



The A & P: A Study in Price-Cost Behavior and Public Policy (Harvard Economic Studies)

M. A. Adelman

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In this study of the A & P. the author inquires into cost and price policy in one of America's large corporations, and examines the fact-finding process in government regulation of an industry.

The first part of the book treats the history of The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company from 1919 to 1951 as a case study of a business management which is seeking to understand its market, formulate a rational price policy, and enforce the policy despite the inarticulate but effective opposition of subordinate executives. The second part deals with the buying methods of the company and A & P's relations with large and small suppliers. Particular attention is given to price discrimination.

In the final part of his study, Mr. Adelman discusses in detail the antitrust suit of the 1940's against the company and the goals and values implicit in that suit. He shows the way in which these goals predetermined the "facts" that purportedly were found. The author shows how a standard inductive-deductive method of economic research would have improved on the process of "trial by slogan and cliché."

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