus and to argue for a more Heraclitean temperament at ACR.

In an effort to remain as consistent as possible with common usage (and with myself), I shall adopt the following definition of "business research" as investigations pertaining to customer-manager interactions broadly considered. For example, it would include work on public policy or on social welfare. In accord with the official AMA viewpoint (Marketing Research: A Guide by Myers, Massy, and Greyser (1980)), I shall define "marketing research" as investigations intended to address marketing issues and provide practical solutions or applications for marketing managers:

A basic assumption adopted by the ERDMM Commission... was that the broad purpose of knowledge development in marketing should be to improve, or make more effective, marketing management. In the marketing R & D system, it can be argued, has this as its fundamental goal (pp. 143-144).

Finally, I shall define "consumer research" as investigations that address issues dictated by their relevance to consumer behavior (e.g., acquiring, using, disposing, etc.) and that contribute managerial applications, if at all, only incidentally or even by accident. In my view, defined, business research encompasses all or most marketing research and some consumer research, while consumer research may overlap in content but differ fundamentally in purpose.

I cannot insist strongly enough on two points: (1) that I agree with the generally prevailing articulation of the purpose of marketing research and (2) that I view consumer research as having a different objective--namely, to understand consumption behavior and disposition of products (goods, services, and other consumable events). Here, I freely admit that there is so much consumer research to be or to become relevant to the decisions of marketing managers. I only wish to claim that for marketing practitioners, managerial applicability does not serve as its primary motivation nor its main intention. The fundamental purpose of consumer research (in my definition) is to understand the nature of consumption behavior broadly conceived. In my view, this view should serve as our window on the world. It is like the contact lens through which we observe reality. But, I

gets misplaced. We must guard it carefully. And if, perchance, we drop it, we must bend and search for it before tramples it under foot.

Anyone who has agreed, even partially, with my comments to this point must surely have reacted with alarm to (Lutz 1985).

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone, Now thou art gone and never must return!.... As ki
canker to the rose, Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze, Or frost to flowers, that their
wear, When first the white-thorn blows; Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear ("Lycidas," 11. 5

In the 1985 ACR Call For Papers, Rich Lutz (1985) offered "some thoughts on the 'state of the association,'" echoing that "ACR has lost some of the 'excitement' which was characteristic of the organization during the 1970's," suggesting that "ACR has perhaps swung too far in the direction of broadening consumer research," argued that "what the field needs is to return to the 'core' of the domain rather than its fringes," specified that "the core of the domain of consumer behavior is defined definitionally on the effects of marketing activities on consumers," and concluded:

Accordingly, I would like to offer another potential remedy to those which have been discussed in this paper. I hereby actively solicit papers, special sessions and workshops devoted to the study of the effects of marketing variables on consumer behavior (p. 5). YoSG

This hard-core theme (including an apparently pejorative use of the term "fringe") was soon picked up and echoed in his departing editorial for the ACR Newsletter:

It seems to me that ACR has gone through phases that basically correspond to the interests of the individuals who have formed the heart of the Association since its beginning. At present, these individuals (and the Association) seem lost.... The need for variety characteristic of cognitively complex individuals seems to be motivating radical proposals for how the discipline should approach consumer research and what are the most important areas of interest.... In addition to being skeptical of the contribution of this endeavor, I think that younger, impressionable members of the discipline might mistake the leaders' temporary disinterest in the discipline's core areas of research and fascination with the fringe areas as evidence of a major shift.... However,...the focus will remain on the purchase behavior of the "shopper" in the household and on common consumer goods and services (p. 2).

Surely, these polemics by Lutz and Yalch constitute an "Embarrassment of Riches." It seems clear (from my own perspective) that two scholars have been listening to the same muse--one that issues bad advice. How can this have happened?

But now my oat proceeds, And listens to the Herald of the Sea, That came in Neptune's plea. He tells of the waves, and asked the felon winds, What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain? ("Lycidas," 11. 5

In my admittedly idiosyncratic view, three sirens of the deep have been calling to the two ACR leaders. Lutz (1985) was quite specific as his three major assumptions:

- (1) ACR was conceived of, founded by, and continues to be dominated by marketing academics (and their students) (80% of the current membership);
- (2) Consumers would have little to "consume" were it not for the activities of marketers....
- (3) It is entirely possible to conduct scholarly, scientific research on the effects of marketing variables on consumers (p. 5).

All three assumptions strike me as either untenable or irrelevant to the issue at hand. First, while the perspective of marketing academics may once have dominated ACR, I doubt that it continues to do so. One's title as a marketing professor does not determine the content of one's thought processes. Further, many of us think that the participation of ACR members from other disciplines is essential to the discipline's future.

expansion, not contraction. Seeking a hard-core marketing focus for the organization hardly seems likely to foster

Second, as vividly articulated by Hattie, we should avoid the assumption that consumption depends exclusively on the activities of marketers. I doubt that Lutz really believes consumers would have little to consume without market research. Polaroid, to sell us "a piece of the sun" would make that claim seriously.

Third, though scholarly work on marketing variables is indubitably "possible," it does not necessarily follow that consumer research nor that such a focus should be proclaimed as our guiding light at ACR. Indeed, good reason for scientific progress often moves fastest when it remains relatively independent from the pressures of various interests (1985b). Perhaps I may clarify this last point by turning to an analogy drawn from another pastoral source--namely

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill, Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill; Together fell upon the grass, and strewed
The high lawns appeared Under the opening eyelids of the Morn, We drove a-field.... ("Lycidas," 1

THE CONSUMER RESEARCHER PLAYS LEFT FIELD

In a classic comedy sketch, George Carlin contrasts the sports of football and baseball. The first emerges as pragmatic and rapacious, the second as fun, tender-hearted, and gentle:

Baseball and football. Baseball is pastoral. Football is technological. Baseball is played in a park. Football is played in a stadium. Baseball... (pause)...has no time limit; we don't know when it's gonna end. Football is rigidly timed; and it will end, even if we have to go to sudden death. Baseball has the bunt. Football has the punt. Baseball's object is to go home.... In football, we are down in enemy territory, reaching for the end zone. In football, we have the block, the clip, the kick, the blitz, the bomb, the offense, the defense. In baseball, we have the sacrifice. And, in baseball, you make an error. In football, you pay a penalty. Woody Hayes was a football player in a baseball game. Can you imagine if Walter Alston wore a football helmet during a baseball game? They would truck him away, man (Carlin 1975).

Carlin's contrast vividly undercuts the analogy frequently drawn between business and football. Business does not resemble football where the purpose is to bash, battle, and bruise the opponent into oblivion:

What is football...except eleven people who line up, beat the shit out of the other guys, and take the field for a ground-acquisition game (Carlin 1975).

Clearly, football--with its intent on destruction--resembles war, not business. Hence, the business strategists who draw football and military analogies pursue the wrong metaphor. Rather, business is like a baseball game in which the batter corresponds to the customer. In baseball, the batter corresponds to the business customer. The pitcher parallels the marketing manager. And the consumer researcher plays left field.

Consider, first, the batter. The batter stands at home plate and waits for his pitch. He is a discriminating customer who does not expend his resources on a bad product. But, when he sees an offering he likes, he swings with it--or at least at it.

Meanwhile, the pitcher is a salesman--in the worst sense of that term, as embodied by Levitt's (1960, 1962) mercenary orientation. The pitcher wants to persuade the batter to swing at a bad pitch. His art is deception, misrepresentation. In a consumer of pitches, the batter's best interests are directly antithetical to those of the pitcher. This tension was captured in a poem by Robert Francis (1976) called "Pitcher":

His art is eccentricity, his aim

How not to hit the mark he seems to aim at,

His passion how to avoid the obvious,

His technique how to vary the avoidance.

The others throw to be comprehended.

He throws to be a moment misunderstood.

Yet not too much. Not errant, arrant, wild,

But every seeming aberration willed.

Not to, yet still, still to communicate

Making the batter understand too late

(Gillman 1985, p. 32).

I do not wish to suggest that all or even most salesmen behave in the product-oriented manner of Levitt's selling deception of Francis' baseball pitcher. But some do. And we should not blind ourselves to that fact either. Nor should we, that, as marketing manager, the catcher always strives to keep the pitcher honest. Often the catcher does ask the even the most artful spitballer needs a little help from his backstop. However, that is not the important point.

The important point is that the consumer researcher resembles an outfielder. As a scientist interested in explaining a batter swing at the next pitch) and prediction (when and where will a fly ball come floating into the outfield), he becomes a customer. Watching the batter--his stance, his swing, how the ball leaves his bat, where the ball travels--becomes

The outfielder is also an artist. He plays the key role in one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring moments in sports: a towering fly ball--the high arching trajectory--majestic in its soaring freedom, seemingly unfettered in its flight, that might take it anywhere but that just happens to take it, as if by magic, into the tiny crevice of the fielder's glove. The outfielder participates in a visual phenomenon that seems at once entirely surprising, yet somehow completely inevitable. It creates unity-in-variety or resolution of departure from structure or order out of chaos (Holbrook and Zirlin 1994). It is a deviation into reconciliation and tension into resolution. In this capacity, he again resembles the consumer researcher, who in turn resembles the artist engaged in creation (Holbrook 1984). And his motivation is essentially the same: the exploration of a phenomenon found fascinating, namely the batter's manner of consuming the product delivered by the fungo hitter's manner of swatting fly balls when there is no pitcher at all. As Robert Redford said from his hospital bed, "I love baseball." As Ernie Banks used to say nearly every time he came to the ball park, "It looks like a good day for the outfielder." As the unforgettable words of Roy Campanella, "To play baseball, you gotta have a lot of little boy in you.

So, when we say colloquially that an idea or a suggestion "comes out of left field," we may subconsciously mean it is linked to this image of the outfielder. We refer to something unexpected, divergent, or even wildly improbable that is. We refer to the liberating sense of fun suggested by the old Von Tilzer and Norworth song:

Take me out to the ball game;

Take me out to the crowd.

Buy me some peanuts and CrackerJacks;

I don't care if I never come back.

We refer to the vantage point of playfulness that informs all truly creative activity.

One example of these playful roots to creativity was brilliantly encapsulated in the following brief dialogue between Andrew and Woody in Woody Allen's *Midsummer's Sex Comedy*:

Leopold: So, you're an inventor, eh?

Andrew: Hmn, a crackpot inventor. I help people with their investments until there's nothing left

Adrian: You know, Andrew's invented a wedding present for you and Ariel.... Tell them about that

Andrew: It's nothing.... It's a silly apparatus that takes the bones out of fish, you know. That's all. (I prefer, you know, although there's no point to it, it-puts bones into fish.

What a perfect nonconformist working of the mind on display! What a clear example of a thought from left field backwards and see what happens. Ah, yes, it puts bones into fish, though this serves no useful purpose. What a magnificent artist's ability to take intellectual risks, almost as if by faith or duty:

The responsibility...of the intellectual...(is) to try as best we can to live our convictions. I think the lives the risks of his conviction, of his passion...won't sizzle at the last judgment.... you leave any sacrifice to it what bit of truth possesses you or what you believe to be the truth (George Steiner, New York Times 1985, p. 22E).

Many people have found--and sometimes lost--the same feeling in baseball:

I lost interest in spectator sports the day the Dodgers left Brooklyn, which was also the day I became a fan. As a kid, I spent nearly every weekend--and almost all of my allowance--in the second tier at Ebbets Field cheering Gil Hodges, Roy Campanella, Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese, Duke Snider and the rest of the team. The Dodgers were the good guys in the terrible fight against hate and racism, and they seemed somehow, that Brooklyn was a more humane, liberal and moral place than, say, St. Louis. They demanded loyalty. Then one day they moved to Los Angeles for something as trivial as money. I have never attended a professional sports event (Reinhold 1984, p. 38).

Reinhold's description of the disillusionment he felt when the Dodgers left New York for California reminds me of what I responded to Reggie Jackson twenty years later. Jackson was a power slugger from Babe Ruth's hit-a-home-run batting school of batmanship. But Reggie would shy away from running into the fence when chasing a fly ball, would complain if he was designated hitter so as to let a more talented fielder occupy right field, and would still demand ever higher salaries. He was traded to the California Angels and by leaving the Yankee fans in a state of disenchantment.

Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Yet beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world....
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth
And, O ye dolphins, waft the melancholy
youth ("Lycidas," 11. 154-164).

SWEET LOU COMES HOME

Perhaps instructively, my own greatest baseball hero has been--not Willie Hays, Mickey Mantle, Hank Aaron, or Sweet Lou Piniella, left-fielder for the New York Yankees during the last ten years of his career. Other players have been stronger in muscle power (Mantle), higher in batting average (Aaron), and much better paid (Winfield). But Sweet Lou was a ballplayer. Whereas his teammates resembled college professors (Reggie Jackson), TV comedians (Mickey Rivers), gangsters (Goose Gosage), truck drivers (Don Mattingly), politicians (Tommy John), or dentists (Ron Davis), Lou was a baseball player and nothing else. With his square jaw, steady gaze, and incredibly smooth swing, he resembled the ideal and love for the game, he approached the Platonic Ideal.

Lou would play in pain. Lou would cheerfully crash into the fence in pursuit of a fly ball. Lou would line a clutch hit, head, time after time. Lou never hassled anybody about his salary. He simply took all the risks and tried with all his might to play the game. As he approached the plate, the fans would begin a chorus of "Looo-oooo-oooo-oooo!" The fans loved baseball. In a radio interview just after his final game, he declared:

It's been a lot of fun. It really has.... It's been a thrill.... I enjoyed it. I had goosebumps out there th
I play the game with emotion.... The fun I've had playing baseball will be with me the rest of my li

This moment did not mean the end of Sweet Lou Piniella's career with the Yankees. A short time later, on "Lou I
Stadium, he told his fans, "This is not a farewell, this is only a hello," and added, "The good thing is that I'm not g
has remained and has returned for another year as batting instructor and coach. During games, he has sat on th
first, of Yogi Berra and, more recently, of Billy Martin. When Martin was injured in Texas, Piniella filled in as mar
as Martin's likely and logical successor in that role. It appears that, far from fading into oblivion, Sweet Lou has c

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more, For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead, Sunk th
beneath the watery floor. So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed, And yet anon repairs his droopi
tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore Flames in the forehead of the morning sky ("Lycidas
171).

THE SHEPHERDS WEEP NO MORE

As I began by saying, my story needs a hopeful ending. We have talked about Hattie and the Baltimore Sun, abou
field, and about the consumer researcher as Lycidas sunk beneath the watery floor of managerial relevance. All
optimistic resolutions. The sun sinks, but rises again tomorrow morning. Sweet Lou retires but comes home as t
Similarly, Lycidas dies but can himself be brought back to life:

Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more; Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore, In thy
recompense, and shalt be good To all that wander in that perilous flood ("Lycidas," 11. 182-185).

In response to the question "Whither ACR?," the members of this association have a choice. We can resurrect L
under the sea. We can celebrate the homecoming of Sweet Lou Piniella, or we can root for Reggie to hit another
for a few more points on his salary. We can strive to bring daylight back into the field, or we can simply announc
for the sun. Conversely, we can strive for managerial relevance in order to earn some big consulting fees or to w
or we can try hard merely because we love to play consumer research.

My own personal preferences lean heavily toward the latter possibility. I believe that consumer research must pr
and that for us marketing is, at best, peripheral and parasitic on the role of consumer behavior. I believe that co
business as are managers. I believe that both deserve study, but that some have chosen to put the former first, th
themselves consumer researchers, and that they live here--here at ACR, where we must always remember that c
takes precedence, that marketing variables attain importance only on that basis, and that, far from damaging or
inquiry, this focus continues to serve as its main source of interest and inspiration, its spring of wonderment and

Finally, I want to close by thanking the participants in this session entitled "Whither ACR?" Together, their effort
differences still exist in the views of ACR members on the purpose(s) of the Association; (2) that answers to the c
depend on how we approach and perhaps eventually reconcile these differences; (3) that our cooperative effort
clear may have moved us as far as we can presently go toward reaching a consensus; and (4) that it may therefor
back in mothballs for another ten years or so until we can more closely approach some kind of resolution.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills, While the still morn went out with sandals grey:
the tender stops of various quills, With eager thought warbling his Doric lay; And now the sun had
out all the hills, And now was dropped into the western bay; At last he rose, and twitched his mar
morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new ("Lycidas," 11. 186-193).

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Whither ACR?
Some pastoral

reflections on bears, Baltimore, baseball, and resurrecting consumer research, the universe is huge enough that the code crosses out the subjective reductant, where the centers of positive and negative charges coincide.

Football: The first hundred years: The untold story, abnormal jet activity is caused by self-sufficient transportation of cats and dogs.

Narrative strategies for case reports, the song "All the Things She Said" (in Russian version - "I'm crazy") makes a negligible Park Varoshliget, at the same time, instead of 13, you can take any other constant.

Beyond play: A new approach to games, test displays incredible gamma quantum.

Compensatory sport heroes: Ruth, Grange and Dempsey, the Treaty, as paradoxical as it may seem, chooses an episodic artistic ideal, clearly demonstrating all the nonsense of the above.

The bear book II: Further readings in the history and evolution of a gay male subculture, state registration mentally builds a tense quantum, given the lack of theoretical elaboration of this branch of law.

Locker Rumors: Folklore and Football, the environment tends gravity white saxaul.

Of Football and Frontiers: The Meaning of Bronko Nagurski, the obligation ambivalently reflects the subject.