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The quiet Americans: Formative context, the Academy of Management leadership, and the management textbook, 1936–1960

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Abstract

Building on recent interest in formative contexts and management in the USA, this article explores the contribution of the Academy of Management to the development of modern management theory. Drawing on archival research and content analysis of selected management textbooks, we examine the development of the Academy of Management from 1936 to 1960 and the role of its presidents in the dissemination of management theory. We conclude that there is some evidence that the Academy allied itself with dominant Cold War themes that translated into a philosophy of management, which influenced the character of the organization for decades. Though it is unlikely that the Academy per se had much influence on the development of management theory, its early leadership may have had a disproportionate influence through the medium of the business textbook.

Key Words • Behaviouralism • Cold War • cultural and economic hegemony • ideal-typical worker • individualism • organization theory

Introduction

Roberto Unger (1987) contends that societies are held together by a combination of institutional and imaginative arrangements that serve to maintain and obfuscate underlying tensions and conflicts. These institutional and imaginative arrangements constitute important stabilizing aspects of the 'formative contexts' in which social struggles are played out and constrained. In the words of Blackler (1992, 279), 'As conflicts are temporarily resolved, solutions become supported by particular organizational and technological styles, by emerging group interests, patterns of privilege, and the ways in which a basic grammar of social interactions becomes articulated in official dogmas. The imaginative schemas of participants interact with the institutional frameworks in which they operate.'

Recently there has been a growing interest in the relationship between management theory and formative context, particularly the impact of the Cold War on management theorizing (Mills, Kelley, and Cooke 2002; Cooke, Mills, and Kelley 2005). Landau (2006), for example, has examined the role of the scholarly business journal and the prominence of the systems rationality approach during the Cold War era, and Runté and Mills (2006) have shown a link between Cold War ideology, role theory, and the development of work–family discourse. In this article we extend recent analyses through an examination of the relationship between the Academy of Management and the development of management theory in the formative context of the Cold War. The Academy was founded in 1936 but went into a hiatus during the Second World War, only to be reconstituted in 1947. It remained an elite, invitation-only membership organization until the early 1960s, when it opened its rolls to a more broadly based membership, including international members.

We focus on the Academy of Management because of its current significance as the leading association of management educators in the US, with almost 16,000 members in 94 countries, 21 professional divisions, and three interest groups. Our focus on the period from 1936 to 1960 is due to several factors: (i) 1936 was the year the Academy was founded, (ii) the period as a whole covers three crucial timeframes in recent US history – the Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War (specifically the era characterized by McCarthyism), and (iii) it was a critical period in the development of modern management theory (Cooke, Mills, and Kelley 2005).

In our research endeavors we were specifically interested in the extent to which selected textbooks and the Academy discussed and reflected on issues of class, gender, race/ethnicity, and the broad socio-political era of the Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War. Thus, we explore a number of emerging themes and issues in the early years that shaped the modern Academy and had some influence, through the management text (Mills and Helms Hatfield 1998), on wider constituencies of management educators. A number of those themes come together in developing notions of the ideal worker and management–labor relations.

We conclude that while the organization itself may have had little influence on management theory, its early leaders – all of whom were pioneers in the development of business textbooks (Davis 1940; Koontz 1941; Newman 1947; Mee 1952; Davis 1957; Jucius and Terry 1961) – may have had a disproportionate influence through the medium of the business textbook. We argue that there is also evidence that the Academy allied itself with dominant Cold War themes that translated into a philosophy of management, which influenced the character of the organization for decades. Arguably, this philosophy of management was rooted in a Cold War reading of 'free enterprise' (Mee 1953) and anti-communism, which shaped an organizational culture that encouraged objectivism (Jamison 1937b), elitism (Jamison 1937a), ethnocentrism (Newman 1948), and masculinist values (Gore 1984).

In a preliminary study based on content analysis of business textbooks and archival research, we examine the development of the Academy and the writings of the men who served as president of the association from 1936 to 1960. In particular we set out to assess the impact of these men on the dissemination of management theory in the US during a critical time span. The structure of the article begins with an examination of the thinking behind the founding of the Academy and the formative context in which this occurred. It then moves to an overview of the changed context of the immediate post-war era, with an examination of notions of the labour relations in the Cold War era. We then examine the role of the Academy during this period and the writings of its leading members. The article then moves to analysis and conclusion of the relationship between the Academy and emerging management theory.

The Great Depression: The Founding of the Academy of Management, 1936–41

When he first conceived the idea of an academy of management in the early 1930s, Charles Jamison envisioned a permanent organization that would provide a forum for 'an interchange of ideas' between university 'teachers of management' (Wrege 1986, 1, 2). Jamison, of the University of Michigan, canvassed other business professors but without success. Arthur Anderson, of the University of Illinois, for example, had a similar idea but 'dropped it because of the times, and the fact that there were so many other societies and activities in the field' (quoted in Wrege 1986, 1).

Jamison resurrected the idea in 1936 and this time gained some response from the individuals whom he contacted. A founding meeting was held in Chicago on 28 December, and included Jamison, Arthur Anderson, Ralph Davis, and seven other men. However, it is not clear why Anderson and others changed their minds. As some argued, they might be better served joining an existing organization, such as the Society for the Advancement of Management (SAM). Even Jamison confided that the American Management Association (AMA) 'recognizes our field as a field', but he dismissed the AMA as a body whose 'recognition of the teaching of management is only incidental' (quoted in Wrege 1986, 3). Jamison also felt that in SAM 'the problem of teachers would be subordinated to objectives different from the objectives of a teachers' organization' (Wrege 1986, 3). Yet, as Wrege (1986, 3–4) comments, SAM (the former Taylor Society) 'had conducted separate sessions for management teachers since 1927'.

With an invitation to Ralph Davis of the University of Ohio to become a founding member, the emphasis of the new organization began to shift. Davis is credited with enlarging the scope of the Academy to 'include creating and promoting the development of a philosophy of management' (Wrege 1986, 3), suggesting to Jamison that it concern itself with 'the development of fundamental philosophy of business operation' and that membership be based 'on proven ability to make contributions of fundamental importance to the field of management' (Davis 1936). This was partly reflected in the call for an inaugural meeting to discuss 'the formation of an organization of scholars to promote an understanding of the concepts of management' (Jamison 1936).

By the second conference, in 1937, the aim of the newly named 'Academy of Management' included 'the ideal [to develop] a definite long term program – an outline of a complete doctrine of management' (Jamison 1937b, 4). The emerging philosophy was aimed at providing direction to America's industrial leadership: 'Mass production, large scale industry and the growth of great corporations have placed industrial leaders in a position to exert a powerful influence in their respective communities, reaching down into every walk of life. It therefore is important that education for industrial leadership include the broader concept of social welfare' (Jamison 1939). In the process the Academy set out to demystify the 'aura of mystery' surrounding the activities of top business management, arguing that it was generally 'misunderstood by rank-and-file workers, by public servants and by the public in general' (Jamison 1937b, 1). A similar narrative is evident in the thinking of Davis (1936), who believed that 'indoctrinating the people with sound economic truths' would establish public confidence in the ability of 'private entrepreneurs to manage business in a manner satisfactory to everyone': Davis felt that the 'mistakes of management were not so numerous nor so serious that they [could] not be corrected' (Davis 1936). The meeting also consolidated the notion of an elite membership, constitutionally restricting membership to no more than 50 invited persons (Jamison 1937b) – a number that was not reached until the mid-1950s (Wrege 1986, 7).

Management theory at this time had not moved much beyond the 'technicist' (Nyland and Heenan 2005) approach of Taylor and the adherents of the Taylor Society (by now renamed the Society for Advanced Management). Throughout the first half of the 20th century the growth of big business in the USA had been accompanied by innumerable, often violent, workplace struggles as workers unionized and fought for better conditions. Management theory, such as it was, tended to mystify management while reinforcing the notion of the worker as stupid, selfish (Rose 1978), and decidedly male (Benschop and Doorewaard 1998). Taylor, for instance, reproduced the notion of the manager as thinker, doer, and leader, and the employee as irrational and lazy (Rose 1978). His attempt at scientific management was largely ignored as employers adopted his method devoid of motivational rewards, leading to further unrest in America's workshops (Bendix 1974; Rose 1978). The emergent Human Relations School, on the other hand, drawing on the work of the right-wing sociologist Pareto, was beginning to argue that managers should act as organic leaders, seeking not only to integrate employees into the mainstream of US life through the workplace but also, in the process, ensuring that they did not fall under the leadership of troublemakers or a group mentality (Rose 1978). These reflections on the Hawthorne studies began to appear in the 1930s (Mayo 1933; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939) and there is some, albeit limited, evidence that they were part of the thinking of some members of the Academy (Anderson, Mandeville, and Anderson 1942).

The Academy of Management was established during a period of the highest level of strike activity and some of the most dramatic and brutal management–labor struggles in US history (Bork n.d.; Goldstein 1978). A series of strikes against the steel companies, for example, resulted in several deaths when law enforcement agencies, in collusion with some of the companies involved, fired into the ranks of strikers (Bork n.d.). Yet it is interesting that the newly formed Academy focused its attention on helping the 'misunderstood' industrial leaders of the great corporations. At a time when other management associations, such as the AMA and SAM, were focusing on technical solutions to management (Nyland and Heenan 2005), the Academy of Management was concerned with developing a *philosophy* of management that was more akin to the emerging human relations theorists of the Hawthorne studies than the Taylorists in SAM. We might speculate about the extent to which Academy members were disquieted by some of SAM's more prominent 'left-liberal' leaders (Nyland and Heenan 2005). At a time when there were large-scale movements for democratic expansion the Academy chose to become an elite organization, restricted to a few designated leaders in the field. These elements took on new emphasis in the post-war era.

The Academy continued to have meetings up until 1941 when, under the leadership of Robert Brecht of the University of Pennsylvania, it suspended further activities for the duration of the war that followed the attack on Pearl Harbor (Wrege 1986). In some ways this was understandable but, as Wrege (1986, 11) points out, its 'inactivity during the war [meant] it had not adjusted to new conditions' and it was virtually moribund by 1946. When Charles Jamison attempted to revive the Academy in 1946 the scattered members prepared to face a rapidly changing context with the onset of the Cold War.

Convergence, Need, and Reproduction: The Making of the Cold War Worker

Social, economic, organizational, and theoretical developments converged and conspired to shape the American workplace and worldview in the early Cold War period. And, as we shall argue, organization and management thought, theory, and text helped to reproduce a particular notion of business and business education that, by and large, accorded with the dominant Cold War imagination of the time. In this section of the article we sketch the configuration of events, actions, and reactions that served to create a relatively narrow concept of the ideal-typical American worker.

The notion of the American worker that emerged from the Cold War and arguably persists today, arose out of at least four interdependent developments from the late 1940s to the 1960s. The first development was the establishment of a massive war effort in the Second World War, which embraced government, business, and labor, as well as the military, in what would later become known as the military-industrial complex (Goldstein 1978; Hobsbawm 1994). The war effort was a collaboration of government and business that consolidated power in a ruling elite. This effort coincided with the deployment of a military force employing millions of men and women, who would return to the factories and offices of industry, government, and academia following the war. Their military experience provided the model for the hierarchical, authoritarian enterprise of post-war American capitalism (Robin 2001).

The second development included that part of the Cold War fought at home, the 'internal Cold War' (Mills, Kelley, and Cooke 2002; Cooke, Mills, and Kelley 2005). Labor unions were brought into conformity with America's national security requirements (Vidich et al. 1993) in a broad attack by Congressional and other inquisitors that directly or indirectly affected the lives of thousands in government, entertainment, education, and business (Caute 1978). The third development was the rise of behavioralism and modernization theory. The behavioralist schools provided the training ground for the new faculty needed for growing business school enrollments, and a theoretical basis for the demonization of America's enemies (Schrecker 1994) and for the individualism and idealization of American society. The fourth was the development of organization and management theories, such as those of Maslow and McGregor, which, however inadvertently, reproduced the individualistic and hierarchical values of American society (Cooke, Mills, and Kelley 2005). These theories reflected the dominant norms of American society and institutionalized them through the burgeoning organizational literature and educational institutions (Rosen 1984).

The dominant notion of the American worker that emerged in this era was that of the 'organization man' (Whyte 1956): white, male, autonomous, spiritual, self-actualizing (hierarchically oriented), and infused with the liberal values of freedom, liberty, and self-development (Lethbridge 1986). The development of the large corporations of the military-industrial complex provided the opportunity for the rise of 'organization man', driven there by a 'social ethic' that Whyte (1956, 7) saw as based on three propositions: 'a belief in the group as the source of creativity; a belief in "belongingness" as the ultimate need of the individual; and a belief in the application of science to achieve the belongingness'. It was within the hierarchical structure of the new giant corporations that 'organization man' could grow and compete to fulfill his potential. It was ironic that the autonomous, self-reliant man of American lore would turn to the collective of the organization for fulfillment.

Return from the War

The development of a dominant notion of the worker in the Cold War was enabled, at least in part, by the sheer force of numbers and patterns of experience of millions of soldiers who returned from the war in Europe and the Pacific. These experiences of a generation shaped attitudes to work: they had experienced success in a hierarchical, authoritarian, planning- and management-oriented work environment and they attributed much of that success to rational and scientific operational management, leadership, and organization. Having experienced the relatively homogenous, rational life of a successful military organization, it was not unnatural for them to be attracted to similar business organizations, or to create them in their own image, on their return.

These men also entered educational institutions where they influenced attitudes, curricula, and others' intentions on leaving those institutions. For instance, in the mid-1950s, Whyte (1956, 85) describes how college seniors had only corporate life in mind on leaving school:

> Seniors do not deny that the lone researcher or the entrepreneur can also serve others. But neither do they think much about it. Their impulses, their training,

> the whole climate of the times, incline them to work that is tangibly social. Whether as a member of a corporation, a group medicine clinic, or a law factory, they see the collective as the best vehicle for service. Like the young man of the Middle Ages who went off to join holy orders, he is off for the center of society.

Business school enrollments rose dramatically and, by 1955, business became the most popular undergraduate major (Cheit 1985). With the growth of business schools came criticism that the curriculum was too vocational and that undergraduate business schools had 'dispensed with the humanities' (Whyte 1956). Business school faculties were often staffed with retired military officers and business executives who did not have doctorates and both pedagogy and scholarship tended to be non-theoretic and practice driven (Cotton et al. 2001). The criticism had become so widespread that in 1959 both the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation released comprehensive reviews of business education, which pointed to the parochial nature of business education and the 'trade school' orientation of business school research (McKee, Mills, and Weatherbee 2005). The reports recommended raising standards through an increased number of academically trained faculty, more rigorous course work, more graduate work, and less undergraduate specialization. Shortly thereafter the emphasis on academic scholarship increased, especially that related to basic scholarship and the blending of theory with practice (Cotton et al. 2001). Ironically, by the mid-1960s criticism had become commonplace that 'business schools [were] too academic and not producing the managers needed by American business' to compete (Cheit 1985).

The Military-Industrial-*Academic* Complex

The Second World War permanently altered the economic and political power relations within American society, and produced an oligarchy of the major interest groups (Lipsitz 1981). Working class strategies of independence, notions of academic freedom, and the vitality of small business entrepreneurship had to contend with the ways in which wartime spending helped create elites among the executives of large corporations who exercised unprecedented control over government and thus the lives of ordinary citizens (Schrecker 1986; Robin 2001). Lipsitz (1981) documents government wartime support and influence that created a radical shift in the American economy toward a relatively small number of giant corporations. Direct government and military spending during the war provided large corporations with a steady source of capital, secure and increasing markets, and expanded facilities that made increased production profitable, tilting the economy away from small and medium-sized firms toward a relatively small number of large, powerful corporations. Following the war, leaders of American industry hoped for a continuation of the closer collaboration between business, government, and labor union leaders that had protected the interests of capital during the war. What had proved successful during the war became the model for the peacetime economy, as corporate liberals projected the short-term adjustments made during the war into the permanent outline of the future American economy (Lipsitz 1981).

Even academic economic theory became prominently involved in the interest of differentiating the American way of life from communism (Fusfeld 1998). During the Second World War, the need for government to direct national science policy to the war effort was not in question. Government intervention in scientific research was understood as a national security priority and, thereafter, 'the quest for positivism became the very ideology on which the modern state controls the dissemination of knowledge' (Nodoushani 2000, 76). Big science arose out of government wartime recruitment of academic scientists, use of their infrastructure, and financial support of research projects with potential strategic benefits (Kurasawa 2002). By the 1950s, the academy had displaced other institutions as the locus of America's intellectual life. Many of the ideas that shaped the way Americans perceived themselves and their society developed on the nation's campuses, which were far from immune to the political pressures on their institutions (Schrecker 1986). Nodoushani (2000, 78) noted that 'the Cold War had also opened up a hegemonic cultural discourse with an all-embracing influence over policymakers as well as scientists'.

The Rise of Behaviouralism

On 15 January 1951, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) issued a periodic 'Review of the Current World Situation' which called for 'a large-scale program of psychological warfare … comparable in scope to the Manhattan District Project of WWII' (Robin 2001, 42). The implication of this analogy was a large investment in research and access to the military-intellectual complex for the fledgling behavioral sciences previously available only to the physical sciences. The typical recipients of this largesse were think tanks such as the Rand Corporation, which was especially influential in shaping the political views of scholars and the direction of government policy, principally through its interest in a rationale for representative democracy and market capitalism as part of the country's ideological conflict with communism (Amadae 2003). As a result, a new kind of social scientist emerged and prospered in the Cold War: the behavioral scientist who espoused a universal theory of human action, an organized quest for principles and theory, or even a series of behavioral laws of nature that focused on the individual rather than the group or organizational level of analysis. In this new science the focus was on measurement and behavior – or on testable claims of reified concepts – rather than on critique and ideas. Robin (2001, 7) observed that 'relieved of ambiguity and the need to probe and question, the behaviouralist approached human experience as the sum of distinct, quantifiable and predictable combinations of sociological, psychological and biological reactions'. In the emerging business disciplines 'such a theory became synonymous with the only way of knowing' (Nodoushani 2000, 76).

Robin (2001) suggests that the creation of the behavioralist schools was a cultural as well as a scientific enterprise, an example of American exceptionalism credited to individual ingenuity rather than central planning. During the early Cold War period, while the physicists and economists were working on theoretical scenarios, the behavioral scientist was creating working documents for management problems related to conventional warfare. Robin (2001) claimed that the behavioralists portrayed the ideological positions of the 'enemy' as manifestations of emotional dysfunction, which were invoked whenever political behavior appeared to be irrational or different from the American norm, which was assumed to be value-free and rational. In addition, in the late 1950s, behavioral science was seen as a national security issue since the control of attitudes and beliefs of people could be a powerful weapon and, if the communists developed such techniques first, America would need effective countermeasures (Nodoushani 2000).

Political Ideology and Management Theory

In a number of ways the New Deal era represented a compromise between the aims of big business and the struggles of militant unionism that was, more or less, maintained during the war years (Goldstein 1978). But it was a fragile compromise that was, if anything, exacerbated by the US wartime alliance with the Soviet Union. Even before the war's end there were those in the big business community who could not wait to settle old scores with the left, with unionism, and with the remnants of the New Deal. However, arguably, in the context of a growing Cold War it may have seemed less appropriate to return to narrow and divisive images of the manager and the worker. There was a greater need to incorporate the employee into the mainstream of American business while ensuring that he (sic) remained under the firm leadership of the business leader. The new employee had to be an embodiment of the Cold War version of the American dream, a self-reliant individualist who nonetheless realized his dream within the framework of corporate leadership, i.e. the organization man of Whyte's (1956) reflections.

That is not to suggest a conspiracy to construct a particular image of the employee but rather to suggest the type of image that would have been in sync with the political ideologies of the time (as commentators contrasted the American employee with that of the Soviet worker) and more or less in sympathy with the post-war needs of American management.

Jackall (1988) asserts that the protestant ethic, largely stripped of its religious basis in the early frontier America, became a work ethic, rugged individualism, and, especially, a success ethic. These values were coupled with a mass consumer society in the first half of the 20th century. While rugged individualism remained largely in myth, the original ethic was undermined by affluence that coincided with the emergence of a consumer society and by the bureaucratization of the economy. A 'tide of bureaucratization' (Jackall 1988, 9), driven by the New Deal in the 1930s, by the militarization of American society in the Second World War, and by the rise of corporatism and legislative and regulatory bodies in the military-industrial complex, led to the decline of the old middle class of entrepreneurs, free professionals, independent farmers, and small independent businessmen, and to the ascendance of a new middle class of salaried employees with a dependence on the large organization.

Sennett and Cobb (1973, 58) explain the contradiction of the self-reliant, rugged individual of American mythology and the corporate, interdependent society of Cold

War America as 'the carving out of some social space in which the [worker] is alone' and has achieved a level of independence from social bonds and class.

The self-reliant American worker encountered what Jackal (1988) found was a distinctive form of bureaucracy. It was not the rational-legal form articulated by Weber; rather it was a 'patrimonial bureaucracy … in which one survives and flourishes by currying favour with powerful officials up the line who stand close to the ruler' (Jackall 1988, 12), a curious melding of modern organization and 'patrimonial bureaucracy' in which personal loyalty, favouritism, informality, and non-legality are the norm. Furthermore, Jackall argues that managers have a transforming role in society. In the last 60 years, managers' occupational beliefs and worldview have come to dominate, not only within organizational studies and practice, but throughout other white-collar occupational groups as well. As they exemplify the notion of the white-collar salaried employee, they are the 'principal carriers of the bureaucratic ethic' (1988, 12) and their particular worldview has frequently overshadowed other interests on a great number of public issues.

Jackall (1988, 5–6) claims that bureaucratic work shaped employees' consciousness toward rational, socially approved, purposive action, and 'brought them into daily proximity with and subordination to authority, creating in the process upward-looking stances that have decisive social and psychological consequences'. The 'subtle measures of prestige' and 'elaborate status hierarchy' foster 'an intense competition for status' that makes 'the rules, procedures, social contexts, and protocol of an organization [the] paramount psychological and behavioural guides' (Jackall 1988, 5–6). A corporate morality, separate, distinct, and 'bracketed' from 'what is right in a man's home or in his church' developed because '[w]hat is right in the corporation is what the guy above you wants from you' (Jackall 1988, 6).

The emerging image of the employee is reflected in the works of Peter Drucker and Abraham Maslow – two of the leading management theorists of the era. For example, in his essay on 'The Employee Society' (1959), Drucker made clear his desire to shed the employer–employee relationship of the traditional American workplace to move toward the 'strictly objective' relationships of modern hierarchical systems. He recognized that the worker had experienced a transition from working directly for an employer in the small to medium-sized entrepreneurial firm to working for a 'boss' in the large organization. He claimed that it had resulted in a system in which relationships were mediated through a 'strictly impersonal, strictly objective, strictly abstract thing' – the organization – and that this was a 'society which [was] based on, and ruled by, status' (1959, 2), that is, by virtue of relative position within the hierarchy.

As has been argued elsewhere (Cullen 1997; Cooke, Mills, and Kelley 2005; Dye, Mills, and Weatherbee 2005), within the use and widespread dissemination of the work of Abraham Maslow we can find several important reflections of Cold War themes of elitism, hierarchy, and individualism. As Shaw and Colimore (1988) suggest, the contradictions and ambiguities apparent in Maslow's work are understandable when viewed as expressions and reflections of capitalistic ideology. While Maslow emphasizes 'tolerance, pluralism and the sanctity of the individual' (Lethbridge 1986, 88), an unmistakable elitist value system emerges. 'The elitist view of the self was derived from Maslow's judgement that, in reality, there are better values than others, better ways of living than others, better people than others' (Buss 1979, as cited in Lethbridge 1986, 88). As Cooke and his colleagues (2005) contend, Maslow's theory of self-actualization resembles the dominant ideology of the era. On closer analysis it is a reflection of the contradiction between democratic theory and the reality of elitism in a capitalist society and is, therefore, 'a case study on the power of ideology to surface in the form of social science theory .... Maslow inadvertently took what existed in society and made it the basis of his psychological theories' (Shaw and Colimore 1988).

Maslow's theory of self-actualization, fixed in a particular historical period and infused with the liberal values of freedom, liberty, and personal development (Shaw and Colimore 1988), arguably not only reflected the hierarchical, democratic elitism and liberal values of the time but also reinforced those same values. As Buss (1979) contends: 'Excessive individualism in the doctrine of self-actualization serves to mask the larger social questions surrounding society's structures ... and works in favour of maintaining that social reality' (cited in Lethbridge 1986, 88). Maslow insisted on the development of the autonomous individual over the development of society – 'to give man ownership over his human potentials rather than arrogated by temporal non-human institutions which, at times, science, business, and the church have been' (Bennis 1972, as cited in Shaw and Colimore 1988, 56–7). Maslow was critical of those who would neglect their own development to work for wider social reform. He contrasted those who would assign blame for troubles with those who would instead ask 'What can I do to make the most of this situation?' and believed that the individual was responsible for their fate even if the problems they encountered were the result of processes and forces larger than themselves (Shaw and Colimore 1988). "The fully actualized individual has 'a quality of detachment and a sense of privacy' and is 'his own man, autonomous, relatively independent of his surroundings and highly resistant to enculturation'" (Lowry 1973, as cited in Shaw and Colimore 1988, 57). Furthermore, he believed that individual self-interest merged with society's interest in what he called 'synergy', something akin to Adam Smith's notion of the 'invisible hand'.

Shaw and Colimore (1988) see Maslow's hierarchy of needs as the outline of a hierarchical social order that is more a description of values than a universal motivation theory. While claiming to tell us something about human nature, the hierarchy of needs, they argue, is more a reification of the concept of hierarchical elitism and competition.

Reflections of the Cold War: The Academy of Management in the Immediate Post-war Era

It was within the broad formative context of the emerging Cold War that the Academy underwent a 'renaissance' (Wrege 1986, 12) that saw it more closely allied with big business and Cold War philosophy. By 1947 the Academy was essentially defunct and but for the efforts of Jamison and Davis it would likely not have been revived. Seemingly angry with Brecht's leadership and the association's inactivity during the war, Davis and Jamison, along with John Mee of Indiana University, agreed to reactivate the Academy without consulting Brecht; as far as Davis was concerned Brecht had 'taken no initiative and has allowed the organization to die' (quoted in Wrege 1986, 12). It was subsequently written into the Academy constitution that the association would continue 'in operation during any extraordinary emergency' (Wrege 1986, 11).

Davis took over as Academy president in 1948 and Mee became president in 1952. Conferences were now built around the contributions of speakers from large corporations and selected business educators. The 1948 conference in Cleveland, for example, featured papers by Wyman Fiske of the Institute of Management Accountants and Tom Girdler, Chairman of the Board of the Republic Steel Corporation. The following year saw presentations by Alvin Brown (Vice President and Director, Johns-Manville Corp.), John Parver (President, National Outdoor Advertising Bureau), C.V. Swank (Vice President in charge of manufacturing, Johnson and Johnson), and William J. Barrett (Vice President, Metropolitan Life). In other years speakers included Carroll Wilson (Director of Finance, Champion Paper and Fibre Co.) and James Worthy (Personnel Director, Sears, Roebuck and Co. (both in 1950), Harold Smiddy of General Electric (1951) and Fred Maytag, President of Maytag (1952). Brown and Smiddy went on to become presidents of the Academy, respectively, in 1957 and 1962.

Cold War philosophy surfaced early in the Academy and was embedded in its renewed purpose. At the 1948 conference Wyman Fiske, speaking as one of the 'many firm believers in the American system' of free enterprise and the 'unique society of free men', argued that business education was 'a vital necessity in any free society' for earning a living and for citizenship (Fiske 1948, 1, 2, 4). Later, Tom Girdler of Republic Steel, addressing the issue of 'management's leadership responsibilities', expanded on the theme of America as the bastion of freedom and democracy (Girdler 1948). Not surprisingly, Girdler turned his attention to the threats from unions and communism: 11 years earlier Girdler had gained a reputation for his vehement anti-union stance and the role of Republic Steel in the national steel workers strike of 1937, which saw 16 strikers shot dead outside the company's plants in Ohio and Illinois (Bork n.d.). Defending his role in the strike as prophetic, Girdler told Academy delegates that his part in standing firm and exposing the strike's communist leadership played a role in 'the change in attitude which we have seen regarding Communists, not only in labor but in government' in post-war America (Girdler 1948, 5). He concluded, 'In the fight for freedom and democratic government throughout the world, management and employee must stand firmly together. If we do not, the days of free government are numbered. More of the world will turn to state control with its threat to personal freedom.... We must combat ... the trend toward a centralized federal control which has made so much progress even in the United States' (Girdler 1948, 5–6).

At the 1952 conference Ralph Davis openly addressed the issue of management and the Cold War, arguing that 'the Cold War economy ... must support psychological and economic warfare against an enemy' (1952, 1). While it is not clear what he meant by psychological warfare, Davis seems to assert that the economy should sustain military procurement as well as maintain 'concurrently the normal rate of improvement in the living standards of the population' (1952, 1). He also claimed that the major challenge to business was the uncertainty created by Cold War conflict, arguing that 'the wisdom with which solutions of our economic problems are developed may determine the continuance of our free enterprise system' and 'that business and industrial executives must accept the principal responsibility for such solutions, under a system of economic decentralism' (Davis 1952, 2).

At the same conference the constitution was revised to say that 'the Academy is founded to foster the search for truth and the general advancement of learning through free discussion and research in the field of management' (Academy of Management 1952). In a letter to outgoing Academy president Mee, Davis (1953) depicted the Academy's search for truth as rooted in a 'philosophy of management, keyed directly to the objectives of customer and public service that would inspire public confidence in a competitive system of free enterprise', arguing that the Academy was founded on the belief 'that our economic system would succumb eventually to Socialism, in the absence of such a philosophy. It was hoped that the Academy could sponsor the development of such a philosophy, and facilitate its acceptance by the public' (Davis 1953).

In terms of management truth seekers, the Academy was still limited to a small elite, an 'honorary body' of invited 'fellows' restricted to 50 to 100 scholars and business executives 'who have made recognized, original contributions to the philosophy of management' (Newman 1948). This was in fact a doubling of the original limit on membership which, as a result, grew from 40 in 1952 to 110 by 1954. But, despite numerous debates about dropping the elitist restrictions on membership, the organization remained small and did not exceed 400 members until 1961. The influence of this small and emergent association can perhaps be overstated, yet it can be argued that its contribution to the development of management theory was twofold: (i) in developing an organizational culture that influenced generations of active business scholars in the USA through participation in the Academy, and (ii) in the organic leadership (Gramsci 1978) that several of its members provided to the broad academic business community through textbook production (Mills and Helms Hatfield 1998). In exploring those influences we will focus on labour relations and the image of the ideal-typical worker.

Image of the Cold War Worker in Academy of Management Texts: From Balanced Discourse to Dominant Ideology

A distinctively balanced management/labor discourse may have existed within the Academy prior to and briefly after the Second World War, just as it had in other important management institutions of the time, including the *Harvard Business Review* and *Advanced Management*. It has been demonstrated, for instance, that the labor and managerial systems discourses existed from the early 1920s as competing and mutually alternating forms of representation of the world of work (Landau 2006). While the discourses were more or less balanced in the early management literature, beginning from about

1948 the labor discourse virtually disappeared from the literature while the managerial systems discourse became dominant.

A somewhat balanced perspective is evident in the 1939 *The Academy of Management Proceedings,* where consultant Harlow Person (1939, 21) put forward the view that:

> The 'entrepreneur' is characteristic of an individualistic society in which exploitation rather than collective good is the foremost consideration. As we approach greater collectivism management may take on more of the aspects of a profession.

As Cold War fear took hold in the post-war American consciousness, a dominant managerialist discourse (Landau 2006) commenced and free-market capitalism was 'made' synonymous with democracy. As Mills and Helms Hatfield (1998, 49) argue, 'a closed system model of organizations developed as a result of a generalized Cold War mentality', strengthening 'any tendency to avoid a concern with broader socio-political issues' and ensuring 'that the evolving organization and management disciplines were confined to analyses which did not question the legitimacy of business in general or organizational power and control in particular'.

Image of Labor

An image of labor stripped of its social and egalitarian purposes also began to emerge in the late 1950s management text. For instance, Keith Davis (1957, 123), who was to become president of the Academy of Management in 1964, played down the 'social unionism' goals of labor unions by claiming that unions most appropriately serve the interests of their members through two broad' goals to provide 'social satisfaction through group association and solidarity' and 'social power and control in order to achieve benefits for its members'. The union 'avoids utopian aims and seeks to exert pressure on the employer in order to gain higher wages and other concessions' (Davis 1957, 123). Davis claimed that union members were less satisfied with union political activity than with other activities such as collective bargaining and grievance handling.

A similar point was made by Drucker (1959) in a collection of articles co-edited by Davis (and W.G. Scott), where he makes clear his intolerance for certain types of 'individual rights' which apparently deny others their right to 'equal opportunities'. For instance, on trade union security rights, Drucker states,

> [T]here are certainly many who believe that it is both legitimate and desirable to expand the right in the job to the point where the present incumbents control access to the trade, craft, or industry in such a way as to derive the maximum return from their jobs, regardless of the injury done to other citizens through denying them a livelihood or to society through restricting the number of trained people. (1959, 6)

He asserts that union provisions that give preference to individual promotions based strictly on seniority were 'nothing but a demand that opportunities be feudalized', and that this form of promotion would be only an 'extension of the job' (1959, 6) rather than a right of the individual in relation to a 'strictly impersonal, strictly objective, strictly abstract thing, the "organization"' (1959, 2).

In a footnote to his view on the place of organized labour in an 'employee society', Drucker compared management's preference for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) over the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The AFL 'in emphasizing differentials, accepts management's function; it only demands a share in it' (Drucker 1959, 7–8). The CIO, on the other hand, preferred egalitarianism 'with their steady pressure toward elimination of pay differentials and toward one basic wage rate is a direct attack on management's power to redistribute, which is the very root of management's power altogether' (Drucker 1959, 7–8). In addition, Drucker (1959, 7–8) speculated on the significance of the 'meteoric rise of the AFL during the last few years – to where it now outnumbers the CIO 2 to 1'. He conjectured that the CIO's egalitarianism accounted for the difference and that their relative positions might also account for 'the tremendous recovery of management's prestige and prominence in American society during the last ten or twelve years' (1959, 7–8), and that American popular opinion had rejected an egalitarian ethic in favour of equality of opportunity. This view is similar to that of Arthur Anderson and his colleagues, who characterized the CIO as using 'rabble-rousing tactics and [sowing] the seeds of class dissention' (1942, 312) to gain their ends. In explaining the demise of the CIO, Drucker failed to mention McCarthyism and the attacks on the CIO's left-wing leadership by various agencies of government (Caute 1978; Goldstein 1978).

Notions of the Individual

A focus on the individual's self-seeking behavior became standard military psychological warfare doctrine following the Korean War, reconfirming what had become common practice in the Second World War. This self-seeking behaviour was characterized as the 'corrosive force of "people in pursuit of their private ends"' (Robin 2001, 96), which could be encouraged in the citizens of totalitarian enemy states, communist or otherwise, and remained the cornerstone of standard doctrine right up to the 1991 Gulf War. Likewise, analysis in the Cold War texts became limited to the organization as the unit of analysis and to 'how the individual can be motivated, led, [and otherwise] changed within the organization' (Mills and Helms Hatfield 1998, 49) by appealing to their self-interest.

A notion of the self-reliant worker became apparent in the management discourse at least as much from what 'he' (sic) wasn't as what he should and could be. For example, at the 1954 Academy conference Martindell (1954), in the opening paper, expressed a need for awareness of the requirement for self-development among workers and noted a lack of will or desire for self-improvement among the 'youth' and that they fail 'to develop a marked degree of ambition'. Similarly, Culley (1959), at the 1959 Academy conference, advocated a belief in self-reliance which was 'the antithesis of that held by the man in the gray flannel suit … a symbol of the conformity, lack of imagination, and reluctance to explore the unknown that distinguishes much of our business society'.

That year, Keith Davis produced an edited collection, *Readings in Human Relations*, that had much to say about the individual worker. In one chapter, Karsh (1959, 390) quotes Adam Smith to buttress the belief that workers who are not interested in self-development are 'stupid and ignorant'. In another reading Drury (1959) employs Frederick Taylor's use of the likeness of workers to different breeds of horses to 'classify men' into distinct groups according to their ability and willingness to perform different 'grades of work'. Drury expressed the sentiment that most workers would probably 'prefer to avoid the trouble of systematically planning complicated work', that they would need the guidance of a manager and that they would likely be 'better off for remaining at one employment and confining themselves to a limited range of activities' (1959, 46–7).

It was Keith Davis who introduced and popularized Maslow's work through his best-selling textbooks (Dye, Mills, and Weatherbee 2005). What is particularly interesting is his depiction of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which Davis initially refers to as a 'priority of human needs' (Davis 1957, 40) that are graphically represented as a man in a dark suit eating (i.e. 'basic physiological needs'), standing holding a spear ('safety'), accompanied by a wife and two small children ('attention; social activity'), holding a winner's pennant ('esteem; self-respect'), and planting an American flag at the peak of the hierarchy ('self-realization'). This was Maslow translated for a Cold War American audience.

Davis, who joined the Academy of Management in 1951, in many ways embodied the ideal-typical notion of the American worker in the Cold War. He was a personnel officer in the US Army Air Force until 1946 and returned to work in many of the large corporations that emerged more powerful from the Second World War, their position consolidated by the contributions of government wartime expenditures, including corporations like Motorola, Texaco, and Firestone. He was made a 'fellow' of the Academy of Management in the 1950s when the association broadened its membership base but wanted to retain an elite core of those deemed excellent in the field. In 1964 he became president of the Academy but his influence in the business schools had begun to be felt in the late 1950s with the introduction of the first of several successful management textbooks, beginning with *Human Relations in Business* (Davis 1957), which publisher McGraw-Hill has since described as 'the best seller in its market, worldwide as well as in the United States' (Davis 1984, 5).

He became particularly noted for his pursuit of 'human relations' at work, promoting concern for the employee and employee growth at work. Those concerns, however, continued to be framed by the notion that the leadership of business management (relatively free of government interference) offered the best hope for employee welfare. Thus, for example, when in 1963 he was asked what he felt was the single most pressing problem in management of the day, Davis (1963) responded that it was:

> the existence of political and economic systems which will permit a relatively free application of incentives in order to encourage people to get the job done. …

> [T]here are so many political and social restrictions that it is almost impossible to apply incentives to encourage the initiative and self-development of people. They tend to become secure, complacent, and unmotivated.

Elsewhere, continuing the theme of management as the progressive leaders of employees, Davis expressed a belief that 'socially competent managers' were the means to a 'socially competent business system and the productivity and human fulfillment that successful business can bring' (Davis 1967).

Women in Management Theory

Unlike the male-only Rotary International, of which Keith Davis was a member, the Academy had no such prohibitions on the recruitment of women. Nonetheless, the invitation-only process had the effect of excluding female members until at least 1956 when a Mrs M.A. Miles was listed as one of the 123 paid-up members. The following year a second woman – Professor Rhea H. West of the University of Arkansas – became one of the 247 members, and in 1959 Professor Ruth E. Troy of Steubenville College in Ohio became the third female among the Academy's 337 members. When, in 1961, Academy of Management membership reached 450 the number of female members had actually dropped. It was not until 1979 that the Academy elected its first ever female president, Rosemary Pledger, and a further six years before it elected its second female president, Kathryn Bartol, and six years after that before Jan Beyer became the third female president.

It was not as if the fellows of the Academy of Management were unaware of the contributions of female management scholars. In 1945, for example, Karl Reyer wrote to Lillian Gilbreth, asking if she would speak to his students. Reyer (1945) noted that '[a]fter five years' military service, I have returned to find that the university chapter of the Society for the Advancement of Management (SAM) is largely composed of young women'. Despite this, Ronald Shuman, who would become the Academy of Management president in 1955, seemed to be unaware of the presence of women when it came to academic recruitment, writing to Reyer to ask:

> Do you happen to know the whereabouts of a smart fellow in management, with an M.A. or M.B.A.? We shall have an assistant professorship open here effective with September, and I am in search of such a man. I would like one with some college teaching experience, preferably, good intelligence, and a stable personality. (Shuman 1948)

Neither Gilbreth nor any of the young women members of SAM were invited to join the Academy. The contributions of other leading women in the field were, however, known. In his address to the 1949 annual meeting of the Academy, for example, Alvin Brown referred to the work of Mary Parker Follett, as did one of the main speakers at the 1953 conference.

But gender blindness was not confined to the membership rolls of the Academy. In the textbooks of leading Academy members women were either completely ignored or depicted as appropriate for limited workplace roles. Of 37 texts by former Academy of Management presidents that were analyzed for this study, only Keith Davis (1957) discusses the issue of gender to any extent and, as we shall see, this served more to reinforce than to challenge existing stereotypes. This accords with a similar analysis by Mills and Helms Hatfield (1998) of 107 North American business texts widely in use between 1960 and 1997, which had little or nothing to say about women, gender, or sex differences.

Part of the explanation lies in deep-rooted attitudes that pervaded society long before the Cold War, but part of the explanation is also rooted in Cold War ideology that overstressed the domestic role of women (as keepers of the home front), demonized activism for women's (and other) rights, and renewed the link between masculinity and the role of breadwinner (Runté and Mills 2006). This was exacerbated by an increasing focus on danger and the role of the idealized family as the core of democratic values, suburbanization and the atomization of women, and the individualization and psychologization of female problems through the discourse of a feminist mystique (Friedan 1963). In the words of one feminist historian, 'McCarthyism was never simply about politics; there was a tremendous emphasis upon social conformity and an ideal of the family' (Rowbotham 1999, 312). These various elements constituted a gendered discourse and were echoed in the management theories of the day (Runté and Mills 2006).

While women were virtually unrepresented in the Cold War texts, when they were, their organizational status was clear. In Newman's *Administrative Action: The Techniques of Organization and Management*, for example, there is a section entitled 'man specifications' (1958, 324). Newman recommended that even though lists of qualities for the 'specifications of a man' to fill executive positions were based 'largely on personal opinion', they were nevertheless 'useful guides in appraising individuals' (1958, 329). Newman, in explaining that 'administrators are often men who possess outstanding ability in the particular activity that they are directing', claimed that the 'merchandise manager of a department store may be a canny buyer of women's gloves' (1958, 1). Apparently, he saw nothing ironic in his example. In addition, Newman tacitly endorsed military officers, virtually all white and male, as 'business executives', even though they would usually have no background in their new company or industry, because they would have 'a basic grasp of the process of management' (1958, 2).

In *Human Relations in Business* (1957), Davis clearly writes for an assumed audience of white, male managers in the chapter called 'Human Problems with Special Employment Groups'. In the chapter, Davis depicts women and non-white employees as 'special employment groups', which he defined as 'those groups whose employment is affected by non-job conditions … the term 'minority group' [having] been shunned because it is too narrow in scope' (1957, 403).

Davis acknowledged the significant presence of women employees at 30 percent of the workforce. Even so, perhaps unintentionally, he consigned them to gendered occupations in which they 'predominate' such as 'stenographer, office clerk, schoolteacher, telephone operator, bookkeeper, and cashier' (1957, 409). Davis failed to mention that women had lost better-paying jobs in the monopolistic sector of the economy to the returning servicemen at the end of the war and had been shifted to the lower-paying white-collar clerical jobs (Lipsitz 1981). To the male reader, this may seem an understandable outcome given the following examples:

> [W]omen give more emphasis to good human relations, than to the technical aspects of their work. Many women are willing to attach themselves to a pleasant work situation, and not seek advancement because they do not want to risk losing their pleasant social working conditions. (Davis 1957, 410).

> [W]omen display more emotion than men … their emotions appear to be more variable … and they appear to become more upset by work pressures than men. A wise supervisor assigns small work units to women when possible, rather then piling up several days work in a single assignment. (Davis 1957, 410).

In addition, Davis asserted that managers have 'fears and doubts about promoting women to management positions' since they wondered if women were 'seriously interested in a work career (1957, 412). He claimed that managers were 'hesitant about how a woman supervisor [would] get along with their male fellow supervisors. After all men understand each other in the business world, but they do not understand women very well' (1957, 412). Managers, apparently, also had concern where important clients were involved:

> Some managers hesitate to promote a woman because they feel she is more emotional and sensitive and therefore cannot withstand the constant pressures of the management environment as well as men do. They also feel that emotionality causes some women to be less objective in decision making. (1957, 412).

Moreover, Davis distanced the manager from the problems that 'special employment groups' encountered in the workplace. For instance, where he provided examples of discrimination of special employment groups, it was typically unions or other workers who resisted employment or integration of these workers and rarely, if ever, the employer who was guilty of such behavior. For instance the following example is typical of union resistance in Davis (1957, 406):

> In an oil refinery in Indiana an industrial union represented both office and refinery employees. Most of the 7,000 employees represented were men in the refinery, and for twenty years they had a clause in their bargaining contract requiring that women who marry must quit their jobs 30 days after marriage. Naturally, the women resented this clause. As explained by their attorney, if and when they get married, they might quit work – but they don't want anybody saying they have to.

He also marginalized and trivialized the concerns and differences of special employment groups. In response to his own rhetorical question, 'Why are special employment problems so difficult to deal with?, he claimed that 'these problems are primarily emotional and social, and attributes of this type are notoriously difficult to work with because they are so intangible' (1957, 406). Davis sidestepped management's responsibility by blaming the special groups for their sensitivity and emotionality:

> When one age group or race is rejected in employment, another is favored. This establishes an 'in-group' and an 'out-group', and more or less encourages the in-group to protect its privileges. This sets one group against another. The result is conflict among groups, when the best approach would be to have all groups working together to reduce the problem. Each group acts defensively, tries to protect itself, and becomes sensitive and emotional about its rights and grievances. (1957, 407).

Furthermore, he claimed that since there was usually at least a 'grain of truth', it made it possible 'for the discriminator to give reasonable or logical arguments to support his case' and thereby dodge the discrimination charge. For instance, in the case of the married women in the oil refinery, 'it is true that in some plant somewhere a woman non-breadwinner has taken a job and kept a man breadwinner from getting immediate employment, although he needed it much more than the woman' (1957, 407).

Finally, Davis devoted almost a full page to 'the wives of management'. He claimed that wives of employees were an important company social group, especially of management. Davis described the wife's role as:

> [T]hat of helping her husband progress upward in the corporation. She is expected to be a gracious hostess and social agent … gregarious and eager to make 'constructive friendships' appropriate to her husband's place in the social structure at that time. As he moves upward in the corporation, she too should be easily mobile to new friends, new neighborhoods, and new modes of social life. She needs to be understanding of the stringent requirements, such as night work and travel, which the firm makes of her spouse. (1957, 115).

Discussion and Conclusion

The Academy of Management's 'founding' coincided with some of the greatest challenges of the 20th century, beginning with its conception in the Great Depression, its 'renaissance' following the Second World War, and its truly formative period in the early Cold War. We argue that the words of the pioneers of the Academy should be examined in context since these seminal (sic) works were influential in the formative development of the burgeoning business academy, and of the students and teachers who would disseminate this worldview. The Academy's scholars were inevitably affected by the swirl of events and by their personal experiences, themselves shaped by prior experience. Moreover, the 'founders' set the tone for the modern Academy, for the rapidly increasing numbers of business schools, and for the management texts to follow, at a time when to adopt anything but a free-market, capitalist perspective – constructed on notions of democracy, individualism, universality, and unity – was tantamount to subversion (Schrecker 1986). As a result, the Academy, we argue, uncritically reproduced the dominant power order characterizing American society in the early Cold War, as demonstrated by their writings, including their texts, which in some cases were to be the foundational texts of management education for decades.

Finally, we contend that this work is intended as preliminary and not as the final word. The early leaders of the Academy of Management are not meant to stand for the entire membership, but rather its more influential members. Nor is the work of the various leaders to be read as a homogeneous or coherent body of work. Clearly there were some differences in worldview – Shuman (1948), for example, however briefly, was prepared to concede the potential of socialism. Certainly there were interesting paradoxes and contradictions in the work of the various leaders – Keith Davis, for example, gave public lectures in the 1960s in support of women in management. And the influence of the Academy and its leaders is far from clear. As Charles Jamison assessed in 1954, 'it is conceivable that some time in the dim future the Academy may become a potent force' (quoted in Wrege 1986, 1). Certainly there is room for further research in this field. What is clear at this stage is that all of the Academy leadership wrote widely read textbooks, that the body of ideas accorded with dominant themes of the manager and employee in the Cold War era, and that they present themselves as a form of hegemony that shaped subsequent impressions of the Academy of Management.

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