Once upon a time, in a story told and retold by my mother-in-law, one of her friends named Hattie pays for the Baltimore Sun. The buyer goes downtown. The consumer researcher plays left field. Sweet 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 our team.

Last year, in an ACR session entitled “The Vices and Virtues of Being Relevant: Perspectives on Consulting,” I prompted some debate by examining the forces that push consumer research toward managerial relevance, comparing these pressures to the Three Bears, likening our discipline to Goldilocks, and retelling the ancient tale in a new version that bore deadly consequences for our fair-haired heroine!


**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 has a hopeful resolution. I can think of no sadder but ultimately more hopeful tale than John Milton’s elegy on the death of Lycidas in which the poet “bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned...on the Irish Seas”.

**ABSTRACT**


**VOLUME**

1986

**AUTHORS**

Morris B. Holbrook, Columbia University

**SHARE PROCEEDING**

Acknowledgments

Gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the Columbia Business School’s Faculty Research Fund.

Truth and Beauty gets nowhere on the financial support provided by the Columbia Business School’s Faculty Research Fund.

The Bad News Bears are back! Only this time, they are wearing baseball uniforms, reading poetry, and playing on our team. Last year, in an ACR session entitled “The Vices and Virtues of Being Relevant: Perspectives on Consulting,” I prompted some debate by examining the forces that push consumer research toward managerial relevance, comparing these pressures to the Three Bears, likening our discipline to Goldilocks, and retelling the ancient tale in a new version that bore deadly consequences for our fair-haired heroine!

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

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

Goldilocks woke up with a start. She ran to the window and jumped out. And she never ever 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 authentic version) makes much difference to those who loved her dearly, I have learned one thing—namely that, as a metaphor for the fate of consumer research, my Three Bears story fails to do the trick. Besides, I’ve always liked bears and mean them no harm.

**ABSTRACT**


**VOLUME**

1986

**AUTHORS**

Morris B. Holbrook, Columbia University

**SHARE PROCEEDING**

Gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the Columbia Business School’s Faculty Research Fund.

Truth and Beauty gets nowhere on the financial support provided by the Columbia Business School’s Faculty Research Fund.


**THE BAD NEWS BEARS RETURN**

The Bad News Bears are back! Only this time, they are wearing baseball uniforms, reading poetry, and playing on our team. Last year, in an ACR session entitled “The Vices and Virtues of Being Relevant: Perspectives on Consulting,” I prompted some debate by examining the forces that push consumer research toward managerial relevance, comparing these pressures to the Three Bears, likening our discipline to Goldilocks, and retelling the ancient tale in a new version that bore deadly consequences for our fair-haired heroine!

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

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

Goldilocks woke up with a start. She ran to the window and jumped out. And she never ever 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 authentic version) makes much difference to those who loved her dearly, I have learned one thing—namely that, as a metaphor for the fate of consumer research, my 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 has a hopeful resolution. I can think of no sadder but ultimately more hopeful tale than John Milton’s elegy on the death of Lycidas in which the poet “bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned...on the Irish Seas”.

Bitter constraint, and and occasion dear, Compels me to disturb your learned Friend, unfortunately drowned...on the Irish Seas!

Irish Seas:

Lycedas is dead, dead ere his prime, Young Lycidas, and hath not left his
tunes that taste good (Holbrook 1985a, p. 30).

He must not float
like a rose in the ocean

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

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

Goldilocks woke up with a start. She ran to the window and jumped out. And she never ever 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 authentic version) makes much difference to those who loved her dearly, I have learned one thing—namely that, as a metaphor for the fate of consumer research, my 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 has a hopeful resolution. I can think of no sadder but ultimately more hopeful tale than John Milton’s elegy on the death of lycidas in which the poet “bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned...on the Irish Seas”.

Bitter constraint, and and occasion dear, Compels me to disturb your season due, For lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime, Young lycidas, and hath not left his peer. Who would not sing for lycidas? He knew himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme. He must not float upon his watery bier Unwept, and wither to the parching wind, Without the mead of some melodious tear ("Lycidas," Milton 1637. 11. 6-14).

I shall therefore take “Lycidas” as my symbol for the potential premature demise of consumer research—Lycidas, the fair-haired and beautiful shepherd boy who has drowned beneath the sea and “sunk... beneath the watery floor” (1. 167). This oceanic image recalls last 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 of lead and perform soggy pirouettes beneath a sea of managerial practicalities. As Charlie the Tuna found out to his dismay, the pursuit of Truth and Beauty gets nowhere on the ocean floor. Sorry, Charlie. Practitioners don’t 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 complaints voiced in the context of business schools or among consumer researchers. Apparently, we are like fish in water. We have so long been submerged under the influence of business sponsorship that we don’t even 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 with a story about the sun—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 Hattie pays for the Baltimore Sun. The buyer goes downtown. The consumer researcher plays left field. Sweet Lou comes home. The shepherds weep no more.
I want to use ‘buyer.’ You don’t go downtown to consume–you go downtown to buy” ([Molotsky] 1985, p. 44). However, well-intentioned, his treatment of “consumers” as people who “go downtown to buy” endangers the recognition that consumers are not just buyers and that our research should reflect this fact. Besides purchasing, consumers also engage in other forms of consumption involved in the acquisition, usage, and disposition of the products they consume.

Hattie understood, metaphorically, that consumers want to enjoy the sunshine and that marketers want to collect for the sun—that marketers want to charge them money for their consumption experiences. In other words, Hattie recognized that there is a fundamental difference in perspective between consumers and marketing managers and by extension, between marketing 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 should reflect the marketing manager’s concern for buying behavior and for phenomena related to purchase decisions and their impact on profitability.

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 the formulation of marketing strategy and the solution of marketing problems. But still, even though I deeply believe that marketing is the most worthwhile activity, many of us in marketing are popularly the most worthwhile business activity, many of us in marketing are in the position of trying to collect for the sun. Therefore, 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 the companies whose stocks I own to practice good marketing management and make lots of money. I want my students to go out and become good marketers and succeed on the job. I would even let my son marry a marketing woman.

Further, as Levitt (1960, 1962) has taught us so well, I recognize that marketing often involves a large component of customer orientation and, therefore, that any decent piece of consumer research may eventually be relevant to some marketer somewhere, some way, some time. But, as Levitt’s critics have insistently pointed out, customer orientation must be tempered by some concern for the firm’s skills, strengths, capabilities, resources, costs, and other internal constraints so that, ultimately, we arrive at what is sometimes called the profit orientation, the survival orientation, or the “marketing orientation” (in the truer sense of that abused term).

This marketing orientation, by focusing on internal considerations of the firm’s profitability, differs fundamentally from the perspective of the consumer. Accordingly, the research intended to serve it does and should differ fundamentally from consumer research. Thus, in my view, consumer research emerges from the perspective of the (value-seeking) consumer and marketing research adopts the orientation of the (profit-seeking) marketing manager. But, already, I have used such terms as “consumer,” “consumption,” “buying,” “business,” and “marketing”—words that have served as endless sources of confusion in our discipline and that occasionally have even led to the abandonment of consumers by some of their erstwhile most devoted friends and to the redefinition of consumer research by some of its most illustrious spokesmen.

Whaere were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep Closed o’er the head of your loved lycidas? (“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 passionate advocates.

“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. 44). However, well-intentioned, his treatment of “consumers” as people who “go downtown to buy” endangers the recognition that consumers are not just buyers and that our research should reflect this fact. Besides purchasing, consumers also engage in other forms of 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 ideas by living units.
- It encompasses much more than just the purchase of products and/or services by humans (Jacoby 1975, p. 979).
- Most definitions of consumer behavior shackle us by confining attention to purchase.
- 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, some of which have affected our own literature.

But the confusion between “buying” and “consuming” is not the only terminological problem that threatens us. Another concerns the meaning of the word “marketing” itself. On the wall outside my office, I have an old New Yorker cartoon. It shows a man coming out of the door, carrying a shopping basket, and
argued that "what the field pendulum has perhaps swung too far in which was characteristic of the organization association," echoed Sheth’s (1985) concern that In the 1985 ACR Call For Papers, Rich Lutz (1985) offered "some to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear, When first the white-thorn But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone, Now thou art gone and never Anyone who has agreed, even partially, with my comments to this point must guard it carefully. And if, perchance, we perspective, this view should serve as our window on definition) is to understand the nature of consumption motivation nor its main intention. The fundamental purpose events). Here, I freely admit that there is some tendency for much acquisition, usage, and disposition of products (goods, services, and articulation of the purpose for marketing research and (2) that I marketing research and consumer research. Their union minus their intersection is the null set. As we shall see, the 1985 ACR Call For Papers by Rich Lutz (this year’s Conference Chairman) conflates the two. Again, one might interpret Jack jacoby’s (1985a, b) position as blurring the distinction somewhat. Geraldine Fennell (1982), another friend from the world of consulting, also seems to suggest that marketing research and consumer research are (or at least should be) indistinguishable insofar as “marketing’s central assignment” involves “responding to consumer wants in a competitive environment” (p. 1). Thus, in their comprehensive review of marketing R & D, Myers, Massey, and Greyser (1980) suggest that in the early 1960’s...marketing research became, in effect, “consumer research,” and the emphasis was placed on developing theories of consumer motivation and behavior or consumer decision processes (p. 4). These examples reflect a prevalent conception based on considerable common sense. Indeed, compared to the difference between marketing research and say, biophysics, marketing and consumer research do seem almost identical. Further, the tendency to squelch the two may exhibit nothing more than one side of the age-old debate between those inclined to see the One and those drawn instead to a view of the Many. Almost 2500 years ago, two Greek philosophers named Heraclitus and Parmenides represented opposite sides of a controversy that most of us still grapple with millennia later. This controversy concerns what Hare (1982) calls the problem of the One and the Many and stems from the fact that people adopt contrasting world views. Some see everything as different and changing. Others see everything as constant and the same: Two great philosophers...took up opposite points of view on the problem of ‘The One and the Many.’ The first was 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 immobile (pp. 12-13). Clearly, those who insist that “buyers” and “consumers,” “marketing management” and “business,” or “marketing research” and “consumer research” are the same things adopt a Parmenidean view of our world. They receive support from a 2500-year-old philosophical tradition. Yet I believe that they blur some important distinctions, fudge some key contrasts, and thereby encourage confusion. Accordingly, I 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 terminology. I shall define “business research” as investigations pertaining to customer-manager interactions broadly considered. For example, business research would include work on public policy or on social welfare. In accord with the official AMA viewpoint (Marketing News 1985, p. 1) and the book by Myers, Massey, and Greyser (1980), I shall define “marketing research” as investigations intended to address managerial problems and to provide practical solutions or applications for marketing managers. A basic assumption adopted by the ERDAM Commission... was that the broad purpose of knowledge development in marketing should be to improve, or make more effective, marketing management. Marketing’s 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 consumption phenomena (e.g., acquiring, using, disposing, etc.) and that contribute managerial applications, if at all, only incidentally or even by accident. Notice that, as just defined, business research encompasses all or most marketing research and some consumer research, while consumer and marketing 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 for marketing research and (2) that I view consumer research as having a different objective—namely, to understand consumption behavior in the acquisition, usage, and disposition of products (goods, services, and other consumable events). Here, I freely admit that there is some tendency for much consumer research to be or to become relevant to the decisions of marketing managers. I only wish to claim that, whatever its relevance to practitioners, managerial applicability does not serve as its primary motivation nor its main intention. The fundamental purpose for consumer research (in my definition) is to understand the nature of consumption behavior broadly conceived. From my perspective, this view should serve as our window on the world. It is like the contact lens through which we observe reality. But, like a contact lens, it easily gets misplaced. We must guard it carefully. And if, perchance, we drop it, we must bend and search for it before we lose it or someone else tramples it under foot. Anyone who has agreed, even partially, with my comments to this point must surely have reacted with alarm to ACR’s 1985 Call For Papers (Lutz 1985). But, ohl the heavy change, now thou art gone, Now thou art gone and never must return....... As killing as the carrier to the rose, Or taint worn to the wearing herds that graze, Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear, When first the white-thorn blowes. Such, lycidas, thy loss to shepherd’s ear (“Lycidas,” 11. 38-49). In the 1985 ACR Call For Papers, Rich Lutz (1985) offered “some thoughts on the ‘state of the association,’ ” echoed Sheth’s (1985) concern that “ACR has lost some of the ‘excitement’ which was characteristic of the organization during the 1970’s,” suggested that “the pendulum has perhaps swung too far in the direction of broadening consumer research,” argued that “what the field needs is more systematic attention to the ‘core’ of the domain
rather than its fringes,” specified that “the core of the domain of consumer behavior rests both empirically and 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 the past and 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 by Rich Yalch (1985) 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 members who have formed the heart of the Association since its beginning. At present, these individuals (and hence 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 constitutes important areas of interest.... In addition to being skeptical of the contribution of this endeavor, my concern is that younger, impressionable members of the discipline might mistake the leaders’ temporary disinterest with the discipline’s core areas of research and fascination with the fringe areas as evidence of a major paradigm shift.... However,... the focus will remain on the purchase behavior of the “shopper” in the household for 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 biased position) that these 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 But now my oat proceeds, And listens to the Herald of the Sea, That came by turning to an analogy drawn from another pastoral source—namely, baseball.

Consider, first, the batter. The batter stands at home plate and waits for the base-runners. In football, there is no meaningful analogy to the business strategists who dwell excessively on football and military analogies pursue the wrong metaphor. Rather, business is like a baseball game in which the sphere of action at any moment includes a batter, a pitcher, a catcher, some other fielders, and maybe some base-runners. In football, there is no meaningful analogy to the customer. In baseball, the batter corresponds to the business customer. The pitch the pitcher parallels the salesman. The catcher resembles the marketing manager. And 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, tough-minded, 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 hunt. 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 wears a baseball hat during the football game. Can you imagine if Walter Alston wore a football helmet during the baseball game? They would throw him away, man (Carlin 1975).

Carlin’s contrast vividly underscores the analogy frequently drawn between business and football. Business does not resemble a football game, 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 their land? It’s a ground-acquisition game (Carlin 1975).

Clearly, football—with its intent on destruction—resembles war, not business. Hence, the business strategist who dwell excessively on football and military analogies pursue the wrong metaphor. Rather, business is like a baseball game in which the sphere of action at any moment includes a batter, a pitcher, a catcher, some other fielders, and maybe some base-runners. In football, there is no meaningful analogy to the customer. In baseball, the batter corresponds to the business customer. The pitch the pitcher parallels the salesman. The catcher resembles the marketing manager. And the consumer researcher plays left field.

Considering this, the batter stands at home plate and waits for his pitch. He is a discriminating customer. He does not want to 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) merciless critique of the selling orientation. The pitcher wants to persuade the batter to swing at a bad pitch. His art is deception, misrepresentation, and chicanery. As the consumer of pitches, the batter’s best interests are directly antithetical to those of the pitcher. This tension was beautifully 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 Lievitt’s selling orientation nor with the deception of Francis’ baseball pitcher. But some do. And we should not blind ourselves to that fact either. Nor should we blithely assume that, as marketing manager, the catcher always strives to keep the pitcher honest.

Often the catcher does ask the pitcher to throw strikes. But 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 explanation (why or how might the batter swing at the next pitch) and prediction (when and where will a fly ball come floating into the outfield), he focuses primarily on the customer. Watching the batter—his stance, his swing, how the ball leaves his bat, where the ball travels becomes his chief preoccupation.

The outfielder is also an artist. He plays the key role in one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring moments in all sports. I refer to the towering fly ball—the high arching trajectory—majestic in its soaring freedom, seemingly-unfettered in its flight, apparently capable of a path that might take it anywhere but that just happens to take it, as if by magic, into the tiniest crevice of the fielder’s outstretched glove. Thus, the outfielder participates in a visual phenomenon that seems at once entirely surprising, yet somehow completely inevitable. Just as an artist creates unity-in-variety or resolution of departure from structure or order out of chaos (Holbrook 1984), the outfielder’s motivation is essentially similar: joyful exploration of a phenomenon found fascinating, namely the batter’s manner of consuming the product delivered by the pitcher or even the fungo hitter’s manner of swatting fly balls when there is no pitcher at all. As Robert Redford said from his hospital bed in The Natural, “Gid, 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 a game; let’s play two.”

One example of many artists has been the American composer, 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 something very closely linked to this image of the outfielder. We refer to something unexpected, divergent, or even wildly improbable that somehow magically fits. 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 CrackerJack;
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 many such artists can be found in the following brief dialogue between Leopold, Adrian, and Andrew in Woody Allen’s Midsummer’s Sex Comedy:

Leopold: So, you’re an inventor, eh?
Andrew: Hrn, 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 it’s all. Oh, if you 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! Let’s turn the handle backwards and see what happens. Ah, yes, it puts bones into fish, though this serves no useful purpose. What a marvelous evocation of the 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 person who lives the risks of his conviction, of his passion...won’t sizzle at the last judgment... you leave any city rather than sacrifice to it what bit of truth possesses you or what you believe to be the truth (George Steiner, quoted by the 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 cynic. As a kid, I spent nearly every weekend—and almost all of my allowance—on the second tier at Ebbets Field cheering Gil Hodges, Roy Campanella, Jackie Robinson, Pee Wee Reese, Duke Snider and the rest of the great team. The Dodgers were the good guys in the terrible fight against hate and racism, and they seemed to say, somehow, that Brooklyn was a more humane, liberal and moral place than, say, St. Louis. They deserved our loyalty. Then one day they moved to Los Angeles for something as trivial as money. I have never again been to a professional sports event (Rheinold 1984, p. 38).

Rainchild’s description of the disillusionment he felt when the Dodgers left New York for California reminds me of the way the Yankee fans responded to Reggie Jackson twenty years later. Jackson was a power slugger from Babe Ruth’s hit-a-home-run-or-strike-out school of batmanship. But Reggie would shy away from running into the fence when chasing a fly ball, would complain if asked to play the role of designated hitter so as to let a more talented fielder occupy right field, and would still demand ever higher salaries. Reggie finished by getting 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; Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides, Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide Visit at the bottom of the monstrous world... Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt
Perhaps instructively, my own greatest baseball hero has been—not Willie Hays, Mickey Mantle, Hank Aaron, or Dave Winfield—but rather Sweet Lou Piniella, left fielder for the New York Yankees during the last ten years of his career. Other players have been flesh of flesh (Mays), stronger in muscle power (Mantle), higher in batting average (Aaron), and much better paid (Winfield). But Sweet Lou was the quintessential ballplayer. Whereas his teammates resembled college professors (Reggie Jackson), TV comedians (Mickey Rivers), movie stars (Bucky Dent), gangsters (Goose Gossage), truck drivers (Don Mattingly), politicians (Tommy John), or dentists (Ron Davis), Lou Piniella looked like a baseball player and nothing else. With his square jaw, steady gaze, and incredibly smooth swing, he resembled the prototype; but, in spirit and love for the game, he approached the Platonic ideal.

(for remaining references, please contact author.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Featured papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **FEATURED** Non-normative influence of self-decided prices on product-related inferences  
Sudipta Mukherjee, Virginia Tech, USA  
Mario Pandelaere, Virginia Tech, USA  |
| **FEATURED** K10. The Acronym Effect: Acronym and Buzzword Use Lowers Consumer Persuasion  
Sumitra Auschatrakul, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce  
Dan King, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, USA  
Ashesh Mukherjee, McGill University, Canada  |

**Engage with Us**

Becoming an Association for Consumer Research member is simple. Membership in ACR is relatively inexpensive, but brings significant benefits to its members.