SAGE

A Framework for Promoting Cooperation
Author(s): Joshua Lyle Wiener and Tabitha A. Doescher
Source: *Journal of Marketing,* Vol. 55, No. 2 (Apr., 1991), pp. 38-47
Published by: Sage Publications, Inc.
Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1252236
Accessed: 11-03-2019 19:24 UTC

REFERENCES
Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:
https://www.jstor.org/stable/1252236?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents
You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

Sage Publications, Inc. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Marketing*

Joshua Lyle Wiener & Tabitha A. Doescher

A Framework for Promoting Cooperation

Marketing scholars such as Kotler and Rothschild emphasize that, because "you can't sell brotherhood like soap," there is a need for research that will generate and test social marketing strategies. By drawing on social dilemma theory, the authors identify the barriers to prosocial behavior and the means for overcoming those barriers. Both general propositions and specific marketing strategies are discussed.

IN 1971, Kotler and Zaltman introduced the concept of social marketing, defining it as the use of marketing concepts to market socially beneficial ideas and causes. During the decade after the concept's introduction, marketing researchers investigated several critical issues. A common theme through much of the early research is that, for social marketing to emerge as a distinct and viable domain, marketers not only must learn that "you can't sell brotherhood like soap" (Rothschild 1979), but also must learn how they *can* sell "brotherhood."[1] These scholars called for the development of communication strategies explicitly designed for "selling brotherhood" and argued that in order to develop such strategies, new conceptual approaches were needed (e.g., Bloom and Novelli 1981; Fox and Kotler 1980; Rothschild 1979; Scott 1977). Though another decade has passed, calls for new conceptual approaches and strategies are still being made (e.g., Kotler and Andreasen 1987; Fine 1990).

"Selling brotherhood" is not synonymous with social marketing; however, many social marketing campaigns are attempts to "sell brotherhood."[2] Specifi-

cally, "selling brotherhood" involves using a mass communication strategy to induce individuals to take actions when the actions are associated with low benefit-cost ratios. The actions' benefit-cost ratio can be low for one or more of the following reasons: (1) the primary beneficiary of the individual's prosocial action is his or her community, (2) in general, most members of the community must cooperate in order for the community to benefit, and (3) the cost of the prosocial action is direct and personal (Bloom and Novelli 1981; Kotler 1982; Kotler and Andreasen 1987; Ritchie and McDougall 1985; Rothschild 1979; Scott 1977).

We develop a framework for promoting cooperation (i.e., "selling brotherhood") by viewing "selling brotherhood" as a problem of gaining cooperation in a social dilemma, a social science construct encompassing better known constructs such as free riders, public goods, collective social traps, social fences, n-person prisoner dilemmas, and the tragedy of the commons. In a social dilemma, a person who contributes to the community's good receives fewer personal benefits than one who does not, and all group members receive more personal benefits if all contribute than if all do not.

The framework we present complements Rothschild's (1979) involvement approach, Scott's (1977) behavioral influence approach, and Ritchie and McDougall's (1985) public policy approach to "sell-

[1]The term "selling brotherhood" was coined in the unenlightened 1950s. We place this commonly used term in quotation marks in explicit recognition that it is a sexist term, and use it in a gender-free rather than a literal way.

[2]"Selling brotherhood" does not include marketing efforts to induce individuals to take actions, such as not smoking, that the social mar-

keter thinks are in the consumer's self-interest, nor does it include marketing efforts to change public attitudes, such as campaigns to encourage individuals to enjoy music.

ing brotherhood." Rothschild equates the problem of "selling brotherhood" with that of overcoming communication barriers raised by extreme levels of involvement. Though Rothschild's analysis of the high involvement barrier focuses on an issue that is not addressed by social dilemma experiments, the problem of overcoming the low involvement barrier is isomorphic to gaining cooperation in a social dilemma. Like the low involvement approach, the social dilemma framework identifies specific barriers and the means for overcoming them; however, the two approaches differ because they address different barriers. Scott, in contrast, argues that social marketers should strongly consider behavioral influence strategies. Such strategies frequently can overcome the low benefit-cost ratio problem because they use prior behavior rather than reward/cost contingencies to influence current behavior. The social dilemma approach, like the behavioral influence approach, attempts to influence current behavior; however, it relies on information, rather than prior behavior, to do so. Finally, Ritchie and McDougall argue that, in many cases, "selling brotherhood" should be approached by using public policies to change directly the benefit-cost ratio associated with cooperation. The social dilemma approach complements this approach by providing a framework for investigating the issue of public support for the policies.

After describing the properties of social dilemmas, we discuss general strategies for solving them, identify the barriers to cooperation, and consider how those barriers can be overcome. Finally, we examine implications and make suggestions for future research.

Social Dilemmas: An Overview

Because social dilemmas have been investigated by numerous scholars in diverse fields, the construct has many definitions. In this section, we review the two most widely accepted and influential definitions and compare the problem of gaining cooperation in a social dilemma with the problem of "selling brotherhood."

Social Dilemmas as Defined in Social Psychology

Dawes (1980, p. 170) defines a social dilemma as a situation characterized by two properties:

> . . . (a) the social payoff to each individual for defecting behavior is higher than the payoff for cooperative behavior, regardless of what other society members do, yet, (b) all individuals in society receive a lower payoff if all defect rather than cooperate.

In Dawes' definition, the terms "individual" and "social payoff" have special meanings. "Individual"

refers to any decision-making unit, be it person or nation, that shares a resource with others. An individual's "social payoff" from an action is the utility he or she derives from the impact the action has on reality. The utility an individual gains from simply acting in a prosocial manner is the nonsocial payoff. For example, a person who recycles a newspaper can gain a social payoff from the knowledge that such action both reduces landfill needs and saves trees. The individual also can gain utility from the act of recycling, but it is part of the nonsocial (not social) payoff.

The distinction between social and nonsocial payoffs can be conceptualized by means of a simple version of the multiattribute model of attitude.

$$A = I_s B_s + I_n B_n \qquad (1)$$

where A is the attitude toward cooperation, I is the importance of the attribute, B is the belief about the goodness of the attribute, s is the social payoff, and n is the nonsocial payoff. In terms of a littering example, B_s captures the individual's evaluation of the personal cost he or she incurs for not littering in relation to the change in the environment brought about by his or her action. B_n captures the individual's beliefs about the goodness of not littering independent of how his or her action alters the environment.

Note that Dawes' condition (a) is similar to both Kotler's (1982) and Rothschild's (1979) argument that a key reason for an individual's failure to act in a prosocial way is a low benefit-cost ratio. Dawes' condition (b) simply means that community members would rather give up the freedom to litter and live in a litter-free community than be free to litter and live in a littered community.

Social Dilemmas as Defined in Economics

The basic economic model of social dilemmas was developed by Olson (1965). The following mathematical description is based on his approach. It has been both simplified and extended to highlight the two factors of greatest concern to marketers.

Olson models a social dilemma in the following way. If a person makes a sacrifice, the community will benefit. However, the degree to which the community benefits depends on both the amount of the individual's sacrifice and the extent to which the community good is augmented by a single sacrifice. Because all community members have access to the community good regardless of whether or not they have cooperated, an individual who sacrifices may receive only a fraction of the total additional community benefit produced by his or her sacrifice. Consequently, the individual's social payoff is equal to the gain he or she personally receives from his or her sacrifice minus the cost of that sacrifice.

Olson assumes that an individual will make a sac-

rifice for his or her community only if the social payoff received is positive. This condition is represented by

$$s(\partial G/\partial S)T > T, \qquad (2)$$

where s is the share of the community good the individual receives, G is the community good, S is the number of people who sacrifice, T is the value of an individual's sacrifice, and $(\partial G/\partial S)T$ is the amount the community will benefit if one additional person makes a contribution of T.

Olson argues that a problem of share arises when the individual receives less than the full benefit that his or her sacrifice produces for the community (i.e., if s < 1). Olson points out that this problem of receiving only a share of the community good explains why members of small groups are much more likely to cooperate than members of large groups. To make this point, he assumes that the fraction of the community good an individual receives is equal to the fraction of the total population represented by the individual; that is, he assumes that s = 1/N, where N is equal to the number of community members. For example, if a community has 5000 members, each person will receive a 1/5000th share of the community benefit.

To illustrate this problem of share, Olson modifies equation 2 by substituting 1/N for s and multiplying each side of the inequality by N/T:

$$\partial G/\partial S > N. \qquad (3)$$

Equation 3 implies that the rate of gain to the community from an individual's contribution or sacrifice must be at least equal to the number of people who have access to, or use, the community good. For example, if a person shares a resource with 5000 other people, he or she will receive a positive social payoff from making a sacrifice only if the benefit the community receives from that sacrifice is 5000 times larger than the cost he or she incurs as a consequence of the sacrifice.

Olson's model of the problem of share shows why an individual's benefit-cost ratio is low when the primary beneficiary of his or her prosocial action is the community. In addition, Olson's model can be extended to describe the second reason why prosocial actions often are associated with low benefit-cost ratios—the problem of scale. It arises when the community good can exist only if a sufficient number of community members sacrifice. Rothschild (1979) uses the example of littering to explain the problem of scale: unless all community members refrain from littering, a vista will not be pristine and the community good will not exist. The community good exists only if enough people sacrifice, so the benefit to the community of one person sacrificing is almost zero. Hence

the individual's social payoff is negative. In mathematical terms, $\partial G/\partial S < T$.

However, as both Dawes and Olson emphasize, even though each individual's social payoff from defecting (e.g., littering) will always be negative, he or she would be better off if most individuals did not defect. This idea can be represented by

$$U(C, T) > T \text{ for some } C > n^*, \qquad (4)$$

where U(C, T) is the amount of utility a person gets from the community good when C community members each sacrifice amount T, and n* is a specific number of people. Figure 1 is a graphic illustration of this problem of scale. A person who sacrifices when fewer than n* people sacrifice is a sucker because the utility he or she gains from the community good is less than the value of his or her sacrifice. A person who sacrifices when at least n* people sacrifice is giving up the opportunity to be a free rider because he or she can enjoy the community good even without sacrificing.

Solving Social Dilemmas

The social psychology and economic analyses of the social dilemma dictate the range of feasible solutions to social dilemmas. A social dilemma cannot be solved by appealing to an individual's self-interest because his or her social payoff from cooperating will always be negative. Instead, a social dilemma can be solved by using, in Messick and Brewer's (1983) terms, either a behavioral or a structural solution. A behavioral solution works by inducing individuals to cooperate for the sake of cooperation. For example, a voluntary recycling program is a behavioral solution. A structural solution seeks to change the properties of the situation so that it is no longer a social dilemma. The situation

FIGURE 1
The Problem of Scale
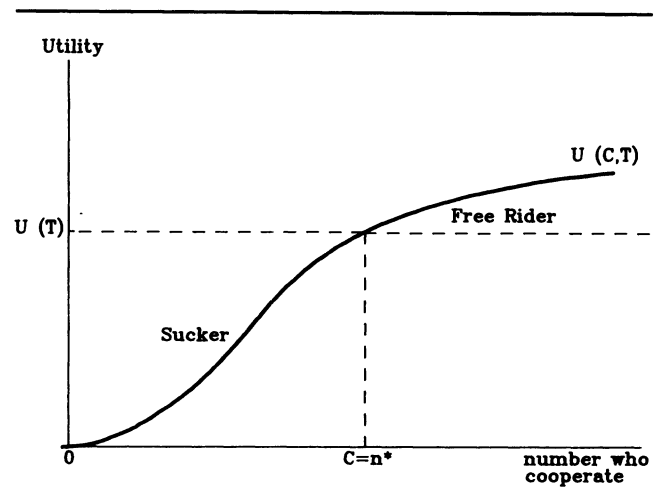
is changed by altering the payoffs received by individuals who cooperate (or who defect). The most common methods of changing the payoff structure involve imposing restrictions on the ability of group members to have free access to the common resource, providing side payments to individuals who cooperate, greatly decreasing the cost of cooperation, or imposing extra costs on individuals who use the common resource.

Hardin (1986, p. 1247) has described structural solutions as "mutual coercion mutually agreed upon." His description is apt because structural solutions restrict individual freedom, and in a democratic society the imposition of a structural solution requires the consent of the group. This is true whether the structural solution involves a direct limitation on individual behavior (such as banning a product), the imposition of costs on defectors (such as a surcharge on nonrecycled garbage), or the use of tax dollars to alter the benefit-cost ratio (such as providing curbside pickup).

The structural versus behavioral distinction is important for two reasons. First, several scholars explicitly argue that many social dilemmas can be solved best by adopting structural solutions (see Edney 1980). This argument is echoed by marketing scholars who have reviewed the failures of social marketing efforts in general (Fox and Kotler 1980; Kotler and Andreasen 1987) and conservation programs in particular (Ritchie and McDougall 1985). The structural solutions most often advocated by marketing scholars entail the use of community resources either to make it easier for a person to cooperate or to provide an incentive to persons who cooperate (e.g., Kotler and Andreasen 1987; Ritchie and McDougall 1985). These solutions restrict individual freedom in that they require community members to give up some of their personal resources (Buchanan and Tullock 1962; Clee and Wicklund 1980).

Second, the structural versus behavioral distinction defines cooperation. When the proposed solution is behavioral, cooperation means making a sacrifice for the community good. When the proposed solution is structural, cooperation entails supporting a political act that will restrict one's freedom. Key barriers to both forms of cooperation are discussed in the next section.

The Barriers to Cooperation

Rothschild (1979) argues that scholars who seek to design strategies for "selling brotherhood" should first identify the reasons why people will not act in a prosocial way and then design strategies to overcome those barriers. We draw upon both the social dilemma literature and Rothschild's discussion of low involvement to identify the barriers to cooperation.

Barriers Identified by Social Dilemma Research

A review of the social dilemma literature identifies four potentially important barriers to cooperation: (1) the desire to maintain one's freedom, (2) the desire to avoid being a sucker, (3) self-interest, and (4) mistrust of others. Whether these potential barriers will be actual barriers depends on the nature of the proposed solution, that is, whether it is structural or behavioral. We examine these barriers and explain how the nature of the solution determines whether an individual's willingness to cooperate is hindered by a particular barrier.

One reason for not cooperating is the individual's desire to maintain his or her freedom. Research investigating reactance, the theory of how people respond to threats to their freedom, consistently finds that individuals will oppose policies and actions that limit their freedom (see Clee and Wicklund 1980). According to Clee and Wicklund (p. 401), any action that is seen as "reducing the subjective probability of attaining a choice alternative" will raise the reactance barrier. All social dilemma scholars acknowledge that reactance is commonly a key barrier. Edney (1980, p. 148) goes so far as to argue that the key research question for scholars interested in solving social dilemmas is to "explore the conditions under which groups and communities will compromise individual freedoms."

A second reason for not cooperating is that the individual does not want to be a sucker. An individual is a sucker if he or she makes a voluntary sacrifice (or is a member of a group that makes a collective sacrifice) to save a common resource and that resource is destroyed (see Figure 1). On the basis of their reviews and integrations of the social dilemma literature, both Dawes (1980) and Messick and Brewer (1983) conclude that individuals have a strong desire to "avoid being a sucker." Their conclusion is based on the empirical regularity that when a manipulation in a social dilemma experiment has the effect of increasing the likelihood that the group's goal will be achieved, subjects are more likely to cooperate. This conclusion is consistent with findings by marketing researchers, such as Tashchian, Slama, and Tashchian (1984), who report that individuals who have more faith in the ability of technology to solve the energy crisis are more willing to conserve.

A third reason for not cooperating is that doing so may not be in the individual's self-interest. Cooperation is not in the individual's self-interest if the social payoff he or she receives is negative. This barrier is, in many ways, the key barrier to solving a social dilemma. Dawes (1980) defines a social dilemma as a situation in which the social payoff from cooperating is less than the social payoff from defecting.

Rothschild (1979) defines "selling brotherhood" as trying to get people to take actions associated with low benefit-cost ratios. The results of many social dilemma experiments support the conclusion that the willingness of an individual to cooperate is an increasing function of the social payoff associated with cooperation (see Dawes 1980; Edney 1980; Messick and Brewer 1983). In addition, many of the social marketing strategies advocated by scholars such as Kotler and Andreasen (1987) are designed to encourage cooperation by increasing the value of cooperation.

A fourth reason for unwillingness to cooperate is that the individual may not trust others to cooperate. Researchers have found that individuals who are caught in a social dilemma try to meet cooperation with cooperation and defection with defection (Brewer and Kramer 1986; Dawes 1980; Kramer and Brewer 1984; Messick and Brewer 1983). These findings are consistent with the marketing research findings that individuals are more willing to conserve when they believe others are conserving (see Katzev and Johnson 1987; Ritchie and McDougall 1985).

Whether or not these four barriers actually inhibit an individual's willingness to cooperate depends on whether the solution being proposed is structural or behavioral. Recall from the preceding section that a structural solution is a political act that restricts individual freedom, whereas a behavioral solution is one that asks individuals to make voluntary sacrifices.

Reactance is always a barrier if the solution is structural; it may be a barrier if the solution is behavioral. It is a barrier when the solution is structural because, by definition, a structural solution restricts individual freedom. Whether it is a salient barrier when the solution is behavioral depends on both the specific behavior being advocated and the type of promotion employed (see Clee and Wicklund 1980).

The other three barriers (fear of being a sucker, self-interest, and mistrust) are present when the proposed solution is behavioral. They may be present when the proposed solution is structural. A behavioral solution raises these three barriers for the following reason: if a single individual makes a sacrifice, it is possible that because others do not sacrifice, the community good will not be achieved. For example, if one person conserves energy and others do not, the community goal of energy independence will not be attained. Because others may not conserve energy, mistrust will be a barrier, and because this barrier makes the goal of energy independence illusive, both fear of being a sucker and self-interest also will be barriers.

When a structural solution is being considered, these three barriers will be present only if the individual is a member of a group that shares a common resource with nonmembers of the group. In many of these sit-

uations, if nonmembers do not sacrifice, the community goal will not be achieved. For example, if one community bans the sale of a particular type of animal pelt and other communities do not, the goal of preserving the species will not be reached. Because nonmembers may sell the pelts, mistrust will be a barrier, and because the animal may become extinct, both the fear of being a sucker and self-interest also will be barriers. If, however, the group encompasses all individuals who have access to the common resource, these three barriers will not be present. For example, a worldwide ban on the sale of ivory, if enforced, might achieve the goal of preserving the elephant. In this case, there are no nonmembers to mistrust; if the ban is enforced, neither the fear of being a sucker nor self-interest will come into play and the elephant will be preserved.

Barriers Identified by Rothschild

Rothschild (1979, p. 14–15) observes that

> . . . in the nonbusiness case, issues are [often of] low individual involvement . . . [because] . . . often there is a cost to the individual and benefit to the larger group. . . . Furthermore, there are nonbusiness problems where all members of society must comply for the best interests of society (and themselves).

In other words, Rothschild is arguing that when the benefit-cost ratio is low because of a share and/or scale problem, the individual's level of involvement is low. The problem of getting people to take prosocial actions under these conditions is the problem of "selling brotherhood," which in turn is isomorphic to the problem of gaining cooperation in a social dilemma.

When "brotherhood" is conceptualized in involvement terms, two issues not addressed explicitly in the social dilemma literature are highlighted. One is the importance of reinforcement. The lesson Rothschild draws from the marketing of low involvement consumer products is that communication tools can induce trial, but only positive product benefits (positive reinforcement) can lead to repeat purchase (continued behavior). Support for Rothschild's emphasis on the importance of positive reinforcement can be found in the conservation literature (Ritchie and McDougall 1985). A second issue is that the direct link between attitudes toward the community good and trial behavior is weak because, under conditions of low involvement, attitudes are not good predictors of behavior. Support for Rothschild's view comes from marketing studies showing that ecological concerns have little direct influence on behavior (see Gill, Crosby, and Taylor 1986).

Overcoming the Barriers to Cooperation

Rothschild (1979) argues that one effective approach to "selling brotherhood" is for marketers to use communication strategies that directly attack the barriers inhibiting cooperation. To use mass communication techniques to overcome these barriers, marketing practitioners must know both what information to communicate and what strategies to use to communicate it (Fine 1990; Rothschild 1979). We draw on the social dilemma literature to develop a series of propositions describing the information marketers should try to communicate to overcome a specific barrier. An example of the type of strategy that can be used to convey the information follows each proposition. Table 1 summarizes the major conclusions.

Overcoming the Reactance Barrier

Recent experiments (see Samuelson and Messick 1986) have investigated the willingness of an individual to accept a structural solution when that individual is a member of a group encompassing all individuals who have access to the resource. These studies found that increasing the perceived likelihood that a resource would be destroyed increased the willingness of individuals to vote in favor of establishing a superordinate authority that would control access to the resource. The authors' explanation is that the manipulations encouraged cooperation by increasing the value

of the social payoff each group member would receive when the structural solution solved the social dilemma.

When the individuals are either members of a group that shares the resource with others or are being asked to restrict their freedom voluntarily, communicating that the resource is likely to be destroyed may not encourage cooperation. The reason is twofold. First, there is no guarantee that if the individuals give up their freedom the community's goal will be achieved. Second, if the goal is not achieved, the sacrifice of freedom will not increase the individual's social payoff. Consequently, the only proposition supported by the social dilemma literature applies to the one-group case—the case in which all individuals who have access to the resource are members of a single group.

P_1: To reduce the reactance barrier in the one-group case, emphasize the benefits of reaching the group's goal.

This information can be communicated by the "starving baby" appeal (Fine 1990), which typically emphasizes the negative consequences of not reaching the group's goal. For example, if a marketer is trying to induce individuals to vote for a special tax that would fund construction of a new water supply, and if the people who would use the water supply are the same ones who would pay the tax, a campaign focusing on the extreme need for a new water supply might be effective.

TABLE 1
Overcoming the Barriers to Cooperation

Barriers to Cooperation	Information That Should Be Emphasized to Overcome the Barrier	Strategies for Overcoming the Barriers[a]
Reactance		
One-group case	Importance of reaching the goal	Starving baby appeal
Multigroup or individual case	None suggested	None suggested
Sucker	Goal will be reached	Well baby appeal
Self-interest	Size of dilemma is small	Scope-reduction approach, civic pride approach
	Your contribution will make the difference	Leadership appeal, phased segmentation approach
	Social payoff is larger, but not more important	Emphasize ease of cooperation
	Nonsocial payoff is larger and more important	Ethical appeal
Mistrust	Others are cooperating or will cooperate	Survey results approach, positive feedback appeal
	Group identification	Civic pride approach, common fate appeal
No reinforcement	Use mistrust and sucker information	Use mistrust and sucker strategies
Attitude-behavior link	Use sucker information	Use sucker strategies

[a]Behavioral influence strategies are not listed because they do not rely on changing cognitive beliefs. They should be effective in terms of overcoming the reactance and self-interest barriers (see Burns and De Vere 1982; Scott 1977).

Overcoming the Sucker Barrier

A common finding in the social dilemma literature is that individuals who believe the community goal will not be achieved (even if they cooperate) are less likely to cooperate than those who think it will be achieved (Dawes 1980; Messick and Brewer 1983). Hence,

> P_2: To reduce the sucker barrier, emphasize that the goal will be achieved.

Fine (1990) suggests a strategy that may help overcome a consumer's fear that he or she (or his or her group) will be a sucker. Fine labels this approach the "well baby" appeal because it emphasizes that the group's goal is being reached. For example, if a marketer is trying to get people to not pollute a river, a well baby campaign can focus on how the river is becoming cleaner and should be returned to its natural state in the near future. Note that the well baby appeal is a type of positive feedback approach and that numerous marketing studies illustrate the power of providing positive feedback (see Katzev and Johnson 1987; Ritchie and McDougall 1985).

Overcoming the Self-Interest Barrier

Because self-interest is the central barrier in social dilemmas, many experiments have investigated how it can be overcome. We discuss a set of four propositions and their strategies.

Numerous studies have investigated and found support for Olson's (1965) hypothesis that small groups are more likely to cooperate than large groups (see Dawes 1980; Messick and Brewer 1983). Hence,

> P_3: To reduce the self-interest barrier, communicate information that reduces the perceived size of the social dilemma.

The scope-reduction strategy can be used to reduce the perceived size of the social dilemma. In this type of strategy, the communication emphasizes a small but distinct part of the group's goal. For example, an individual can be asked to "save a tree" rather than to contribute to "saving a forest."

As described by Fine (1990), the civic pride approach to fund raising illustrates how scope reduction can be implemented through the use of a geographic segmentation approach. Fine uses a regionalized approach in his example of an organization dedicated to preserving threatened environments. Individuals were asked to join with other individuals living in their region to help preserve a local area. An outstanding feature of the civic pride approach is that it reduces the actual size of the social dilemma and so relies on more than simply the power of communication.

A second approach to overcoming the self-interest barrier is suggested by the results of both social dilemma experiments (Fleishman 1980; Sweeney 1973)

and marketing research studies investigating perceived consumer effectiveness (see Allen, Calantone, and Schewe 1982). The social dilemma experiments found that telling subjects their contribution would determine whether or not the group's goal would be reached enhanced their willingness to contribute. Research investigating perceived consumer effectiveness found that individuals are more willing to take a prosocial action if they think their action will influence the social issue. The fourth proposition restates these research findings.

> P_4: To reduce the self-interest barrier, emphasize that the individual's contribution will determine whether or not the goal is reached.

Social marketers, like commercial marketers, should be able to design appeals that give a decision-making unit a sense of leadership. A difference in the use of leadership appeals between social marketers and commercial marketers is that social marketers can point explicitly to the larger aggregate that the individual or community is being asked to lead. This opportunity can be exploited by the use of a phased segmentation strategy.

In a phased segmentation strategy, particular groups are approached initially and asked to lead somewhat larger groups. For example, a homeowner is given the opportunity to be a block leader, or a middle class neighborhood on the north side of town is given the opportunity to lead like neighborhoods. As time progresses, the units can become increasingly larger; for example, a town can lead a county, a county can lead a region, and a region can lead a state.

A third approach is based on social dilemma experiments showing cooperation to be an increasing function of the amount of the social payoff (see Dawes 1980; Messick and Brewer 1983) and evaluations of actual social marketing campaigns (Edney 1980; Stern and Gardner 1981). From their evaluations, Edney and Stern and Gardner conclude that modest incentives for cooperation can have no impact on, or can even decrease, cooperation. These scholars argue that providing incentives can reduce cooperation because such action increases both the social payoff and the importance of the social payoff. Unless the incentive is very large, the social payoff will be negative even after the consumer receives his or her incentive. If the social payoff is negative, increasing its importance will reduce the consumer's overall attitude toward cooperation, as predicted by the multiattribute model. Though communications do not directly influence the social payoff associated with cooperation, they can influence the relative importance of the social payoff. The fifth proposition is consistent with both the results of the social dilemma experiments and the evaluations of past social marketing campaigns.

P_5: To reduce the self-interest barrier, marketing communications should inform consumers that they will receive a higher social payoff without increasing the importance of the social payoff.

Many social marketing strategies seek to encourage cooperation by providing either incentives or disincentives, or by simply making it easier for a person to cooperate. Because both incentives and disincentives are more likely to focus attention on the social payoff, P_5 suggests that marketing communications emphasizing those aspects may be counterproductive. It may be possible to reduce the self-interest barrier by using communications that stress how easy it is for a person to cooperate (see Kotler and Andreasen 1987). For example, instead of promoting the fact that individuals who agree to recycle gain a small reduction in their garbage collection costs, an effective promotion might emphasize how easy it is to recycle.

A final approach to overcoming the self-interest barrier is based on a conceptual, not empirical, foundation. Both Dawes (1980) and Olson (1965) argue that if the value and importance of the nonsocial payoff can be augmented, an individual will be more likely to cooperate. The application of the multiattribute model of attitude formation leads to the same conclusion. The sixth proposition is based on these conceptual arguments.

P_6: To reduce the self-interest barrier, emphasize the nonsocial payoff gained from cooperating.

Whether communications can influence the perceived nonsocial payoff is highly controversial. Dawes (1980) cites an unpublished study in which individuals who read a 938-word sermon about ethics were more willing to cooperate than those who did not read the sermon. Edney (1980) reaches the opposite conclusion. He cites numerous studies showing that explaining the negative consequences of not reaching a group's goal did not enhance cooperation. Ritchie and McDougall's (1985) analysis of social marketing conservation campaigns supports Edney's viewpoint. However, three of the 10 reasons Kotler and Andreasen (1987) give to explain why people donate to a charity refer to nonsocial payoffs.

A possible explanation for this controversy is that the issue of appealing to nonsocial payoffs has been confounded with the issue of ethical appeals. An ethical appeal can focus on either the nonsocial or social payoff. Most of the ethical appeals that have proven to be ineffective in both actual campaigns and experiments emphasize the social payoff. In other words, appeals such as "Don't Be Fuelish—Conserve" direct attention to how the individual will benefit if the community's goal is reached. These appeals are not focusing on the intrinsic rightness of cooperating (the nonsocial payoff) as much as they are focusing on the

benefits of gaining the social goal (the social payoff). However, there is little empirical support for Dawes' (1980) contention that appeals emphasizing nonsocial payoffs can be effective. Consequently, current research does not allow any firm conclusion about appeals that stress the ethical rightness of cooperation.

Overcoming the Mistrust Barrier

Messick et al. (1983) found that individuals were more willing to cooperate when they received false feedback informing them that others were cooperating. Other studies have found that people who report that they expect others to cooperate are themselves more likely to cooperate (see Messick and Brewer 1983). The seventh proposition is based on these findings.

P_7: To reduce the mistrust barrier, emphasize that others are cooperating or are planning to cooperate.

This information can be communicated through the use of a survey results strategy. A survey results strategy takes advantage of the well-known phenomenon that many people who indicate they will engage in a socially desirable behavior do not do so. A social marketer can make use of this tendency by conducting a survey of intentions and then communicating that most community members plan to cooperate.

Another way to communicate this information is by providing positive feedback on the extent to which others are cooperating—for example, by reporting actual cooperation levels, enhancing the social visibility of cooperation, or using promotional messages such as "bandwagon" appeals. In addition, note that because the well baby strategy communicates that the problem is being solved through the cooperative effort of the community, it provides a form of positive feedback.

A second approach to overcoming the mistrust barrier is based on research by Kramer and Brewer (1984) and Brewer and Kramer (1986). They found that cooperation can be increased by increasing the extent to which an individual identifies with fellow group members. This has been done in social dilemma experiments by emphasizing the degree of sociodemographic similarity between individual and fellow group members (Kramer and Brewer 1984) and by emphasizing that all individuals caught in the social dilemma share a common fate (Brewer and Kramer 1986). The eighth proposition is based on this research.

P_8: To reduce the mistrust barrier, enhance the degree to which an individual identifies with his or her group.

There are many ways to suggest to consumers that the others caught in the social dilemma are similar to themselves. For example, promotional messages can emphasize accepted social boundaries (such as the use of region in the civic pride approach). The findings

on common fate suggest the importance of using strategies that communicate that all group members will be treated equally.

Reinforcement

The problem of little or no reinforcement has been addressed in the social dilemma literature by focusing on the effects of communicating (1) how the collective sacrifices of community members are helping the community achieve its goal and (2) how most members of the community are cooperating. These approaches are discussed in the sections on the sucker and mistrust barriers. The core of these approaches is that, instead of being given feedback about the consequences of his or her own action, the individual is given feedback about the consequences of everyone's action. Note also that social dilemma research suggests that effective feedback can stress process (e.g., how many others are cooperating) as well as outcome.

Weak Attitude-Behavior Link

The weak attitude-behavior link can arise when an individual places a high value on reaching a community goal, such as saving the environment, but does not think the goal will be reached. Hence a cause of the weak attitude-behavior link barrier appears to be the fear people have of being suckers.

Implications and Future Research

The key implication of our discussion is that effective communication strategies for "selling brotherhood" can be developed by conceptualizing the problem of "selling brotherhood" as one of gaining cooperation in a social dilemma. This approach identifies barriers that inhibit this form of prosocial behavior and provides direction to marketing practitioners who seek to develop strategies to overcome those barriers.

Future marketing research can pursue three lines of inquiry: the generalizability of the propositions and proposed strategies, the relationship between social dilemma research and behavioral influence strategies, and the development of new strategies. One important generalizability issue is the role of the intrinsic qualities of the community good. Most social dilemma researchers have used a game-playing method in which subjects play for points. Social dilemma behavior is investigated by setting the payoff structure so that, un-

less almost all players cooperate, individuals who defect receive more points than individuals who cooperate. As Dawes (1980) has pointed out, a problem with these experiments is that the subjects are not placed in a situation that has a high degree of moral, political, or emotional content. Though the concordance of the social dilemma research findings and the experiences of social marketers suggests that the simulation game findings apply to real issues, research is needed to investigate this possibility.

A second important generalizability issue is the extent to which social dilemma findings apply to non-Western cultures. Cross-cultural research (see Triandis 1989) suggests that the background characteristics associated with being a member of a Western (i.e., individualistic) culture may interact with the treatments used in social dilemma experiments.

A third issue underlying the generalizability of both the propositions and the strategies is the nature of the contingency relationships that may be present between the barriers. For example, it is vital to know under what conditions overcoming a specific barrier is necessary and/or sufficient for gaining cooperation.

A second line of research could investigate the relationship between the social-dilemma-based barriers and the behavioral influence approaches. Burns and De Vere (1982) argue that the effectiveness of behavioral influence strategies may be contingent on the consumer's beliefs about the consequences of his or her compliance. These contingencies may be social-dilemma-based barriers.

A final line of research is to develop strategies for "selling brotherhood." Marketing scholars such as Rothschild (1979) and Fine (1990) have argued that a key reason for marketers' problems in developing communications strategies for "selling brotherhood" is that it is not clear what message should be communicated. The barriers and propositions we discuss provide concrete suggestions for the content of messages seeking to "sell brotherhood," and the proposed strategies illustrate that those suggestions can be implemented by marketing practitioners. The need is for marketing scholars and practitioners, whose expertise is in developing effective communications, to use the social dilemma foundation as the basis for developing strategies that can help our society overcome the serious social dilemmas in which we all are caught.

REFERENCES

Allen, Chris, Roger Calantone, and Charles Schewe (1982), "Consumers' Attitudes About Energy Conservation in Sweden, Canada, and the United States, With Implications," *Journal of Marketing and Public Policy*, 1, 43–57.

Bloom, Paul N. and William D. Novelli (1981), "Problems and Challenges in Social Marketing," *Journal of Marketing*, 45 (Spring), 79–88.
Brewer, M. B. and R. M. Kramer (1986), "Choice Behavior

and Social Dilemmas: Effects of Social Identity, Group Size, and Decision Framing," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3 (March), 543–9.

Buchanan, J. and G. Tullock (1962), *The Calculus of Consent*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Burns, A. and S. De Vere (1982), "An Investigation of Compliance-Gaining Techniques Applied to a Gasoline Conservation Device," *Journal of Marketing and Public Policy*, 1, 43–56.

Clee, M. and R. Wicklund (1980), "Consumer Behavior and Psychological Reactance," *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 6 (March), 389–405.

Dawes, R. (1980), "Social Dilemmas," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 31, 69–93.

Edney, J. (1980), "The Commons Problem: Alternative Perspectives," *American Psychologist*, 35 (February), 131–50.

Fine, Seymour (1990), *Social Marketing*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Fleishman, J. A. (1980), "Collective Action as Helping Behavior: Effects of Responsibility Diffusion on Contributions to a Public Good," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38 (April), 629–37.

Fox, Karen F. A. and Philip Kotler (1980), "The Marketing of Social Causes: The First 10 Years," *Journal of Marketing*, 44 (Fall), 24–33.

Gill, J., L. Crosby, and J. Taylor (1986), "Ecological Concern, Attitudes, and Social Norms in Voting Behavior," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 50 (Winter), 537–54.

Hardin, G. R. (1986), "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, 162 (December), 1243–8.

Katzev, Richard and Theodore Johnson (1987), *Promoting Energy Conservation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Kotler, Philip (1982), *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

————— and Alan Andreasen (1987), *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

————— and Gerald Zaltman (1971), "Social Marketing: An Approach to Planned Social Change," *Journal of Marketing*, 35 (July), 3–12.

Kramer, R. M. and M. B. Brewer (1984), "Effects of Group Identity on Resource Use in a Simulated Commons Dilemma," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46 (May), 1044–57.

Messick, M. and K. Brewer (1983), "Solving Social Dilemmas: A Review," in *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, L. Wheeler and P. Shaver, eds. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

—————, H. Wilke, M. B. Brewer, R. M. Kramer, P. Zemke, and L. Lui (1983), "Individual Adaptations and Structural Change as Solutions to Social Dilemmas," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44 (February), 294–309.

Olson, M. (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ritchie, J. and G. McDougall (1985), "Designing and Marketing Energy Conservation Policies and Programs: Implications From a Decade of Research," *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 4, 14–32.

Rothschild, Michael L. (1979), "Marketing Communications in Nonbusiness Situations or Why It's So Hard to Sell Brotherhood Like Soap," *Journal of Marketing*, 43 (Spring), 11–20.

Samuelson, C. and D. Messick (1986), "Alternative Structural Solutions to Resource Dilemmas," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 37 (February), 139–55.

Scott, Carol (1977), "Modifying Socially-Conscious Behavior: The Foot-in-the-Door Approach," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4 (December), 156–64.

Stern, Paul and Gerald Gardner (1981), "Psychological Research and Energy Policy," *American Psychologist*, 36 (April), 329–42.

Sweeney, J. W. (1973), "An Experimental Investigation of the Free-Rider Problem," *Social Science Research*, 2 (September), 277–92.

Tashchian, Armen, Mark Slama, and Roobian Tashchian (1984), "Measuring Attitudes Toward Energy Conservation: Cynicism, Belief in Material Growth, and Faith in Technology," *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 3, 134–48.

Triandis, Harry (1989), "Cross-Culture Studies of Individualism and Collectivism," in *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, Theo B. Sonderegger, ed. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.