Unlocking Our Potential: Collaborating with Local and Global Institutions to Advance a *Macro Ethos* for a More Just, Safe, Inclusive and Sustainable World

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Abstract

Marketing—when administered responsibly, inclusively, justly, and systemically over place and time—holds extraordinary promise to unlock humanity's potential for a better world, capable of pulling millions of people from poverty, protecting our environment, and creating and sustaining peace, prosperity and well-being. This *Macro Ethos* is illuminated in an article shared by Macromarketing scholars with interests in scholarly contributions, which impact in ways that enhance the well-being of people, societies and the fragile biosphere we inhabit, on a large scale. Key foci include happiness and its measures; bridging divides via training for collaboration, critical thinking, and a sustainable future; marketing during wartime, with insights from Ukraine and implications for resilience, adaptation and peaceful prosperity; public marketing, Macromarketing, activism and constructive engagement; and developing more responsible, harmonic, and supportive societies in Brazil and beyond. The authors conclude with some discussion, including opportunities for further collaboration and impactful research.

Keywords

macromarketing, happiness, marketing systems, social justice, war resilience and adaptation, peacemaking, constructive engagement, sustainability

Marketing-when administered responsibly, inclusively, justly, and systemically over place and time-holds extraordinary promise to unlock humanity's potential for a better world, capable of pulling millions of people from poverty, protecting our environment and the people dependent on it for survival, and creating and sustaining peace, prosperity and well-being. This position is frequently expressed in Macromarketing articles, our classrooms, and at conferences sponsored by the Macromarketing Society and other organizations and associations¹ around the world. And for good reason; truly, to anyone attuned to the existentially threatening seismic events unfolding around us, a Macro Ethos is imperative. Questions could be and should be asked however about the reach and societal impact of Macromarketing research, teaching and practice; the extent to which we affect the world beyond the academy and how we might better serve local and global stakeholders through collaborations with catalytic institutions-governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), multi-lateral aid agencies, religious institutions and civil-society organizations-to actualize our goals for a better world on a larger, more impactful and sustainable scale (see also, for example, Laczniak & Shultz, 2021; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021; Shultz et al., 2017; Shultz et al., 2022; Sirgy, 2021; Wooliscroft & Ganglmair-Wooliscroft, 2021).

At the 2024 Macromarketing Conference held in Finland and hosted by HANKEN and the University of Helsinki, a panel of Macromarketing scholars with keen interests in complex and often distressed marketing systems assembled to present research and to discuss themes captured in the title of this commentary. Each panelist was/is working with catalytic

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institutions to conduct theoretical and empirical research, and also to apply research findings in ways that help people, communities, countries, regions and our planet. More specifically, we set-out to explore and discuss ways to unlock the potential of marketing and marketing systems—and the billions of people in them and affected by them—for a better, and more just and sustainable world.

The key to unlocking our potential, in our view, is collaboration with local and global institutions of scale, scope, credibility, and influence that are catalysts for systemic change in profound, positive and far-reaching ways.

At the conclusion of the Conference, panelists departed Helsinki and went their separate ways. Some days later and after considerable reflection, participants were encouraged to share with the panel chairs, Cliff Shultz and Andres Barrios, a synopsis of their presentations, including any helpful ideas that emerged during the discussion and perhaps building on the panelists' own reflections. The chairs in turn edited the synopses and organized them as found below; this work forms the body of this commentary, which is followed by some further reflections on what we deem to be key themes and compelling foci for research. In addition to sharing what we hope is thoughtprovoking material, we also hope to provide a bridge of sorts to future conferences, including the 2025 Macromarketing Conference, held in Rio de Janeiro, hosted by its Pontifical Catholic University. We should also like to note that the "Rio Conference" is the 50th Annual Macromarketing Conference.

Primer on Panelists and Presentations

Happiness, one could argue, is or should be an integral measure of a successful marketing system. Truly, if the system provides an accessible assortment of goods, services and experiences, which lead to happiness across socioeconomic strata and over time and place, then the factors that predict/cause happiness in that system should be a high priority for Macromarketing scholars. Toward that possible outcome, in "What to Think and Do about National Happiness?", Petteri Repo raises our consciousness about happiness, with some emphasis on its complexity and nuances, measurement, and ways to increase it among societies. Focusing largely on Nordic countries—which typically receive the highest scores for happiness-Petteri encourages us to ponder how well the 'happy' Nordic model (and we would suggest any model) copes with what most readers might consider to be the two great challenges of our time: climate change and wartime. Issues we explore further, below.

In "Bridging the Divides: Training for Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and a Sustainable Future," the scale and scope of threats to societies are succinctly laid bare by Frederic Jallat, as humanity grapples with sectarianism, socio-political schisms, various conflicts, disinformation and increasing distrust in institutions. Frederic further observes that such challenges also create opportunities for Macromarketers to build a better future. By adopting methodological approaches, while emphasizing collaboration, critical thinking, and tolerance, we can be vanguards for a more peaceful, just and inclusive world. Toward those outcomes, Jallat proposes we must understand the landscape of division, move toward mutual respect for and cooperation with others, and build platforms of academic exchanges, collaboration and education. He concludes that pragmatism in the academy, critical thinking, and holistic approaches are most likely to redress climate change and social injustice while also promoting political probity and a more educated and informed society.

Russia's aggressive and unprovoked war on Ukraine has caused unimaginable death and destruction. But even amidst the horrors of war-and often because of them-marketing is crucial to survival and higher orders of eudaimonia. In "Changes in Marketing Strategies during Wartime: Insights and Implications from Ukraine," Sofiya Opatska, Ihor Blystiv and Clifford Shultz report on Ukraine's remarkable resilience; indeed, terror and massive devastation have forced adaptation and a flexible and innovative marketing system able to provide goods and services in ways that might have been unthinkable prior to Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Among many success stories, financial institutions continue to thrive, trains run according to schedules, businesses actively meet myriad consumer and societal needs, and schools and universities continue to offer well-attended classes. The authors share examples from experiences regarding the war's influences on marketing activities of national and international companies operating from and in Ukraine, with implications for hope, resilience, and sustainable peace, prosperity and well-being².

In "Public Marketing, Macromarketing, and Activism," João Felipe Sauerbronn expresses concerns about the disconnects among academia, scholars, and society, which are exacerbated by the academic pressure and rewards to engage in activities and to chase measures of "excellence" that have little or barely discernible positive impact on people's lives. Drawing from sociology (e.g., Burawoy, 2005), Sauerbronn offers a typology for Macromarketing to spark discussion regarding actions-academic, extra-academic, critical and public-that can drive change in the academy, in the best interests of society. This transposition of marketing leads to a possible conclusion that activism can facilitate the co-production of knowledge, enabling us—the marketing academy—to work together with local and global institutions to foster a more just, safe, inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world. Activism that is willfully and constructively engaging with both like-minded others and contentious adversaries, across and throughout catalytic institutions, would seem to be paramount.

Macromarketers are committed to the study of vulnerable populations in society. Marcus Hemais, in collaboration with students, colleagues and participating vulnerable groups, has fully embraced research in the field, with societal impact. In "Collaborating with Mulheres do Salgueiro to Develop a More Responsible, Harmonic, and Supportive Society in Brazil," Marcus shares reflections from a study of vulnerable women in Brazil who seek to defend themselves from oppressive market(ing) practices. The research design included constructively engaging with a collective of women known as Mulheres do Salgueiro (Women from Salgueiro). Hemais draws attention to the genesis and process of this study and some epiphanies along the way, including the discovery that marketing need not manifest in a traditional capitalist nature; rather, it can follow a collective logic, underpinned by love, toward building a more responsible, harmonic, and supportive society.

In addition to the intrinsically useful knowledge shared by the panelists, we again (1) intend for this commentary to capture key themes of the panel/session-and presumably key themes of myriad institutions more broadly-committed to the sustainable well-being of Homo sapiens and the delicate biosphere we inhabit, and (2) present this commentary as a bridge between the 2024 Macromarketing Conference held in Helsinki and the 2025 Macromarketing Conference in Rio de Janeiro. Accordingly, to the second point, the first essay was written by one of the co-chairs of the 2024 Conference, Petteri Repo, and the last two essays were written by the co-chairs of the 2025 Macromarketing Conference, João Felipe Sauerbronn, and Marcus Hemais Wilcox. Importantly to the matter of content, all the text comprising this article, including the select essays and comments below, are organized and placed to facilitate a narrative flow, as hinted above, and are not intended to indicate importance or contribution.

What to Think and Do about National Happiness?

Petteri Repo, University of Helsinki, Centre for Consumer Society Research

How is happiness measured and what can be done to increase it? This question is at the heart of the World Happiness Report, launched by the United Nations in 2012. The first part of the question is fairly easy to answer, as happiness is measured by responding to a survey on imaginary steps numbered from 0, with the worst possible life for oneself, to 10, with the best possible life. It is essentially a simple and subjective, though intricately constructed, measure that provides easily comparable insights into a complex matter.

Indeed, the follow-up question about increasing or even explaining happiness confirms that achieving happiness is a complex matter. The reports identify six variables as particularly important: GDP per capita (which measures economic performance), social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices (which includes human rights), generosity and perceptions of corruption (which involves trust in governments and other people). These six variables were chosen because they are thought to be significantly related to subjective well-being and, in particular, life evaluation. They are reported to explain more than three-quarters of the variation in scores across countries and years (Helliwell et al., 2024). There are also additional exploratory approaches to explaining happiness, including age, inequality and balance/ harmony in reports (Helliwell et al., 2022, 2023, Helliwell et al., 2024).

Four countries have topped the happiness list: Denmark (2012–13, 2016), Switzerland (2015), Norway (2017) and

Finland (2018–25). The Nordic countries have all performed remarkably well on the World Happiness Index, with Finland topping the list for the eighth consecutive year and Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden all in the top seven of the current country ranking (Helliwell et al., 2025). How can this be, and is there anything that the index and its associated variables measure that would promote a happier world?

It is far from easy to reproduce the Nordic formula for national happiness. Evidence goes so far as to suggest that not even all Finns agree with the happiness index, and national debates on the matter have become polarized to perceive Finland from either utopian or dystopian perspectives (De Paola & Pirttilä-Backman, 2022). Attempts to perform well in country rankings by advocating particular policies are also evident in many other countries in efforts that can be described as "knowledge alchemy" (Erkkilä et al., 2023). Critical views of the World Happiness Index question the use of the happiness index to rank countries (Carlsen, 2020), challenge the methodologies used (Tofallis, 2020), and observe that the index is positioned too closely to economic theory (Devey, 2023).

It is undoubtedly a challenging task to explain subjective perceptions of happiness with objective variables in an attempt to create something akin to an objective and comparable index. Nevertheless, the experience of the World Values Survey encourages the mapping of countries as cultural groups (Inglehart, 1997), and the Macromarketing framework of quality-of-life in distressed and flourishing communities (Shultz et al., 2017) suggests examining institutional dynamics rather than countries and underlying variables. It is not far-fetched to consider the cultural group of Nordic countries as institutionally functioning communities, which therefore score well on the happiness index. A separate observation is that the constructs used in the two other approaches seem to be positioned closer to the main model than in the happiness initiative. The autonomous agency of people to pursue happy lives will also have an effect on the measurements, too.

Returning to the dominance of the Nordic countries in the happiness index, these countries have followed different historical and institutional paths leading to societies that are difficult to replicate elsewhere. What is internationally recognized as the Nordic welfare state combines relatively high levels of taxation with the provision of public services particularly in health and education. Labor market practices are closely linked to social policy, although they are implemented in varying ways in different countries. These are all part of the explanation for people's opportunities to pursue happiness in the Nordic countries.

Perhaps the organization of functional economic and social structures is indeed a prerequisite for happiness. On the other hand, a combination of reasonable material wealth and reasonable rather than exaggerated subjective expectations could also be useful approaches. It will be compelling to follow-up on how well the 'happy' Nordic model copes with the two great challenges of our time: climate change and wartime.

Bridging the Divides: Training for Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and a Sustainable Future

Frederic Jallat, ESCP Business School

Our contemporary society grapples with various issues sectarianism, socio-political schisms, low intensity conflicts and increasing distrust in institutions. From violent conflict depicted in a recent American movie, *Civil War* (Garland, 2024), to the socio-political schisms we witness today, these phenomena highlight a growing trend of increased inequalities in power-sharing, a pervasive lack of trust, and the fateful rise of fake news and disinformation.

We, as educators, researchers, professors, and (potential) role models should adopt methodological approaches that emphasize collaboration, critical thinking, open-mindedness and exchange of ideas in order to foster a more balanced, educated, peaceful, and inclusive world.

Understanding the Landscape of Division

Terms like sectarianism, antagonism, dogmatism, exclusion, and war illuminate the critical landscape we find ourselves in today. These words serve not just as descriptors of societal issues but as symptoms of a deeper malaise, a disconnection at every level of society. Political polarization is evident in the divisive rhetoric surrounding political figures such as Trump and Harris in the US, and fault lines persist within Europe as right-wing extremism clashes with more progressive factions. This environment creates a battleground where nuanced discussion is often overshadowed by simplified, adversarial narratives where "*me against you*" is the rule rather than the exception.

The result is a chilling effect on dialogue, intellectual reflection and mutual understanding. We see this starkly illustrated in conflicts that pit groups against one another, such as pro-Hamas sentiments against Jewish students in some western universities last summer. These conflicts underscore the urgent need for a way forward that emphasizes collaboration rather than division.

Moving toward "Me" and "You"

The reorientation from a mindset of "me or you" (in the best case) or "me against you" (in the worst scenarios) to "me *and* you" is vital. This shift necessitates methodological frameworks that engender understanding and cooperation, moving beyond entrenched positions that easily devolve into adversarial antagonism.

As educators and influencers, we, professors and academics are in a prime position to champion this cognitive transition through teaching, reflections and advocacy. To facilitate this change for a balanced, more inclusive and peaceful world, academics should adhere, in our opinion, to four main methodological principles that would guide their engagement, contribution and positive impact on society. Highlighting the Concept of Focal Points - Encouraging the Blend of Micro and Macro Approaches as major Methodological Constructs. The concept of focal points in understanding phenomena involves analyzing situations through both micro and macro lenses, which provide distinct yet interconnected perspectives.

Macro and holistic approaches are methodological constructs that emphasize examining systems, structures, and interconnected components on a large scale. The *Macromarketing Society* itself promotes the idea that markets, marketing and society are connected into a networked system that shapes economic, political and ecological outcomes as well as global human welfare, now and well into the future.

Beyond marketing, a macro approach focuses on understanding the broader context, such as social, economic, and political factors that shape phenomena, revealing patterns and trends within entire systems. The approach enables a comprehensive analysis, allowing researchers to capture complexity, understand interdependencies, and account for both the overarching forces and the interactions between various elements in a given system.

At the micro level, the analysis focuses on individual components, such as people, relationships, and immediate contexts. It examines how personal motivations, daily interactions, and localized experiences shape and define a phenomenon. This approach provides a detailed understanding of how people are directly affected and how they navigate their immediate environment.

Understanding a phenomenon comprehensively requires shifting between these focal points.

While the micro view provides depth and richness, the macro view reveals patterns and root causes. Together, they offer a more holistic understanding, highlighting both individual experiences and structural forces shaping the phenomenon.

An interesting illustration of the nuance of focal points is provided when analyzing criminal phenomena, examining various levels of context-micro and macro.

A famous TV series, *Narcos* (Brancato et al., 2017), illustrates how these focal points shape our understanding of crime. By shifting between Escobar's personal story, community relationships, and his influence on national and international scales, the narrative shows how perceptions vary drastically depending on the chosen focus. The micro perspective emphasizes his direct impact on individuals and microsocieties, like providing money and housing for the poor, which portrays him as a benefactor to some. Meanwhile, at the macro level, where exploring the broader societal and systemic effects of his actions, such as widespread violence, political corruption, and the global drug trade, Escobar emerges as a destructive force, a "monster," in the eyes of law and order.

This duality reveals the complexity of phenomena: no single perspective can fully encapsulate the reality, as micro and macro viewpoints provide contrasting yet interconnected narratives.

Going Back to Facts—a Healthy Move toward Pragmatism.

"Theories divide, facts unite," according to common wisdom.

An important principle of education is pragmatism, especially in social sciences like marketing, which calls for a commitment to empirical evidence and factual integrity. It warns against the pitfalls of theoretical dogmatism that can often cloud judgment and foster division. This commitment to pragmatism not only nurtures better understanding but also builds a platform for constructive discourse. By focusing on facts rather than ideological constructs, we can bridge some of the most pressing divides in our society.

In practice, this means our discussions and analyses must begin with verified data and real-life implications. When approaching complex issues such as inequality or social conflict, we must ground our conversations in tangible experiences and facts that can be universally recognized, devoid of ideological bias. This approach will encourage constructive dialogue and lead us away from entrenched positions.

Integrating the Principles of Limited Rationality and Cognitive Biases in our Analyses. Understanding the emotional undercurrents that inform decision-making is critical in fostering meaningful dialogues. We must recognize that human behavior is often irrational, influenced by various cognitive biases that can lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding. By creating safe spaces for individuals to articulate their fears, hopes, and misunderstandings, we lay the groundwork for empathetic dialogue. Engaging emotions positively can catalyze the collaborative efforts needed to counteract the impacts of disinformation and fake news, both rampant in today's media landscape.

The Power of Questioning: Socratic Maieutics at the age of Al. Finally, the Socratic method of questioning remains a form of inquiry that probes deeper into our assumptions and beliefs by continually asking *Why*? This principle encourages critical thinking and self-reflection, essential tools in combating entrenched ideologies. Fostering a culture of inquiry within educational settings may empower students and communities to critically assess their views and the information to which they are exposed. Socratic questioning allows us to unearth shared values and common ground, countering the binary thinking that dominates discussions surrounding current sociopolitical tensions and contentious issues.

Building Platforms of Academic Exchanges, Collaboration and Education for a Better Future

By embracing pragmatism, recognizing the importance of emotions in many socio-political engagements, and fostering a culture of inquiry, educators and professors may be instrumental to confront a large array of challenges and major societal issues. Educational institutions and universities can serve as incubators for new initiatives led by pragmatism, critical thinking, and a more holistic approach, to serve and focus on various issues—from addressing climate change and social injustice to promoting political probity and a more educated society.

Changes in Marketing Strategies During Wartime: Insights and Implications from Ukraine

Sofiya Opatska, Ukrainian Catholic University

Ihor Blystiv, Ukrainian Catholic University

Clifford Shultz, Loyola University Chicago

At the time of this writing, Ukraine has been enduring a full-scale invasion by Russia for more than three years. The experience of Russia's war in Ukraine is overwhelming and hard to process, as it affects nearly all aspects of everyday life and human behavior. Some people have been forcibly displaced or relocated twice in the last 10 years since the annexation of Crimea and the attack on Luhansk and Donetsk region. This reckless war of aggression inflicts unconscionable destruction on marketing systems, including the people in them and displaced from them, and on many stakeholders affected by those systems.

Amid this devastating experience, we also see remarkable resilience and adaptation in Ukraine. For example, despite profound hardship and sacrifice, the banking sector is fully functioning, trains are running according to schedules, businesses actively meet myriad consumer and societal needs, and schools and universities continue to offer classes and professors continue to teach.

In this essay, we highlight some reflections from experiences of how war influences the marketing activities of companies operating from and in Ukraine—a truly distressed marketing system—both nationally and internationally, and with implications for sustainable peace, prosperity and well-being.

Demographics and displacement have emerged as complex challenges for numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as businesses, in their strategic planning and decision-making processes. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2024), 3.7 million people have been displaced inside Ukraine, while an additional 6.7 million refugees from Ukraine were seeking safety beyond Ukraine's borders, including 6.2 million in countries across Europe (see also International Organization for Migration, 2024). Such massive movement across the border renders difficult the reporting of precise numbers. Data regarding people killed are indefinite and classified by the state. Thus, most marketing directors searching for data since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion rely on mobile operators and the banking sector, which is atypical, but requisite. Various signals indicate the population inside the country now is approximately 1/4 less than it was before Russia's annexation of Crimea and occupation of territories. According to the government's Demographic Development Strategy, by July 2024 Ukraine's population had decreased to 35.8 million, of which 31.1 million lived in territories under Kyiv's control. Therefore, the focus of many businesses moved from satisfying the needs of customers inside Ukraine to international markets. This pivot is now recognized as an appropriate perhaps existential—strategy for crisis management necessitated by war; indeed, the war

gives managers and employees new energy, and creates a supporting dynamic for the leaps of faith that result in a search for initiatives and opportunities, be these projects aimed at brand bolstering, the creation of new alliances, internationalization, the upgrading of technologies, or the launching of new products and reputation enhancement projects (Oblój and Voronovska 2024, p. 103).

The importance of subsequent markets/customers, goods, services, networks, information, technologies, capital, and alliances now and in the future cannot be overstated.

The war crisis also created a newly grown Ukrainian diaspora, which in turn raised the global profile of Ukraine and related goodwill. The current and future strategic trajectory for Ukrainian business, markets and marketing has greatly increased. International markets and partnerships are now integral to strategic forward thinking and are anticipated by many Ukrainian company managers, as well as policy makers and international/global customers and suppliers (Opatska et al., 2023).

Brand manifestation of international companies has changed markedly during and following strategic decisions to withdraw from Russia due to the war (e.g., Kovalenko, 2025; Marcinkowska, 2022; Pajuste & Toniolo, 2022), as hundreds of brand managers and the senior leadership of their companies fretted whether doing business in or with Russia was ethical, or even worthwhile (Shultz et al., 2025). A similar process occurred in Ukraine. It is important for Ukrainian consumers to understand what position a brand/company has taken regarding cooperation with the aggressor country, and whether the company has withdrawn from Russia, or whether it is donating to the armed forces and humanitarian needs. These concerns were not important or relevant in peacetime. The years 2022-2023 were "years of manifestos". where brands declared their positions through communications, and consumers perceived the brand as "theirs" or "alien". We saw attempts to boycott major brands that did not withdraw from Russia, and Ukrainians played a role as activists and as consumers. Unfortunately, in the second half of 2023 and 2024, this trend of "patriotism" and "declaration of position" significantly weakened.

However, another, much deeper context has emerged. Ukrainians are gradually replacing Russian narratives, content, culture, cinema and language from their space, with Ukrainian. In essence, we see a phenomenon of searching for Ukrainian identity and meanings. The period of full-scale invasion spawned the flourishing of Ukrainian music, cinema, Ukrainian-language YouTube, and podcasts, to name but a few examples. Ukrainians have become more interested in their own cuisine; there is an interest in the authentic Ukrainian traditions, which were prohibited by the totalitarian soviet system and later marginalized by Russian narratives. Today, we see a boom in Ukrainian clothing and jewelry products. Ukrainians are trying to find their roots and their way, which provide extraordinary opportunities for Ukrainian brands. In a brave new world of global social media, the war in Ukraine has captured the world's interest in Ukrainian culture, art and clothing, which opens a window of opportunity for Ukrainian artists, brands and manufacturers. We see Ukrainian clothing brands increasingly chosen by global celebrities and appearing in international markets.

Ukrainians have been and remain demanding of services and products, and their high level of digitalization plays a significant role in continuing everyday activities and creates expectations toward businesses. A notable example of digitalization is the banking system or postal services, which continue operating even during blackouts and the absence of electricity. The State of Ukraine developed a digital product called Diya, which other countries are ready to export and use. Ukrainians can use Diya not only as document storage but also for claiming damages due to war, opening a business in a couple of clicks, education, even getting married without being in one place. Despite the war, Ukrainian companies and brands maintain a supply of products and a level of service that enable Ukraine and its people to endure and often to thrive. On the other hand, we see that people's incomes are decreasing; therefore, brand managers are increasingly trying to offer special prices, deeper discounts, or to reduce the cost of a single purchase by reducing packaging. At present, we can state that these measures allow companies to meet needs of consumers and retain customers.

War, from a Macromarketing perspective, is executed to destroy or degrade an adversary's marketing system to a degree that results in elimination of said adversary or capitulation (Shultz, 2016). Ukraine has adapted, innovated, allied and integrated, and has countered an unprovoked attack and occupation in ways that, to date, have sustained a functioning system to ensure rudimentary and even luxury goods and services for Ukrainian consumers-and consumers of its exports (e.g., grain). The costs to consumer-citizen well-being during Russia's war on Ukraine, however, are made clear in the numbers of displaced persons and deaths, key socioeconomic indicators, and the daily stresses and uncertainties of war. We believe the study of resilience, adaptation, perseverance and diplomacy are vital to peacemaking, a well-functioning and just marketing system, and war recovery and prevention. Going forward, the authors will champion responsibly integrated marketing systems and encourage research on policies and marketing practices that ensure the peaceful well-being for all law-abiding nations and global citizens-and research that can help actualize those outcomes.

Public Marketing, Macromarketing, and Activism

João Felipe Sauerbronn, School of Communication, Media and Information at FGV

Building on our panel in Helsinki, I contribute to this commentary by sharing thoughts I have been mulling throughout my career, specifically, the role of marketing scholars in promoting a more just, safe, inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world. In so doing, I start by highlighting the disconnects among academia, scholars, and society. We face a moment of choice: do we persist in prioritizing our careers, seeking publication in select journals, and taking pride in teaching at "triple accredited" business schools while the world continues to deteriorate, or do we dare to effect change?

We have engaged in this behavior so often that we have lost sight of our purpose and responsibilities. While we still maintain a connection to businesses, we are heading in a direction that distances us from addressing the real issues people face.

Many companies succeed with our support, managed by executives who were once our students and now shape the careers and lives of millions. They determine the products people will consume, how much money people will make, and which texts and images are presented to people on social media. We also educate managers who take on roles in the public sector and gain decision-making capacity over public policies, which impact everyone's lives for better or worse.

We face many expectations, but ultimately, we aim to develop tools that enhance people's lives and support community well-being. As (macro)marketers, we should help transform people's lives for the better, but we are still far from what society asks. We have difficulties listening to society, especially the most vulnerable people who are not in universities. We are far from them.

With this in mind, I sought a way forward based on a discussion that took place a few years ago. In 2004, Burawoy (2005) brought the concept of public sociology to his American Sociological Association (ASA) presidential address, and it resonated across many other disciplines. He questioned the professional narrow-mindedness and highlighted sociology's understanding: for whom and for what purpose?

To answer this question, Burawoy (2005) divides the audiences of sociology (whom) into two—academic audience and extra-academic audience—and the types of knowledge (what) into two—instrumental and reflexive. Thus, instrumental knowledge constitutes Professional Sociology, when focused on the academic audience, and Policy Sociology when aimed at the extra-academic audience. Reflexive knowledge gives rise to Critical Sociology when aimed at an academic audience, and Public Sociology when aimed at extra-academic audiences. By categorizing different forms of sociological knowledge—public, professional, policy, and critical—and characterizing public sociology as a force that fosters and safeguards the social connections essential to humanity, Burawoy breathed new life into discussions and debates regarding the discipline's purpose. The typology in Figure 1 helps to focus and clarify this articulation.

Applying Burawoy's reasoning to marketing is fairly simple, though some may suggest there are ontological barriers to this transition. While this could spark an interesting discussion, it would distract us from our aim of exploring actions that can drive change. Therefore, I suggest a straightforward transposition of marketing knowledge forms.

We are already familiar with emulating natural sciences when pursuing marketing knowledge. Much of the knowledge published in so-called top-tier journals could be classified as Professional Marketing, sometimes referred to as Marketing Science.

Instrumental marketing knowledge aimed at the extraacademic public involves providing knowledge that can be used to solve business problems and would be categorized as Practitioner Marketing. Many academic journals and business magazines provide space for articles that address these topics and reinforce the connection between academia and business.

Critical Marketing involves reflective knowledge aimed at an academic audience. It achieved more evidence at the beginning of the twenty-first century but has become rarer in recent years. However, it is undeniable that critical marketing scholars have pointed the way to thinking about deeper co-production of knowledge with communities that would not be considered the most apparent extra-academic audiences for marketing. This means building Public Marketing based on reflexive knowledge that questions the role of marketing in social change and analyzes the real problems people face due to marketization and commodification. (Macro)marketing should get closer to society and co-produce knowledge. Otherwise, it will become less relevant as other disciplines have managed to bring people solutions to market and consumer problems they face.

In conclusion, I suggest that activism can serve as a means of co-producing knowledge, enabling us to work together with local and global institutions to foster a more just, safe, inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world. At Macromarketing, we are deeply interested in exploring societal issues and evaluating the actions of corporations and governments. We introduce words, concepts, theories, and models that question established norms. Our critical discussions on the social function of markets have even met skepticism in the hallways. Nevertheless, we are aware that we must strive for more. We must aim for more and we must constructively engage to effect real change.

Collaborating with Mulheres do Salgueiro to Develop a More Responsible, Harmonic, and Supportive Society in Brazil

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In June 2023, a doctoral student with whom I work expressed interest to study how racialized vulnerable women in Brazil defend themselves from oppressive market practices, as she began engaging with a collective of women called Mulheres do Salgueiro.³ This collective came about in 2002 intending to offer courses and workshops on dyeing clothes and fashion in general, to boost the productive capacity of women from the Salgueiro Complex, the name given to an array of *favelas* located in the city of São Gonçalo, in the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The right to life and safety has historically been denied to this community, which lacks basic services, such as sanitation, water supply, health, and education, and suffers from police brutality (Deister, 2021). From this scenario of deprivation, a group of women decided to create the Mulheres do Salgueiro, looking to help each other improve their lives and surroundings since they understood no one else would do this for them.

	Academic Audience	Extra-Academic Audience
	Professional Sociology	Policy Sociology
Instrumental Knowledge	Seeks to emulate the natural sciences in the pursuit of knowledge	Seeks to provide knowledge that can be used to solve, help or understand a specific problem, issue or challenge in society
	Critical Sociology	Public Sociology
Reflexive Knowledge	Seeks to expose the values and hidden assumptions that professional sociology seeks to bring to bear on social issues and social relationships. The idea of value free 'objective' social science is exposed as dangerous chimera	Emphasizes accountability to and engagement with the public. This may take the 'traditional' public sociology in a top-down 'public intellectual' model, or a <u>deeper form and a</u> <u>co-production of knowledge</u>

Figure I. Burawoy's Four Sociologies.

Note: From Burawoy, M. (2021). Public Sociology, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 36.

Since the student would be researching this collective, she felt it important not only to extract data from them but also contribute to their growth. So, after talking to the coordinator of the collective, she thought of offering marketing classes, so the women could be more successful in commercializing the purses, handbags, and fashion accessories they produce from recycled materials and sell to finance the social activities they develop in their community (as well as the courses and workshops, they also offer free classes to prepare students for admittance exams in universities and cultivate a community garden). With this in mind, the student told me her idea, and, happily, I agreed to join the project.

Initially, she and I invited another PhD student and a professorcolleague to join us, given their expertise in marketing. In sequence, the four of us started to elaborate the marketing course plan. There were two theoretical bases we followed in this process, both of a decolonial background. The first, the coloniality of power, is a concept developed by Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano and pertains to how the Eurocentric world has established a hierarchy of races, with white populations being considered superior to others (Quijano, 2000). This coloniality is justified by the belief that knowledge developed in Eurocentric settings is superior to that originated outside of this locus (Lander 2005). Therefore, we approached classes understanding we needed to decolonize from these colonizations (which we, to some extent, reproduced). We thus established from the get-go that we were not and would not assume the role of "white saviors" (Jefferess, 2023) of these Black women, nor would we impose Eurocentric knowledge over them, as if it were more important than their lived knowledges (Etuk & Ibuot, 2024).

To aid us in this process, we were also inspired by the pedagogy of the oppressed developed by Brazilian pedagogist Paulo Freire (Freire, 1987). Through this approach, both educators and students construct the knowledge being sought after, without hierarchies between them and having as a starting point the realities of the latter (which entails the educator having to learn about the context from where students are coming from in order to know how to transmit information that makes sense to them). We believed this was important given the diverse backgrounds we, academics, and the women from Salgueiro experienced. We wanted to ensure equality amongst all of us and an understanding that, to move forward, we needed to work collaboratively.

The course with the Mulheres do Salgueiro went from September 2023 to June 2024. We would meet once a month, either in person at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (the university where the four academics work and study) or online. When we, the academics, made up the course plan, we thought of classes that would have a simplified structure, one that permitted us to introduce a subject related to marketing to guide our discussion, but without going into details about it. The idea was that this would make it easier for the whole group to engage and, from then on, delve into debates that intertwined academic marketing concepts and theories with practical experiences the Mulheres do Salgueiro were developing.

The academic marketing resembled the practical experiences in some ways, but a significant factor differentiated both: the approach these women adopt to the "marketing" they practice is not of a traditional capitalist nature (Nazareth, 2022). *Their* marketing follows a collective logic, one underpinned by love, affection, and care, which they believe is the path to developing a better and more harmonic society (Nazareth, 2022). So, when they create new products, for instance, they do it thinking of the needs of their community and not its marketability. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the women learned how to produce soap, made from recycled cooking oil, so they could donate it to families, providing them a means to wash their hands and avoid getting contaminated by the virus. Now, this soap is part of the portfolio of products commercialized by the collective. To become aware of this meant we, academics, who thought we knew all there was to know about marketing, were learning a new way of practicing the discipline, more in tune with the Brazilian reality than we imagined (or taught).

The collaboration with the Mulheres do Salgueiro resulted in transformations for all involved. The women of the collective began developing their marketing activities more consciously, understanding the technical issues behind the commercialization of their products and their "brand." Individually, they also began to crave further growth, either desiring to study more, become entrepreneurs, or improve their current enterprises (given some of them own small businesses).

On the other hand, we, academics, began to reflect on our roles as educators and understand the importance of engaging with the "real" world in order to grow in our profession. We were inspired by the Mulheres do Salgueiro and their take on life, and this has transpired into our classes. Not only are we teaching about the social good this collective is striving for and the type of marketing they are developing, but we also invite them to talk about their organization and their work to our students, so they can also be moved or transformed by these women. It has been an important collaboration, one that is only beginning and that will result in many exchanges between us since there is much to be shared on both parts. For more information on the Mulheres do Salgueiro, readers are encouraged to visit: @mulheresdosalgueiro.

Where from Here: Reflections and Future Directions

So, what to make of these thoughts and projects for unlocking our *Macromarketing* potential? We share below some syntheses, further commentary and plausible ideas as a starting point to answer that question, which may stimulate further thinking, collaboration and *impactful* research.

Firstly, we see an initial and overarching (albeit elusive) goal of happiness as an inalienable human right for people and states, and we offer the Nordic countries as examples of political economies that have designed and administered marketing systems that provide an assortment of goods, services and experiences to facilitate happiness and measures that indicate people are happy in them. By practical and systemic extension, we see this goal more broadly evident as eudaimonia, a sublime sense or actualization of individual and societal flourishing. We should add that we are not novel in championing eudaimonia as a personal or societal goal: Aristotle made a similar observation (Bartlett & Collins, 2012). We are however perhaps more novel in our understanding and championing of the "Nordic Model," and we have keen interest in the possibility of its systemic applications beyond Scandinavia, and the imperative of constructive engagement among catalytic institutions, their stakeholders and even adversaries to enhance the probability of success. We encourage research on this model—including factors that predict and sustain happiness, well-being and eudaimonia—and its potential applications (and possible limitations) in emerging markets, developing economies, and other socioeconomic contexts in which underserved communities may struggle to flourish.

A well-functioning political economy and marketing system requires a well-educated and healthy population; collaborative institutions in the forms of the previously mentioned governments, businesses, NGOs, civic organizations and perhaps multilateral aid organizations; laws, policies and practices that ensure the system meets primary, universal and idiosyncratic needs of people; and fundamental decency. We understand that even the best systems are imperfect and may fracture, leading to divisions, discord and, in a worst case, violent conflict. Bridging the divides requires education, training, empathy and mutual respect; it necessitates constructive engagement that offers a holistic platform for collaboration, critical thinking, and ultimately multi-win outcomes most likely to spur or propel eudaimonia—and a flourishing, inclusive, just and sustainable future.

While we seek to understand factors that predict/effect eudaimonia and sustain marketing systems-and accordingly enhance the well-being of those systems and the lives of people in them -human history and current events reveal that some actors and states deliberately seek to block access to those systems, destroy them, and/or extinguish people in them. This grotesque reality is now playing-out in Ukraine, as we well know. War and other forms of systemic violence are ongoing in scores of other countries at unimaginable costs to blood and treasure, ecosystems, and future generations (Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project [ACLED] 2025; Institute for Economics and Peace 2024). Research committed to ending war, creating peace and enhancing sustainable well-being is of existential importance (Shultz et al., 2025). A Macro Ethos-and subsequent Macromarketing research designs and methods-are indispensable to this process; they are requisite to the research foci and activities required to administer marketing-research projects with capabilities to create and sustain peace, and to sustain inclusive marketing systems that deter war and ideally render deliberate and systemically violent conflict to be unthinkable or untenable policy-options (see also Barrios et al., 2019; Dholakia et al., 2025).

Decades of research published in the *Journal of Macromarketing* have drawn from and produced exemplary research foci, methods, measures, and interpretations. This research has enhanced understanding of marketing systems and in turn helps to develop and advance theory, and the design and implementation of policies and practices that can improve—and have improved—marketing and the ecosystems in which it is embedded, to the benefit of

countless stakeholders. The Macromarketing discipline, the research and outreach in which we engage, and its impact on the academy and society can be further advanced by learning from and collaborating with colleagues in other disciplines. We share the example of sociology. We furthermore submit that *all* disciplines—which are artifacts of some marketing system and/or political economy—have the capability to affect marketing systems, individual QOL and societal wellbeing. Indeed, the systemic complexity of the existential threats with which we are confronted—war and climate change—necessitate the inclusion and participation of scholars and practitioners from other fields. It also necessitates idea-generation and research-participation by the people we study, an idea to which we (re)turn, below.

We must commit to and reward field research that has potential to affect individual QOL and societal well-being on a large scale, and/or we must commit to other forms of research with the potential to impact the well-being of people and systems on a large scale. Doing so would seem to embody the Macro Ethos. Established Macromarketing scholars know-and all marketing scholars should know-that Macromarketing pioneers committed to such research. In the 1950s, Wroe Alderson and several colleagues/pacifists trekked thousands of miles through the Soviet Union to study that purportedly non-marketing system (Alderson et al., 1956). Alderson also was a firm believer in the complementarity of theory and practice, and the importance of interdisciplinary perspectives and methods (Shaw et al., 2007; Wooliscroft, 2006). In the 1960s, Charles Slater collaborated with numerous institutions and people to study marketing processes in developing Latin American societies, including in Brazil (Slater, 1968). This zest for meaningful field research to improve the human condition remains alive in Brazil, as exemplified by the study involving Mulheres do Salgueiro to develop a more responsible, harmonic and supportive society, and perhaps most virtuously, a loving marketing system. The word-choice, "involving," is deliberate: these women are not merely objects or subjects of the research, they were/are active and equal participants. This research gives agency to Mulheres do Salgueiro, and offers a potential model for research designs involving other disenfranchised and underserved people. A country, political-economy and ecology such as Brazil presents innumerable opportunities for such field research to affect social justice and sustainable peace, prosperity and wellbeing-as do Colombia, Finland, France, Ukraine, the United States, and indeed all other countries.

Toward the goals of happiness, individual QOL, societal well-being, and eudaimonia—locally and globally—we must unlock our potential by constructively engaging with academics of all orientations and ranks, and numerous local/global institutions to design and administer research that builds theory, inspires research among our students and colleagues in the academy, improves policies and business practices, and ultimately offers solutions to a litany of systemic challenges confronting humanity that are affected by markets, marketing, managerial decisions, and government policies. The *Macro Ethos* was inspired by the Macromarketing founders, and it continues today via ideas and activities shared in the synopses of our work above, and the high-quality work demonstrated by so many of our colleagues, from Helsinki to Rio de Janeiro.

The observations, experiences, ideas and suggestions shared here are not exhaustive, nor could they be, but we do hope they stimulate thinking and impactful action—and constructive engagement with and participation in future Macromarketing Conferences, which have been catalysts for idea-generation, collaborations, good/impactful projects, many high-quality articles published in the *Journal of Macromarketing*, and lifelong friendships.

Finally, we conclude by connecting some people, places and events. The first Macromarketing Conference/Seminar was principally organized by Charles Slater and held in Colorado (Slater, 1976). Decades later, his spirit returns to Brazil for the 50th Annual Macromarketing Conference. Stanley Shapiro, former student of Wroe Alderson at the Wharton School and former Editor of the Journal of Macromarketing, current enthusiast for special sessions such as ours, and to this day an endless font-of-wisdom is expected to attend that Conference, in person. The 51st Annual Conference is scheduled to be held in Denver, Colorado. We are hopeful the spirit of Professors Alderson and Slater will be present at both conferences, as will be the person of Professor Shapiro, and indeed all Macromarketing and Macro-curious scholars, as the Macromarketing Society continues its steadfast commitment to research and outreach that enhances the well-being of people, marketing systems, societies and the fragile biosphere we inhabit, on a large scale.

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Notes

- Further to this point, as just one example, this topic was featured recently at an annual Winter Academic Conference sponsored by the American Marketing Association.
- 2. Our colleagues from Ukraine were invited to participate on this panel, but were unable to attend the Conference. In the collaborative

and helpful *Macro Ethos* to support our colleagues doing truly impactful research on the frontline (literally) of Macromarketing, we have included as commentary a synopsis of an intended presentation.

3. For more information on the Mulheres do Salgueiro, visit: @mulheresdosalgueiro

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